

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Energy and Water Appropriations
Subcommittee

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chairwoman
House Energy and Water Appropriations
Subcommittee

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Water Appropriations
Subcommittee

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
House Energy and Water Appropriations
Subcommittee

Dear Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Feinstein, Chairwoman Kaptur, and Ranking Member Simpson:

As you work to finalize Energy and Water appropriations for FY 2020, the undersigned organizations are writing to highlight the importance of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (USBR) Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program, and to urge you to provide no less than \$20 million for the competitive grants portion of the program (Section 4009(c) of WIIN), as detailed in the Senate Committee Report.

The Title XVI program is the only federal program with water reuse as its sole focus. Since Title XVI's inception in 1992, Congress has authorized 53 Title XVI recycling projects producing more than 400,000 acre-feet of drought-resistant water supply. To date, Congress has appropriated approximately \$672 million in federal funding which has been leveraged with non-federal funding to implement more than \$3.3 billion in water reuse improvements – a nearly 5:1 leverage ratio.

In 2016, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act established a mechanism, colloquially known as Title XVI-WIIN, to enable new projects to apply for competitive grants within Title XVI. Due to the popularity of Title XVI-WIIN in its first few years, the program now has a large and growing backlog of more than \$550 million in federal cost share for eligible projects, and demand is expected to grow as more projects become eligible.

Given the critical role that water recycling will play in future water management, and given the overwhelming demand for Title XVI-WIIN projects across the West, we urge you to include \$20 million at a minimum for this program in the final appropriations agreement for FY 2020.

We also request that the final conference report for FY 2020 exclude Senate Committee Report language dictating that, of the total appropriation provided for Title XVI, \$20 million must be used for Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects. ASR is vitally important; however, it should not be mandated by Congress through the Title XVI program. Mandating that a large portion of Title XVI funding be used for a particular project type would create a less diverse

project pool and significantly alter the nature of the program. Instead, we urge you to let the competitive process bear out so that the most effective, efficient, and qualified projects move forward.

Finally, we ask for your support in securing \$12 million, as included in the Senate Committee Report, for the WIIN portion of USBR's Desalination and Water Purification Program in FY 2020.

The Desalination Program provides funding for projects in Reclamation states that involve ocean or brackish water desalination. In the arid West, desalination is an important tool that can help communities increase their water supply. Thank you for considering our requests.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association
American Water Works Association
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
US Water Alliance
Water Environment Federation
WateReuse Association