



AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

Your Comprehensive
Public Works Resource

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July 29, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2134 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
1135 Longworth Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

On behalf of the American Public Works Association (APWA) and our more than 30,000 members, we are writing to thank you for your continued work and focus on our nation's infrastructure. A perfect example of this focus is your work on H.R. 7575, the Water Resources Development Act of 2020. This bipartisan legislation is vital to protecting and enhancing our nation's water infrastructure. The projects and studies approved by the Chief Engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will help enhance America's dams and levees, as well as authorize important flood prevention and protection projects across the country. Your work on this legislation underscores the importance of the policies within, and we applaud your success.

While H.R. 7575 receives a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives this week, we would urge you to work to merge this legislation with other critical water infrastructure legislation, mainly S. 3590, the "Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020," and S. 3591, "America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020", as well as Title II of Division F of H.R. 2, the "Moving Forward Act of 2020." APWA is supportive of these pieces of legislation and views their enactment into law as necessary to the job public works professionals do in the water infrastructure sector every day.

Specifically, APWA supports language in AWIA 2020 that will make public works agencies eligible for federal water workforce funding, as well as reauthorizing and increasing funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program, and reauthorizing the Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA) program.

APWA members are also supportive of provisions in DWIA 2020 that authorizes a lead mapping pilot program, creates a needs assessment for low-income community water assistance, and creates a program to review the operation sustainability of small public water systems.

Title II of Division of the "Moving Forward Act of 2020" takes important steps in helping communities deal with Clean Water Act compliance, mainly through reauthorization of the CWSRF program, increases in authorizations for the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant program, and making investments in the wastewater infrastructure workforce.

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

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Scott D. Grayson



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All these elements, combined with the language in H.R. 7575 enabling the Army Corps of Engineers to undertake important projects throughout the country, will combine to make this package a tremendous step in finding solutions to our nation's water infrastructure problems.

However, APWA members are disappointed that language related to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program was not included in any of these bills. We urge you to add this important language to this package. Legislation was introduced last year (H.R. 1764) that would extend permit lifecycles from five years to 10 years under the NPDES program. For these agencies that have a proven track record of compliance with NPDES, a 10-year term for a NPDES permit would be much more efficient than the current 5-year term, due to the inordinate amount of time, effort, and expense involved in reviewing permits every five years. These costs are all resources that are used on the permitting process rather than actual permit implementation. The processes involved in the permit, including watershed planning and development of Total Maximum Daily Load levels, have lengthy implementation schedules, often longer than five years. APWA and its members are happy to discuss this change to the NPDES program and how it can be incorporated in the final version of this legislation.

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. If you have questions or comments regarding this letter or APWA's water priorities, please contact APWA Government Affairs Manager Sean Garcia at (202)218-6734 or sgarcia@apwa.net.

Sincerely,

William (Bill) Spearman, III, P.E.
President

Scott Grayson, CAE
Chief Executive Officer

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

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Scott D. Grayson