



March 21, 2024

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 Mike Johnson
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 Johnson, 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) to assist low-income families with their water and wastewater bills. LIHWAP expired at the end of the 2023 fiscal year. Through the 2023 Fiscal Year, the LIHWAP program helped approximately 1.4 million American households with restoration of services, preventing disconnection and reducing bills.

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 in a letter, dated February 5, 2024, to Senator Alex Padilla sent by the American Water Works Association; the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies; the Water Environment Federation; the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, and the National Association of Water Companies 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 bottom line is that making investments to maintain and upgrade 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, we write to urge you to make permanent funding for a low-income water assistance program a key part of your appropriations.

Respectfully Submitted,

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