January 30, 2018

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) supports your efforts to bridge the construction funding gap for publicly owned clean water infrastructure projects. As the leading voice for California’s public wastewater agencies, CASA wants to ensure that Congress is dedicated to maintaining a robust federal partnership under the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) Program and to ensure that any new programs of assistance do not disadvantage this vital program.

It is our understanding, from your staff, that bipartisan legislation might be introduced that would establish a new water infrastructure program to provide direct assistance to states that could be leveraged, in a manner consistent with the existing WIFIA program, to help address clean water project backlogs within individual states. California has a significant backlog of clean water projects, and existing CWSRF financial resources are inadequate to address these needs. Our preference would be for increased direct grant funding to the Clean Water SRF program. However, provided the SRF program would not be adversely impacted by a new source of revenue to the states, and that the CWSRF would be fully funded at not less than fiscal year 2018 levels, an approach like the one contemplated in the draft proposal holds promise.

The State of California currently has approximately $2 billion in completed project applications awaiting funding under the CWSRF program and another $5.6 billion in projects under development that will need funding. We understand that the proposed legislation envisions providing states with funding assistance that could be leveraged using U.S. Treasury-rated bonds. It is important that this legislation provide California with a sufficient share of any appropriated assistance to construct up to $7 billion in clean water infrastructure projects. This amount is vital to address our population and overwhelming project needs.

As you and your colleagues consider legislative options to help address the substantial funding need within the water sector, we look forward to working with you to advance a balanced and effective investment in water infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Adam D. Link  
Director of Government Affairs