

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
And Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriation
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree:

As you begin drafting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully urge you to allocate funding for critical water infrastructure programs that strengthen national security, support economic growth, and ensure water remains accessible and affordable for all Americans.

From Alaska to Florida, America faces a pivotal moment in strengthening its water infrastructure. Closing the water utility funding gap will require sustained, innovative investment strategies to strengthen system resilience, address extreme weather risks, and ensure utilities can maintain safe and reliable service.¹ Without long-term capital planning and funding certainty, utilities will struggle to meet growing demand for clean, safe, and reliable water and wastewater services.

Strategic investments in water infrastructure also serve as a powerful economic catalyst. As our nation moves to reinvigorate its private sector, corresponding attention must be given to maintaining and building our nation's network of pipes, treatment plants, pumps, and storage tanks that underpin that growth. A report from the Value of Water Campaign estimates industrial output could rise by more than \$103 billion if greater resources are directed to our nation's water infrastructure.² Securing and upgrading America's water infrastructure would create a vital springboard for job growth.

Water is a fundamental resource for communities, ecosystems, and the industries that support the nation's economy. As sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced manufacturing expand in the United States, data centers and production facilities increasingly rely on reliable, high-quality water supplies for cooling and operations. At the same time, many communities already face challenges related to aging infrastructure, and long-term supply. Supporting continued technological innovation therefore requires investments in modern water systems that strengthen reliability and resilience for both local residents and industry. Ensuring that water infrastructure can meet growing demand, while protecting community access and sustainability, will be an important part of maintaining the nation's economic competitiveness.

Moreover, affordability remains a pressing issue. The EPA's Water Affordability Needs Assessment estimates that between 12.1 million and 19.2 million households across the United States struggle with the rising costs of water services, with the national impact of unaffordable water bills ranging from \$5.1 billion to \$8.8 billion annually. In addition to affordability challenges, inefficiencies within water distribution systems further strain utilities and communities. Across the United States, an estimated 2.7 trillion gallons of treated water are lost each year due to leaks, pipe failures, and other forms of non-revenue water, reflecting the ongoing challenges

¹ McKinsey & Company. (2025, March 11). Water resilience: Closing the funding gap for utilities. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/energy-and-materials/our-insights/water-resilience-closing-the-funding-gap-for-utilities>

² Value of Water Campaign. (2025). *Tapping potential: The economic benefits of investing in water infrastructure*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/67dd711d1a117219a03e4f7a/t/6917b2fbc2843b7310c7ace1/1763160827739/FINAL+VOW+Economic+Report.pdf>

posed by aging infrastructure. Targeted repairs, leak detection, and modernization of water systems is essential to improving system efficiency and reliability.

To that end, in the FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request:

- A minimum of \$4.89 billion for the Clean Water and \$4.38 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs);
- \$280 million for the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant Program;
- \$80 million for activities carried out under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA); and
- \$50 million for the Household Decentralized Wastewater System Grants.

Additionally, we support initiatives that prioritize streamlining regulations to encourage responsible innovation and modernization of infrastructure while maintaining strong enforcement of water quality standards. Ensuring clean drinking water and supporting clean rivers and streams are essential to preserving our Great American Outdoors.³ Boating and fishing alone contribute \$230.5 billion annually to the economy, underscoring the importance of protecting our water resources.

In recent years, federal agencies have delivered tangible improvements in high-profile areas such as the Tijuana River⁴. While these accomplishments demonstrate what coordinated investment can achieve, we must now ensure that similar attention and resources are directed to other critical waterways, including the Potomac River⁵ and additional communities across the country facing infrastructure strain, pollution challenges, and rising costs of water.

Finally, we urge Congress to adopt fiscally responsible policies that ensure efficient allocation of funds while maintaining a commitment to national priorities. Reducing fraud, waste, and abuse in federal spending is essential⁶, and targeted investments in water infrastructure remain a cornerstone of public health, economic stability, and national security. By focusing on cost-effective solutions and leveraging public-private partnerships where appropriate, we can maximize the impact of taxpayer dollars while addressing critical infrastructure needs.

By supporting these programs, Congress can strengthen job creation, U.S. competitiveness, protect our water resources, and help ensure that all Americans have access to safe and reliable water.

Thank you for your attention to these critical issues.


Sincerely,

³ The White House. (2025, July 3). *Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission*. Executive Order. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/07/establishing-the-presidents-make-america-beautiful-again-commission>

⁴ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2026, March 2). *Administrator Lee Zeldin provides public update on San Diego area Trump-admin efforts*. <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/administrator-lee-zeldin-provides-public-update-san-diego-area-trump-admin-efforts>

⁵ American Rivers. (2026, February). *The catastrophe on the Potomac is a stark warning to cities delaying water infrastructure upgrades*. <https://www.americanrivers.org/2026/02/the-catastrophe-on-the-potomac-is-a-stark-warning-to-cities-delaying-water-infrastructure-upgrades>

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2026, March 2). *Trump EPA takes action after uncovering government subcontractor analysts altering measurements in East Palestine train derailment clean up* <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/trump-epa-takes-action-after-uncovering-government-subcontractor-analysts-altering>



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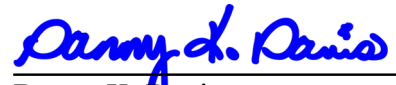
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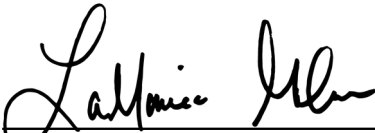
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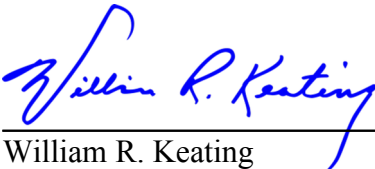
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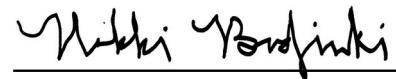
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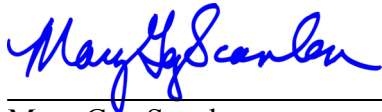
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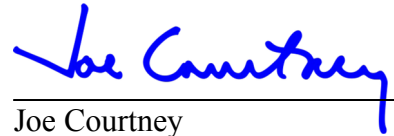
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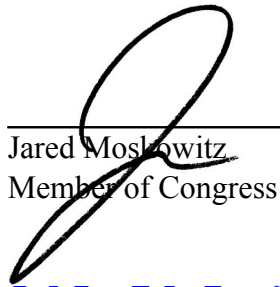
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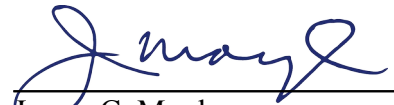
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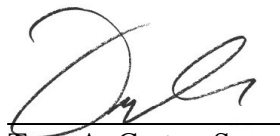
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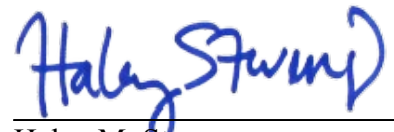
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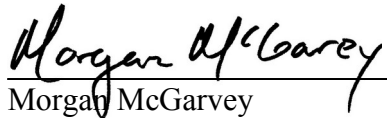
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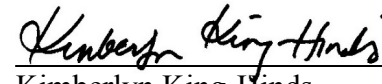



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