



AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

Your Comprehensive  
Public Works Resource

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October 28, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio,

On behalf of the American Public Works Association (APWA) and our more than 30,000 members, we are writing to thank you for amending and holding a Committee markup on H.R. 1497, the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2019. Your support for our nation's clean water practitioners has been instrumental in ensuring the protection of public health and our environment through sound water infrastructure.

As our nation's wastewater systems age, communities face greater costs in meeting federal environmental requirements. Yet the federal government is contributing fewer dollars to communities struggling to meet these federal mandates. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that 96% of funding that goes into wastewater infrastructure is from state and local entities, and in the 2012 Clean Watersheds Needs Survey, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that our nation's wastewater infrastructure will need \$271 billion in investment over the next 20 years. Given that this study is the better part of a decade old, it is very likely that the estimate has increased.

APWA and its members appreciate your leadership on this bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program. This program is a shining example of partnership between the federal government and the states, and the over \$126 billion in assistance that has been leveraged since the program's 1987 inception speaks to its effectiveness. By increasing the authorized funding level for the program to \$14 billion over the next five years, communities will have a greater ability to meet their needs to protect public health and the environment.

In addition to the health benefits, investment in our nation's water infrastructure is a proven job creator. The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that for every job added in the water workforce, 3.68 jobs are added to the national economy. Additionally, for every dollar spent on water infrastructure, about \$2.62 is generated in the private economy. Clearly, federal funding of water

PRESIDENT  
William E. (Bill) Spearman III, PE.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Scott D. Grayson



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infrastructure is a wise investment.

Your support for the CWSRF program is vital, but it is only one aspect of the multitude of federal tools that communities need to meet their water infrastructure needs. Along with robust funding for CWSRF, APWA appreciates that the bill includes the following:

- Language that allows for extended permits under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Program (NPDES);
- Funding to help communities with combined sewer systems in dealing with potential releases of raw sewage during high precipitation events, as well as language that reduces the local match requirement for federal funding;
- Funding set-asides for rural and small communities, water workforce development programs, and programs related to water affordability; and
- Language related to the Environmental Protection Agency review of the Financial Capability Assessment Framework for Municipal Clean Water Act Requirements at EPA.

Each day public works professionals are diligently working to protect and maintain the critical infrastructure that is so essential to protecting our health and quality of life. Because of our shared commitment, APWA looks forward to continuing to work with you and your staff on this legislation to help public works professionals meet our water infrastructure challenges.

Sincerely,

Scott Grayson  
Executive Director

William E. "Bill" Spearman, III  
President

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Scott D. Grayson