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Water Sector Urges Trump to Prioritize Water in Second Term.

In December, associations representing the municipal water and wastewater sector submitted a [letter](#) to President-elect Donald Trump, urging his administration to prioritize water infrastructure in his second term.

The letter was endorsed by the American Water Works Association (AWWA), Water Environment Federation (WEF), the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) and WateReuse. The groups said they welcome the opportunity to meet with the President-elect's transition team to discuss collaboration efforts and presented a list of policy priorities based around what they see as some of the top water-related issues in the United States.

Funding, of course, is front and center among the sector's challenges heading into 2025. The associations' letter cited a 2024 report by the Value of Water Campaign, which identified a \$91 billion gap between the nation's water infrastructure needs and spending. If left unaddressed, this gap will grow to more than \$2 trillion by 2043, the report said.

With this in mind, the associations stressed the importance of these issues:

- Support the 'polluter pays' principal for PFAS cleanup
- Promote Regulations Based on Sound Science and Fair Policies; Increase Interagency Coordination
- Take Action to Promote Water Reuse and Recycling Efforts
- Reauthorize and Fund the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

The latter of the above issues — LIHWAP — was the subject of focus before the election, as water sector representatives [urged support](#) for maintaining the program at the Department of Health and Human Services. LIHWAP was created in 2020 and received additional funding through the American Rescue Plan. Since its establishment, the program has assisted 1.7 million low-income households in maintaining water service, but the program has since expired and has not received additional funding from Congress.

More than 13,000 water and wastewater systems across the country have utilized LIHWAP funding thus far. A recent poll from AWWA showed that one in three Americans struggle to pay their water bill on time, and 77 percent of American support federal assistance to help pay water bills.

According to AMWA, the President-elect is working to name the leaders of his administration's EPA transition team. In November, Trump said he intends to appoint former New York Congressman Lee Zeldin as the next EPA administrator. Effective Dec. 31, current administrator Michael Regan will step down from his role, with Jane Nishida, EPA's assistant administrator for the Office of International and Tribal Affairs, service as acting administrator in the closing days of the Biden administration, according to the AP.

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by WFM Staff

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