



October 11, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing the water utility and environmental communities, we thank you for cosponsoring S. 1669, the “Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act of 2011.” We strongly support this legislation, which will help communities create jobs and protect clean water now and for years to come.

Over the next several decades the nation’s water supply, wastewater, and stormwater agencies are expected to face a host of challenges such as increased drought, more extreme storms and floods, and rising sea levels – all of which will threaten water quality and quantity, as well as public health and the economy.

The “Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act” will address these issues by establishing a program through which the nation’s water supply, wastewater, stormwater, and flood management agencies can compete for funding to undertake projects to adapt their operations and infrastructure to these impacts. Eligible projects will include efforts to conserve water or increase the efficiency in its use, preserve or improve water quality, rebuild or relocate threatened infrastructure, protect source waters and ecosystems, or implement advanced treatment technologies such as water reuse and recycling. Water systems will be encouraged to utilize new, innovative, and “green” infrastructure approaches that can serve as models for other communities struggling with similar water management challenges. They will also be able to use grant funds to increase their use of renewable energy or to conduct local-level analyses of future water resource challenges they will face.

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A 2009 study commissioned by water and wastewater associations estimated that the country's water systems might have to spend nearly \$1 trillion over the next forty years just to meet the challenges posed by changing hydrological conditions. Meanwhile, studies have found that each dollar invested in water infrastructure increases long-term GDP output by \$6.35, and that each job created in the local water and sewer industry leads to 3.68 jobs elsewhere in the national economy. The "Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act" will promote economic growth today while helping communities maintain clean and safe water for years to come.

Again, we strongly support S. 1669, the "Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act" to help communities preserve clean water, protect public health and maintain economic growth. We thank you for your leadership on this issue, and look forward to working with you toward passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association
American Rivers
American Water Works Association
Association of California Water Agencies
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
California Association of Sanitation Agencies
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
National Association of Water Companies
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
Trout Unlimited
Water Environment Federation
WaterReuse Association
Water Utility Climate Alliance
Western Urban Water Coalition
World Wildlife Fund