

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# REALIZING 2020 VISION

## A Year of Engagement, Collaboration, and Resiliency

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It is with great excitement that I look to the year ahead as the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) President and to the many accomplishments yet to come in 2020. The year will mark a key milestone in NACWA's history—its 50th anniversary—and I am honored to have the opportunity to help navigate the organization as we look to our many accomplishments over the past five decades and, of far greater importance, to setting a vision and direction for 50 more years of success for the clean water sector.

I am grateful to be following the strong and solid leadership of NACWA's outgoing President, Mark Sanchez, Executive Director, Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority. He made it clear from the outset that he wanted his year as President to focus on member engagement—getting the growing NACWA membership to exchange best practices and ideas with one another through a variety of in-person and online tools that NACWA offers. Mark also focused on ensuring that the membership of utilities of all sizes and from all geographies speak with one voice on water policy to all levels of decision making—local, state, and federal. He oversaw the first significant amendment to the Clean Water Act in decades, making integrated planning, green infrastructure, and a municipal ombudsman's office at



the US Environmental Protection Agency to voice municipal clean water concerns directly to the Administrator, permanent parts of the core statute that shapes the clean water landscape. Hats off to Mark and his leadership!

My goal is to build on this strategy of engagement with a targeted focus on what I believe is the greatest challenge for the sector—climate change and resiliency. Communities across the country continue to be devastated by unprecedented wet weather, drought, wildfires, and cyber-attacks. Unless we share best practices and unite behind workable advocacy solutions, we will not be able to adapt to and mitigate these changing and more intense weather patterns and frightening cyber-security risks. It is a challenge that I know is top of mind in my hometown of Boston as we seek to confront sea level rise and more intense storms and precipitation than at any time in the past.

I am excited to announce here that NACWA is already hard at work with its sister drinking water association, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), on four joint webinars that will be free to all NACWA and AMWA members and nonmembers alike. These webinars will start in September and continue through the year, culminating in a joint AMWA-NACWA in-person Resiliency Summit in Miami, Florida, in December 2020. Top utility executives and experts will share

the full range of resiliency actions—from planning to investment—resulting in the two leading advocacy-based water sector organizations developing a set of policy asks to ensure strong and more predictable federal activity on resiliency. More than anything else, I believe this collaborative effort will strongly position NACWA and the sector on resiliency in a way that will ensure success for the next 50 years.

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I look forward to working with all the NACWA members and to hearing from you on how to make this year as successful as possible. I encourage all of you to continue to support NACWA and summon you all to not just be members but to get engaged. Together we will make this a very productive year. 🌊