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February 19, 2021

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
Chairman
Water Resources and Environment
Subcommittee
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable David Rouzer
Ranking Member
Water Resources and Environment
Subcommittee
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairs DeFazio and Napolitano and Ranking Members Graves and Rouzer:

On behalf of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), I am writing to express strong support for the *Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2021*.

As the leading Association advocating on behalf of the nation's public clean water utility sector, NACWA and our over 330 public utility members nationwide – both large and small - greatly appreciate your efforts to increase authorized federal funding available to clean water utilities.

We firmly believe it is past time for the federal government to re-engage as a strong funding partner in water infrastructure investment. Our nation's water infrastructure is at a key juncture, with costs rising both for traditional investment needs like maintaining aging infrastructure and newer challenges such as addressing emerging contaminants, ensuring system resilience in the face of climate and cyber risks, and managing increasingly complex water quality issues.

Now is the time to take steps to strengthen the federal funding commitment and help communities innovate and adapt to meet their local challenges and help ensure water is affordable and accessible for all. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing water service challenges in Texas have only heightened the importance of safe and reliable clean water for all Americans, while also underscoring the growing divide between federal and local investment in water systems and the critical need for more robust federal funding.

This legislation provides a solid starting point in helping to bridge the growing gap in federal cost-share of water infrastructure, which according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is currently less than 5 percent of total drinking water and wastewater infrastructure investment. Overwhelmingly, the increasing costs of these essential public services are borne by local ratepayers – with no reliable safety net for households when costs are unaffordable.

The *Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2021* would help strengthen the federal funding partnership and further ensure that families, hospitals, schools, and businesses in communities across the country have the uninterrupted, safe, reliable, and affordable access to the clean water services they need and deserve.

Specifically, NACWA strongly supports the following provisions in the legislation:

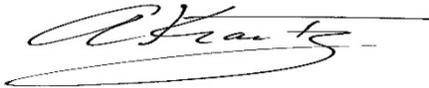
- Reauthorization of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) at \$40 billion over five years. The CWSRF is the primary federal clean water financing tool that communities utilize to help meet their Clean Water Act (CWA) obligations and infrastructure needs, and will be more crucial than ever in the coming years as the nation recovers from the pandemic.
- Reauthorization of Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants at \$2 billion over five years. Controlling sewer overflows and ensuring proper management of stormwater are essential to protecting public health and the environment; however, the compliance costs associated with these are very costly and place financial strain on many communities and their ratepayers, especially in older communities dealing with aging infrastructure and population and economic shifts as well as significant low-income populations.
- Reauthorization of the Watershed Pilot Project Program at \$1 billion over five years. This funding would help public clean water utilities across the country that are on the front lines in building resilient infrastructure, managing wet weather, and piloting integrated and adaptive approaches to watershed management.
- Authorization of \$1 billion in grants over five years for the treatment of emerging contaminants. Direct federal funding for public clean water utilities to implement pretreatment standards for PFAS and other emerging contaminants will be increasingly important as communities face significant burdens to implement pretreatment standards. Utilities may need to add staff and monitoring capabilities to properly oversee the industries that discharge these contaminants.
- Reauthorization of State Management Assistance for water pollution control programs at \$2.5 billion over five years. These funds, which are provided through Section 106 of the CWA, are essential in assisting states in implementing their water pollution control programs in accordance with the CWA and providing for a cooperative federalist approach. NACWA members rely on their state partners to meet CWA goals and are fully supportive of state funding.
- Reauthorization of Alternative Water Source Projects Program at \$1 billion over five years. This funding helps support innovative ways to address unique local challenges in water

supply and water quality, such as the use of recycled wastewater effluent and capturing stormwater.

NACWA appreciates the strong and ongoing collaboration with the Committee to address many of the pressing challenges before the public clean water sector. We look forward to further working with the Committee and Congress on advancing this bill in a bipartisan and bicameral manner. We also look forward to working with the Committee as it begins legislative work on specific CWA policies and other clean water programs this Congress to advance affordable, reliable and resilient clean water services around the country.

Thank you for your leadership and work on behalf of public clean water utilities throughout the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Krantz", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Adam Krantz

Adam Krantz

CEO

NACWA