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Broad Coalition of Local Government Organizations Applaud Passage of Water Infrastructure Improvement Act.

Coalition Members Include The United States Conference of Mayors, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, American Public Works Association, National Association of Regional Councils, National Association of Clean Water Agencies

Washington, D.C. – A broad coalition of local government organizations applaud Congress for passage of the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (H.R. 7279), a much-needed update to the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Cities, counties and public utilities are on the front lines of environmental protection and support clean and safe water. The Water Infrastructure Improvement Act gives much-needed flexibility to local governments, who are currently facing huge unfunded mandates, in meeting the requirements of the CWA more affordably. The legislation codifies the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Integrated Planning framework, which allows communities to negotiate with EPA to better prioritize their most pressing public health and environmental concerns efficiently and cost-effectively. Since water and wastewater systems are paid for by ratepayers, the bill will help stabilize or reduce costs for a substantial number of low- and fixed-income citizens who spend a significant portion of their income on water and wastewater bills.

Cities and counties invest over \$123 billion per year to provide safe, reliable, water and sewer services, and maintain a vast physical infrastructure of pipes, pumps, and plants. EPA estimates local governments will have to invest more than \$700 billion over the next 20 years, in addition to current spending, to comply with current drinking water and clean water laws. These figures do not include additional spending by local governments, our residents, and businesses to comply with other environmental and non-environmental federal and state unfunded mandates, which further limit the money available for water infrastructure.

Coalition members include: The U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), and the American Public Works Association (APWA).

This coalition has been working for years with House and Senate members to pass this legislation, which will dramatically help local governments comply with CWA mandates.

The coalition would like to thank key leaders in the House and Senate including: Representatives Bob Gibbs (OH), Grace Napolitano (CA), Bill Shuster (PA), Peter DeFazio (OR), Bob Latta (OH), Steve Chabot (OH), and Senators Deb Fischer (NE), Sherrod Brown (OH), Ben Cardin (MD), John Barrasso (WY), and Tom Carper (DE) for their support.