June 17, 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) writes in support of your continuing commitment to address water resiliency in the western U.S. and specifically throughout the State of California. CASA has reviewed your draft Drought Resiliency and Water Infrastructure Act. Among other matters, it would establish a number of programs to address climate induced challenges and lead to a more safe and reliable water supply for Californians. CASA supports provisions that would maintain a federal partnership with local water agencies to develop water recycling facilities. As we have noted in support of your prior Congress’s legislative efforts, and most notably WIIN, water recycling is an integral element of a comprehensive water infrastructure portfolio.

The draft legislation would reauthorize the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s Title XVI program. Title XVI and the successor WIIN water recycling program is critical to California. Many CASA members are planning and designing projects that depend on these programs. As drafted, the program would benefit from a new $100 million authorization and equally important raise the project cap to $30,000,000. CASA would encourage the bill be revised in two important areas. First, we believe that an authorization of at least $500,000,000 is appropriate to serve as a catalyst for California and other western states’s water agencies to develop new water recycling infrastructure. Second, the provision to deauthorize Title XVI projects that have not secured federal assistance or begun construction within the past several years deserves further review. The Title XVI projects backlog can be reduced through the elimination of projects that are no longer feasible. However, some authorized Title XVI projects may be feasible, but for the absence of a federal partnership that has prevented projects from proceeding. We believe that the legislation should address such a circumstance to avoid eliminating projects that can contribute to a sustainable water supply.

CASA looks forward to working with you on these matters as the legislation progresses through Congress. Again, we are deeply grateful for your unwavering commitment to develop federal policies and programs that will lead to solutions to our water supply challenges.

Sincerely,

Jessica Gauger  
Director of Legislative Advocacy