Dear Senator \_\_\_\_:

As a utility representing [service area] of your constituents in [state/congressional district], I am writing on behalf of our customers at [name of utility] to request your support and cosponsorship of S. 1350 the *Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act*.

For far too long, clean water agencies and their workers have dealt with the clogs, strained and damaged equipment, and extra costs and dangers associated with the improper flushing of disposable nonwoven products – commonly known as wet wipes – that are flushed into sewer systems but do not break down as advertised. Many wipes on the market today that are labeled as “flushable” are prone to getting stuck in plumbing, forming clogs in sewer lines, and causing mechanical failures for utilities. Yet consumers are misled to believe that they are appropriate for disposal down the toilet.

Our utility, [add local cost projections/economic impacts from responding to and mitigating risks associated with the improper disposal of wipes, and/or trends you’ve experienced in the prevalence of wipes in your systems]. At a national-level, wet wipes are responsible for $441 million a year in additional operating costs at US clean water utilities.[[1]](#footnote-1)

States have begun taking action to address this problem. To date, wipes labeling laws have been enacted in Washington, Oregon, California, Colorado, Illinois, and the District of Columbia. Legislation is also introduced or pending in New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Hawaii. These state efforts have gotten the ball rolling to address the problem, but they can also create a confusing marketplace for manufacturers and consumers alike. The time is right for federal legislation.

It is for these reasons I applaud the work of Senators Merkley (OR-D) and Collins (MI-R) for working with both the clean water sector and manufacturing community to develop legislation that will help solve this pervasive problem. Specifically, the *WIPPES Act* would direct the Federal Trade Commission to issue regulations requiring wipes manufacturers to include clear, consistent, consumer-friendly “Do Not Flush” labeling on the packaging of wet wipes that are not designed to be flushed.

This legislation will protect critical wastewater infrastructure in homes and communities, help consumers make informed choices, and reduce the risk of sewer backups and overflows.

We encourage you to reach out to Caitlin Buchanan (caitlin\_buchanan@merkley.senate.gov) or Molly Ryan (molly\_ryan@collins.senate.gov) with any questions or to cosponsor this commonsense legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

1. NACWA. 2020. The Cost of Wipes On America’s Clean Water Utilities: An Estimate of Increased Utility Operating Costs. [https://www.nacwa.org/docs/default-source/resources---public/govaff-3-cost\_of\_wipes-1.pdf?sfvrsn=b535fe61\_2#](https://www.nacwa.org/docs/default-source/resources---public/govaff-3-cost_of_wipes-1.pdf?sfvrsn=b535fe61_2) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)