

June 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-222, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 2 – Moving Forward Act

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

WaterNow Alliance is a nonprofit [network of 600+ local water leaders](#) nationwide advancing sustainable, affordable, and climate resilient water strategies in their communities. These strategies include onsite installations and technologies distributed widely across a community, such as green stormwater infrastructure, water use efficiency measures, watershed restoration, lead line replacements and more, that supplement, extend and serve the same functions as more conventional, centralized infrastructure—they provide water supply, treat drinking water and effectively manage wastewater and stormwater. [Distributed approaches](#) are also often less expensive than larger public works projects keeping rates affordable, while building local resilience to disasters and ability to withstand shifts resulting from climate change. Critically, ***green and distributed strategies provide lasting economic benefits, including near-term permanent local green jobs and local economic development and go a long way in addressing water equity issues around access to clean water and more affordable rates***. Distributed strategies provide other [co-benefits](#) including improved [public health](#), energy efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gases, increased open space, increased property values and reduced crime. As the country continues to navigate the coronavirus public health crisis and Congress considers renewed federal investment in our nation’s aging water infrastructure, large scale investments in localized water management solutions can be an essential part of our communities’ economic recovery.

Cities that have made significant investments treating decentralized, consumer-facing strategies as water infrastructure are already reaping economic and other community benefits:

- Philadelphia’s [“Green City, Clean Waters” program](#) to capture stormwater with distributed green infrastructure is providing \$4 billion in economic benefits to the community and more than 1,000 jobs per year, according to a study by the Sustainable Business Network.
- The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District estimates that its [green infrastructure investments](#) to eliminate local flooding and polluted discharges will capture almost 40% more stormwater than its multi-billion dollar deep tunnels, saving ratepayers \$44 million in avoided conventional infrastructure costs; and will also produce 660 permanent jobs per year; and increase property values by an estimated \$667 million throughout the region.
- Los Angeles’ [One Water Plan](#) which includes large scale investments in centralized and decentralized green infrastructure is expected to produce almost 7,000 new jobs and save \$1.97 for every \$1 spent.
- Lancaster, PA’s investment in green infrastructure to address its stormwater challenges

avoided more than \$120 million in gray infrastructure capital costs and nearly \$5 million in annual benefits according to an [EPA study](#).

- The City of Tucson has doubled-down on investments in onsite water use efficiency saving \$155 million in avoided costs for gray infrastructure, enabling it to [keep water rates 15% lower](#) than they would have been otherwise. The city is using the same amount of water as it did in 1985 even though its population has doubled since then.
- Madison, WI replaced all of the community's lead service lines, including those on private property, resulting in immediate water quality and public health improvements and saving [\\$2.5 million in avoided costs](#).

Enabling and encouraging cities and special districts to use federal funds to invest in onsite, clean and green water strategies will also supplement and extend the life of our critical built infrastructure. Further, localized infrastructure investments are most efficiently made in the form of subsidies, financial incentives and rebates for consumers, including private businesses, commercial, industrial and institutional enterprises, residences, and other public entities (such as local parks, schools, transportation agencies, etc.). Thus, federal support for public utility investment in these and other types of localized water infrastructure can be accomplished primarily through existing federal programs.

For these reasons, we support the Moving Forward Act's inclusion of:

- Sections 22102—22117 of Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act Subtitle;
- Sections 81201—81211, 81232, and 81241—81242 of the FUTURE Drought Resiliency Subtitle;
- Sections 81301—81312 and 81335 of the Western Water Security Subtitle mirroring Western Water Security Act (H.R. 4891/S. 2718);
- Sections 83101—83102 of the Coastal and Great Lakes Resiliency and Restoration Subtitle;
- Sections 90104 and 90108 of the Bond Financing Enhancements Subtitle; and
- Section 90425 of the Green Energy and Efficiency Incentives for Individuals Subtitle.

We focus our support on these Sections of H.R. 2 as key parts of the broader Moving Forward Act that, if enacted, would enable and incentivize federal investment in localized infrastructure strategies. Our comments are not meant to indicate opposition to the remaining Sections of H.R. 2 that fall outside the scope of WaterNow's members [efforts as local decisionmakers](#) to accelerate adoption of sustainable, affordable, climate resilient solutions for their communities.

Localized water infrastructure has enormous potential to not only sustainably manage our water resources now and for future generations, but to also foster long-lasting economic recovery for communities across the nation facing critical needs for access to affordable water services, jobs and renewal. We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to working with you to transform the nation's water infrastructure to secure our water future.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Koehler
Executive Director
WaterNow Alliance