



January 31, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you finalize the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget request, we urge you to continue robust funding levels of at least \$1.449 billion and \$907 million for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs respectively. As cities, counties, and mayors, state drinking and clean water administrators, and drinking and waste water utilities whose communities rely on these programs daily, we were pleased to see you and Congress fund them at these levels in the FY2014 Omnibus Appropriations Act and thereby signal your recognition of the value of these programs in this challenging fiscal environment. We urge your Administration to continue this commitment.

Modernizing and replacing the country's aging water infrastructure is one of the largest public works needs that our nation faces. Meeting this need will require a serious investment. EPA estimates \$187.9 billion in wastewater infrastructure investment needs and \$384.2 billion in drinking water infrastructure investment needs over the next 20 years. It must be noted, however, that EPA's needs surveys only consider projects that would be eligible for SRF funding. A recent study by the American Water Works

Association (AWWA) found that the amount the nation needs to invest in drinking water infrastructure regardless of SRF eligibility actually totals about \$1 trillion over the next 25 years. Clean water infrastructure investment needs roughly parallel this amount.

In order to meet our nation's fiscal challenges while ensuring the economy continues to grow, it is critical that federal investments continue to be made in programs like the SRFs that will yield substantial economic benefits. The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that each public dollar invested in water infrastructure increases private long-term Gross Domestic Product output by \$6.35. The National Association of Utility Contractors estimates that \$1 billion invested in water and wastewater infrastructure can create over 26,000 jobs. Further, the U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local water and wastewater industry creates 3.68 jobs in the national economy and each public dollar spent yields \$2.62 dollars in economic output in other industries.

In addition to the significant economic, public health, and environmental benefits that our communities will reap from water and wastewater infrastructure investments, investment in source water pollution prevention strategies are equally important to our ability to deliver to our residents the clean water they deserve. The EPA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have heralded the Clean Water Act Section 319 grant program as a successful and dynamic program that focuses on local partnerships with agricultural entities as a strategy to reduce water pollution such as excess nutrient runoff. When combined with USDA programs, the Section 319 program yields \$4 in watershed investment for every federal dollar invested. In your budget, we urge you to request level funding for this program at \$159 million.

It is clear that federal investment in water and wastewater infrastructure leverages enormous benefits nationally and for our local economies. Considering the importance of water and wastewater infrastructure to the well-being of the American people, our communities, and to our economy, it is essential that the federal government remains a reliable partner in meeting the nation's clean water and safe drinking water needs. Every federal dollar directed to these programs enhances safe and clean water for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and please contact any of our organizations if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
U.S. Conference of Mayors

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Executive Director
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Cc:
Gina McCarthy, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Director, White House Office of Management and Budget