

April 27, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and
Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and
Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse:

As the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee continues to work on the reauthorization process for key water infrastructure programs implemented by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies and the Water Environment Federation urge the EPW Committee to increase authorized funding levels for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) while also ensuring continued authorized funding for the emerging contaminant fund. As clean water needs continue to grow, we strongly urge Congress to provide authorized funding levels for the CWSRF that build on the current appropriated level of \$4.24 billion¹ as well as \$200 million per year for emerging contaminants.

The CWSRF is the core federal program that continues to be instrumental in helping clean water agencies implement critical projects nationwide. Projects such as upgrades and maintenance of treatment works and critical conveyance systems strengthen public health, foster economic activity, and protect our environment. Support for the CWSRF helps ensure our communities can make needed investments in water infrastructure and protect water quality, while also helping ensure that the cost customers pay for clean water services remains affordable.

With the current CWSRF authorizations ending after FY26, Congress must take action now to ensure this core federal water infrastructure program is reauthorized at a strong, sustainable funding level. Without a strong federal commitment to improving our nation's wastewater and stormwater systems, our nation's water infrastructure will continue to be at risk—disrupting communities' ability to provide basic needs for our public health and for healthy ecosystems.

Notably, the federal share of investment for our nation's water infrastructure systems has significantly declined over the last 50 years – more than half of the costs in the 1970s were covered by federal resources, but the federal cost share has plummeted to about 7% today.² Research by the Value of Water Campaign, *Tapping Potential: The Economic Benefits of Investing in Water Infrastructure*, found that the United States needs to spend nearly \$1.8 trillion

¹ The \$4.24 billion includes the \$1.64 billion from FY26 appropriations (P.L. 119-74) and \$2.6 billion from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act appropriations (P.L. 117-58)

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in capital investment over 20 years to bring up to date, secure, and modernize our wastewater and stormwater systems.³

The risk of failure without support from the federal government is real. Aging infrastructure is not atypical; the average age of the 1.6 million miles of water and sewer pipes in the United States is around 50 years old. Some communities use pipes that are over a century old. Communities are in a constant cycle of reinvestment and replacement, and costs only continue to rise. In fact, financing for capital improvements surfaced as a top challenge for utilities in 2025.⁴

These increased costs are not only a burden on the cities and clean water agencies, but they are a direct burden to ratepayers: water and sewer bills in the U.S. hit a five-year high in 2025, rising 5.1% and outpacing inflation.⁵ The long-standing federal-state-local partnerships supported by the CWSRF are a core tool that communities leverage to finance projects more affordably, and without it utilities will struggle to fund essential upgrades and new technologies that help them balance the need for infrastructure investment with affordability for customers.

Given the current slate of challenges facing our nation’s water infrastructure, federal support for the CWSRF is more important than ever. Federal investment can help communities build and repair the infrastructure they need while maintaining affordable bills for their residents.

Additionally, water infrastructure investment is a proven driver of economic growth. For every job created in the water sector, an additional 3.68 jobs are created across the broader economy, including jobs in engineering, construction, and manufacturing. Plus, a reliable water supply supports businesses across multiple industries, such as energy, agriculture, technology, and recreation. It is projected that by fully funding our nation’s water infrastructure, we would create 800,000 new jobs by 2039 and expand our economy over the next 20 years by gaining \$4.5 trillion in GDP.⁶

The CWSRF proves over and over again that it is a necessary and critical investment for our communities. We ask that you provide strong, robust authorizations for the CWSRF that exceed the current authorized levels, as well as funding for the emerging contaminant fund.

Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to working with the Committee to protect water quality, keep water services affordable, and ensure safe and healthy environments for all American communities.

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⁴ <https://www.awwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025-SOTWI-Executive-Summary.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.bluefieldresearch.com/ns/national-water-and-sewer-bills-rise-5-1-outpacing-inflation-as-utilities-face-rising-cost-pressures/>

⁶ https://uswateralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/VOW-Economic-Paper_1.pdf

Sincerely,

National Association of Clean Water Agencies

Water Environment Federation