

**National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)**  
**Written Testimony Submitted to U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations**  
**Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies**  
**Regarding FY 2027 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Budget**

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The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) represents over 360 public wastewater and stormwater utility members nationwide who provide essential clean water services to more than 150 million Americans daily. Our members play a crucial role in safeguarding public health and environmental protection.

NACWA appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony for the FY 2027 Appropriations Process. We urge the Committee to prioritize the following funding recommendations to support public clean water utilities' steadfast commitment to delivering high-quality services while striving to keep rates affordable for families and businesses.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)**  
**Funding Request: At least \$3.25 billion**

The CWSRF is the primary federal financing tool available to help communities and public clean water utilities meet their Clean Water Act (CWA) obligations and infrastructure needs. Over its 40-year history, the CWSRF has been instrumental in improving water quality and protecting public health. To be sure, today, the majority of infrastructure investment is funded by local communities and ratepayers—but the low-interest loans, and occasional grants, offered through the CWSRF play an integral role in helping communities access project funding more affordably.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)**  
**Report Language Request:**

The Committee supports allowing states to use up to five percent of their allocated funds for projects utilizing proven or emerging clean water technologies. The committee notes the value that new wastewater technologies have in optimizing treatment operations and enhancing public health and environmental outcomes.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) – Clean Water Needs Survey**  
**Funding Request: At least \$5 million**

EPA's Clean Watersheds Needs Survey (CWNS) provides an assessment of existing clean water infrastructure and future investment needs to address the water quality objectives of the Clean Water Act over the next 20 years. Congress directed EPA to administer the CWNS every 4 years.

The last survey was conducted in 2022, so NACWA requests funding to ensure that the next CWNS is completed on schedule and reflects a robust data collection effort on wastewater and stormwater needs across all states.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants (OSG) Program**  
**Funding Request: At least \$280 million**

The Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants program provides rare federal grant funding to help communities with clean water needs. The program focuses on the costly challenges of managing combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, and investing in stormwater capture and reuse.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program**  
**Funding Request: At least \$75.6 million for WIFIA and at least \$5 million for SWIFIA**

WIFIA complements the SRFs by accelerating significant water infrastructure projects through low-cost federal financing. Since its launch, the WIFIA program has closed 147 loans totaling \$22 billion, facilitating the financing of \$49 billion worth of water infrastructure projects. These investments have resulted in estimated savings of over \$7.5 billion for borrowers and their ratepayers and have created approximately 165,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup> WIFIA has filled a critical gap, ensuring that water projects of regional and national significance can advance—and at relatively low cost to the federal government and taxpayers.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Integrated Planning (IP) Support**  
**Funding Request: At least \$2 million**

NACWA requests \$2 million in FY27 for technical assistance to help guide state regulators and communities incorporate integrated planning into their permitting and enforcement programs. Integrated planning is a key tool that was codified in the Clean Water Act in 2019, and which can help communities focus on maximizing clean water outcomes while better managing affordability. This funding will help affirm EPA's continued support of this critical framework and the development of resources and outreach to states and regions, who work with communities to develop and approve integrated planning approaches.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Water Workforce Development**  
**Funding Request: At least \$5.4 million**

As the water sector faces a growing workforce challenge driven by retirements and competition for skilled labor, NACWA supports continued funding to support innovative training partnerships and workforce development initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> EPA. WIFIA 2023 WIFIA Annual Report. [[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/final\\_wifia\\_2023\\_annual\\_report.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/final_wifia_2023_annual_report.pdf)]

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Water Workforce Development**  
**Report Language Request:**

The Committee recognizes the growing workforce challenges facing the nation's drinking water and wastewater utilities as experienced workers retire and competition for skilled labor increases. The Committee supports the Water Workforce Infrastructure Grants Program and encourages EPA to prioritize partnerships that expand workforce training and career pathways in the water sector. The Committee further clarifies that public drinking water and clean water utilities are eligible to receive grants directly when applying in partnership with eligible educational or training institutions.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Clean Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program**  
**Funding Request: At least \$50 million**

NACWA supports \$50 million in grants to support wastewater and stormwater utilities make critical investments and prepare for threats that pose the risk of disrupting water services.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) Connection Grants**  
**Funding Request: At least \$40 million**

NACWA supports \$40 million for EPA's POTW connection grants, helping underserved communities transition from decentralized systems to municipal wastewater treatment – benefitting households and communities as well as reducing water quality contamination.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Small POTWs Efficiency Grants**  
**Funding Request: At least \$50 million**

To assist small communities in improving operational efficiency and reducing energy and water use, NACWA urges funding for the Small POTWs Efficiency Grant Program.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Household Decentralized Wastewater Grants**  
**Funding Request: At least \$50 million**

NACWA supports \$50 million in grants to nonprofit organizations to help low- and moderate-income households install, repair, or replace decentralized wastewater systems.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**  
**Program: Research: Chemical Safety for Sustainability**  
**Funding Request: At least \$10 million**

NACWA urges strong funding for EPA's scientific research on PFAS exposure, toxicity, and treatment technologies.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**

**Program: EPA's Geographic Programs**

**Funding Request: At least \$700 million**

NACWA supports robust funding for all of EPA's Geographic Programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Chesapeake Bay Program, Long Island Sound, and other watershed-based efforts.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**

**Program: Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grants**

**Funding Request: At least \$174 million**

NACWA supports robust funding to address nonpoint source pollution (Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grants), the largest remaining driver of water quality impairments.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**

**Program: EPA's National Priorities Water Research Grant Program**

**Funding Request: At least \$20 million**

NACWA supports robust funding for timely research on critical water quality issues.

**Agency: U.S. Environment Protection Agency**

**Program: Pilot Program for Alternative Water Source Grants**

**Funding Request: At least \$10 million**

NACWA supports robust funding to build off the initial FY26 funding that will help communities access tools to engineer, design, construct, and test alternative water source systems.

**Agency: Bureau of Reclamation**

**Program: Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Grants Program**

**Funding Request: At least \$41 million**

NACWA supports robust funding to help communities across the West build drought resilience, keep nutrients and other pollutants out of sensitive waterways, and grow sustainable economies.

In conclusion, investing in clean water infrastructure is vital to protecting public health, ensuring environmental sustainability, and fostering economic growth. While we are highly cognizant of constraints on federal funding, we also firmly believe that investing in clean water and ensuring communities have the resources they need to comply with their Clean Water Act requirements is a core federal responsibility. NACWA appreciates the Subcommittee's leadership and urges full funding of these critical programs in FY27. We stand ready to work with Congress to ensure communities have the resources to meet their clean water challenges.