



April 21, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
317 Russel Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader of the House
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: NASUCA Support for Permanent Funding for Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program

Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker McCarthy, Democratic Leader Jeffries, Senate Appropriations Chair Murray and Ranking Member Collins, House Appropriations Chair Granger, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (“NASUCA”) is writing to urge you to support the continued funding for a permanent low-income water assistance program. Clean, reliable, and affordable drinking water and wastewater sanitation is essential for the health and safety of our citizens and necessary for a well-functioning economy.

Congress created the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) during the COVID pandemic, but this program is set to expire this year when funding runs out. As of September 20, 2022 (the most recent data available), the LIHWAP program has helped over 433,000 Americans maintain water service during the pandemic.

Customers are still facing challenges. Continuing high inflation and substantial necessary investment in our aging water and wastewater facilities are pushing utility bills higher, causing substantial hardship on lower income customers. The need for a LIHWAP is not diminishing.

NASUCA supports the statements and policy resolution in the April 10, 2023, letter to congress sent by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (“NARUC”) urging Congress to provide permanent annual funding for LIHWAP. NASUCA’s members are designated by the laws of their respective jurisdictions to represent the interests of utility consumers before state and federal utility regulators and in the courts. The nation’s utility regulators and utility consumer advocates are aligned in communicating the importance of continuing the LIHWAP program.

The bottom line is that investing in maintaining and upgrading utility infrastructure is essential to ensure that water service is safe and reliable for all Americans. In this rising cost environment, a permanent low-income water assistance program is crucial to help our neighbors who cannot afford their utility bills continue to have access to high-quality drinking water.

For these important reasons, please make permanent funding a low-income water assistance program a key part of your Fiscal Year 2023-24 appropriations request.

Respectfully Submitted,

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