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August 10, 2023

The Honorable Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C St NW, Washington, DC 20240

RE: Request for Increase to Title XVI-WIIN Per-Project Funding Cap

Dear Commissioner Touton,

The WaterReuse Association recently surveyed our members who have completed Title XVI-WIIN feasibility studies, and asked them to describe the extent to which their project costs have increased in recent years. We write today to share our survey results and ask that you adjust the Title XVI-WIIN per-project funding cap accordingly.

WaterReuse is a not-for-profit trade association for water utilities, businesses, and institutions that advocate for policies and programs to advance water recycling. WaterReuse and its state and regional sections represent nearly 250 water utilities serving over 60 million customers, and over 200 businesses and organizations across the country.

In the case of projects that exceed a total cost of \$120 million (25 percent of which is \$30 million), survey respondents noted that their total project costs have increased significantly due to inflation. On average, project costs amongst all survey respondents increased by nearly 80 percent since completion of their Title XVI feasibility studies. One respondent experienced a 207 percent cost increase over six years.

Given the significant increase in project costs in recent years, we urge you to use your authority under the Reclamation Recycling and Water Conservation Act of 1996 to increase the per-project funding cap for the Title XVI-WIIN Water Reclamation and Reuse Grants Program from the current \$30 million to \$40 million.

The Reclamation Recycling and Water Conservation Act of 1996 states: "[...]the Federal share of the costs of each of the individual projects authorized by this title shall not exceed \$20,000,000 (*October 1996 prices*)." \$20 million in 1996 equates to roughly \$40 million in today's dollars. A per-project funding cap of \$40 million for Title XVI-WIIN is appropriate and needed given recent increases in project construction costs. Exercising this authority will enable Reclamation to meet the demand for recycled water that will help the West cope with drought and climate change more effectively and expeditiously.

Sincerely,



Patricia L. Sinicropi, J.D.
Executive Director