

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Michael Simpson
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree:

As you begin drafting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 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.

The enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided a much-needed boost to federal programs that support water infrastructure. However, the federal government must continue to prioritize strategic investments in water systems to enhance long-term sustainability, efficiency, and resilience. More than two million Americans still lack access to reliable running water, and millions more face challenges related to aging infrastructure and contaminants such as PFAS—per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances—that pose risks to public health.

Investing in water infrastructure safeguards not only public health but also our economy. According to the May 2024 report "Bridging the Gap: The Power of Investment in Water" by the US Water Alliance, maintaining investment levels established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law over the next two decades would reduce the water investment gap by \$125 billion, decrease service disruptions to businesses reliant on water by 46% and generate substantial job growth and economic savings.

Moreover, affordability remains a pressing issue. The EPA's preliminary analysis suggests that between 12.1 million and 19.2 million households across the U.S. struggle with the rising costs of water services. The estimated national impact of unaffordable water bills ranges from \$5.1 billion to \$8.8 billion per year. Federal resources should be directed efficiently to ensure that investments yield maximum benefits without unnecessary bureaucracy or waste. Ensuring every American has access to clean water is essential to upholding EPA's commitment to safeguarding clean air, land, and water, as outlined in Pillar 1 of the Agency's environmental priorities.¹

To that end, in the FY26 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request:

- A minimum of \$4.8 billion each for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs);
- \$280 million for the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant Program;
- \$73 million for activities carried out under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2025, February 4). *EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin announces EPA's Powering the Great American Comeback*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-administrator-lee-zeldin-announces-epas-powering-great-american-comeback>

- (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. Boating and fishing alone contribute \$230.5 billion annually to the economy, underscoring the importance of protecting our water resources.


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 essential, but targeted investments in water infrastructure remain a cornerstone of public health, economic stability, and national security.² 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, we can strengthen job creation, 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

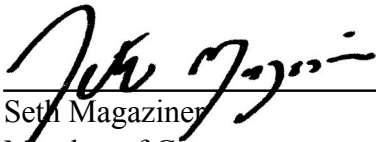
Sincerely,



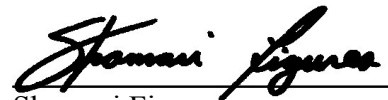
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² The Heritage Foundation. (2024). *Mandate for Leadership 2025: The Conservative Promise*. Retrieved from https://static.project2025.org/2025_MandateForLeadership_FULL.pdf Due to underfunding, resources are misallocated while critical water infrastructure deteriorates. Increased targeted funding is essential to address urgent needs and ensure more communities receive reliable water services.



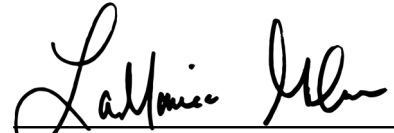
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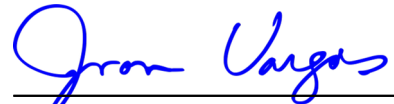
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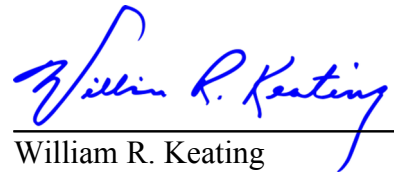
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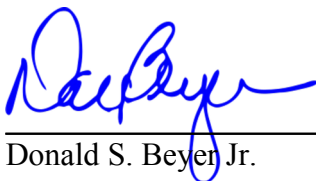
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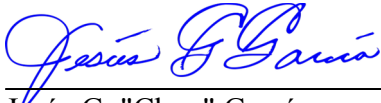
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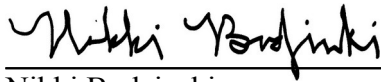
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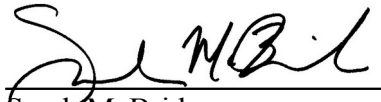
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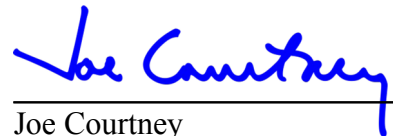
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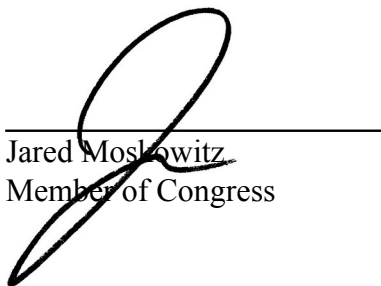
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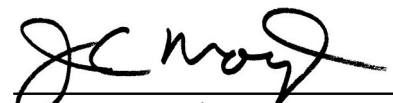
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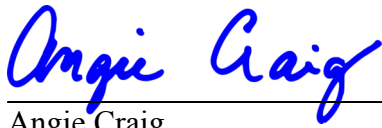
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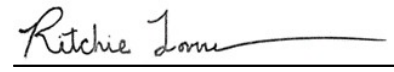
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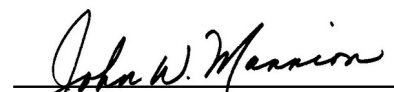
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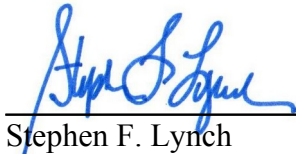
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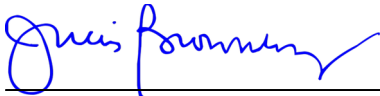
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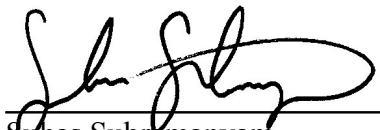
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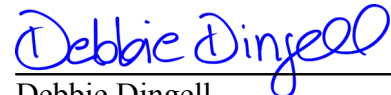
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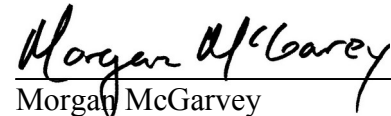
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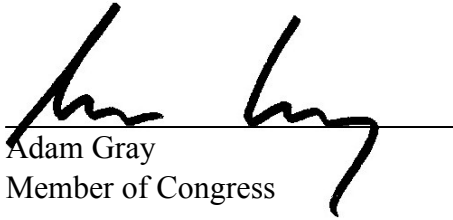
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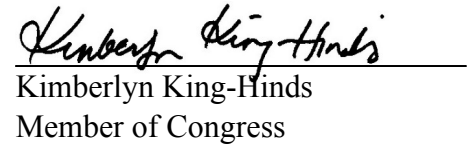
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