July 14, 2017

Subject: Restore Vital Clean Water Funding in FY 2018 Appropriations Bill

Dear California Congressional Delegation Member:

On behalf of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), I write to urge your assistance in restoring clean water funding that is vital to protect our communities and the environment. In approving the Interior and Environment Fiscal Year 2018 Appropriations Bill, the Committee on Appropriations recommended a significant reduction in the Clean Water Act State Revolving Loan Fund Program (SRF).

As the leading voice for California’s public wastewater agencies, CASA is deeply concerned over the decision to reduce the Clean Water SRF by $250 million. Funding the Clean Water SRF at $1.1 billion would be a dramatic departure from current year funding of $2.2 billion, a figure the Administration also requested in its Fiscal Year 2018 budget request. We urge you to support restoration of the requested funding level for the SRF when the House of Representatives debates and votes on the bill.

The SRF program provides vital support for water infrastructure needs in California and is essential to local agencies’ ability to continue protecting public health and the environment. In addition, SRF monies are repaid over time and therefore remain available on a recurring basis to fund continuing wastewater infrastructure needs. During the past several years of extraordinary drought conditions in the arid west, the SRF served as a lifeline to construct water recycling facilities and other critical infrastructure. Without these funds, the impact of the drought could have been significantly worse.

Unfortunately, California’s SRF program is already oversubscribed and any reduction in federal assistance will limit the state’s already constrained ability to support the construction of water quality facilities that support a safe and reliable water supply and a sustainable growing economy. According to USEPA’s most recent survey of clean water infrastructure needs (2012), California’s current eligible project financing needs exceed $26 billion. The decision to reduce available resources for California to invest in water quality sends the wrong message.

CASA strongly urges you to work to restore the Clean Water SRF funding to the current budget level of $2.3 billion. We would be pleased to provide additional information or assistance regarding the SRF in support of this request.

Sincerely,

Roberta Larson
Executive Director