



# CLEAN WATER COUNCIL

*Committed to America's Water Infrastructure*

January 6, 2009

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The Clean Water Council (CWC) is a coalition of 34 national organizations representing underground utility construction contractors, design professionals, manufacturers and suppliers, labor representatives and other organizations committed to ensuring a high quality of life through sound environmental infrastructure. It is the position of the CWC that investment in water and wastewater infrastructure creates scores of high-paying jobs and encourages significant economic activity in local communities around the nation. In response to the current economic crisis, we encourage you to support a minimum of \$15 billion towards wastewater infrastructure and at least \$10 billion for drinking water infrastructure as part of economic recovery legislation, which will certainly be the first order of business in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Critics of infrastructure investment as an economic stimulus often question the amount of time it takes to get a project through design, engineering, and environmental review and move to construction. Although water infrastructure projects can often take years to advance to construction, right now there are thousands of water and wastewater infrastructure projects that have completed the pre-construction phases and are considered “ready to go.” These are projects that would put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work in a matter of months, as well as encourage the purchasing of equipment and materials needed to do these jobs.

For example, a recent report from the U.S. Conference of Mayors indicates that there are 2,536 water and wastewater projects, valued at \$15.4 billion, which would create 133,193 jobs. These jobs could be started quickly in 2009 and completed in 2010, consistent with the parameters of economic recovery legislation set out by President-elect Obama. Moreover, the Conference of Mayors estimates that every job created in rebuilding our nation’s water systems creates over 3.6 jobs elsewhere in the economy, and that every dollar invested in America’s water infrastructure adds \$6.35 to the national economy.

The Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities (CIFA) and the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) also compiled a list of wastewater infrastructure projects valued at more than \$9 billion that could most likely begin within a matter of months if funding were provided. This finding, based on responses from only 25 states, supports the request for a \$15 billion in wastewater infrastructure funding component in economic recovery legislation. On the drinking water side, the American Water Works Association has cited \$10 billion in ready-to-go drinking water infrastructure projects.

Some have also expressed concern about the capacity within the construction industry to provide the manpower, equipment and materials needed to commence this amount of work in a matter of a few months. The CWC assures you that the industry is also “ready to go.” It is important to

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recognize that the current economic downturn has seriously impacted the construction sector. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 513,000 construction jobs were lost during the first 11 months of 2008. The past year has shown an increase in the unemployment rate in construction from 6.5 percent to 12.7 percent—the highest unemployment rate of any industrial sector. Hundreds of thousands of workers have been *recently* laid off, and are currently looking for work.

In addition to putting people to work in the short term, investing in our environmental infrastructure is a wise investment in the long term. Water and wastewater systems across the country are failing by the minute. (For the details, see the CWC's blog, *Water News Update*, at <http://waternewsupdate.com>.) Providing the resources to refurbish these largely unseen but critical systems is an efficient and fiscally sound way to enhance public health, protect the environment and create countless jobs.

The CWC stands ready to advance an economic recovery package that includes investment in water and wastewater infrastructure. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you on this important legislation.

Regards,

Members of the Clean Water Council

# Clean Water Council



American Concrete Pavement Association



Laborers' International Union of North America



American Concrete Pipe Association



Mason Contractors Association of America



American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association



National Association of Industrial Office Properties



American Council of Engineering Companies



National Association of Sewer Service Companies



American Rental Association



National Association of Women in Construction



American Road and Transportation Builders Association



National Precast Concrete Association



American Society of Civil Engineers



National Ready Mixed Concrete Association



American Subcontractors Association



National Society of Professional Engineers



American Supply Association



National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association



Associated Equipment Distributors



National Utility Contractors Association



Associated General Contractors of America



Plastics Pipe Institute



Association of Equipment Manufacturers



Portland Cement Association



Construction Management Association of America



Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association



Ductile Iron Pipe Research Association



The Vinyl Institute



Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute



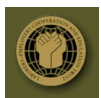
Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association



International Union of Operating Engineers



Water and Sewer Distributors of America



Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust



Water and Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association