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GFOA: Utility Outreach to Congress Key to Inclusion of Water Funding in Future Stimulus Legislation

GFOA, NACWA and our partners in the water sector, are closely engaged with Congress to ensure that future stimulus legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes assistance to public clean water utilities. Members of Congress, however, need to hear directly from water utility stakeholders to outline specific challenges. GFOA encourages utility stakeholders to use this [template letter](#) to write your federal House and Senate delegations to urge additional federal support to the water sector.

While the timing and makeup of the next stimulus package remains unclear, assistance to the water sector is actively in play in both the House and Senate in large part due to the Congressional advocacy of our water utility partners who have helped lay the [groundwork](#). ***But it is critical all members consistently and continuously reach out to their congressional delegations to ensure inclusion.***

Key congressional staff have continued to emphasize the need for public utilities to reach out to their respective Senators and Representatives and provide them with facts and figures on the direct economic impacts they are incurring or expect to incur as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

According to a conservative estimate by NACWA, revenue shortfalls to the public clean water sector is approximately \$12.5 billion, which assumes a 20% annual revenue loss. This estimate has been helpful in elevating the economic needs of the clean water sector to Congress, as has the growing [media attention](#) around the issue.

Going forward, individual utility outreach, especially to key members of Congressional leadership and committees, is critical to ensuring the sector's economic needs are met in any further stimulus legislation, both for low income household assistance programs and industrial and business revenue losses.

For more information on assisting low-income water utility customers, see the American Water Works Association's (AWWA) report, [Thinking Outside the Bill: A Utility Managers Guide to Assisting Low-Income Water Customers](#).