

February 19, 2025

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
S-146, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Simpson, Chair Murkowski, and Ranking Members Pingree and Merkley:

On behalf of the undersigned entities, we urge you to make forward-looking investments in American communities by adopting the House FY 2025 funding level for the **Pilot Program for Alternative Water Source Grants, Section 220 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1300)** in final FY 2025 appropriations legislation. Through the program, EPA will make competitive grants to state, interstate, and intrastate water resource development agencies to engineer, design, construct, and test alternative water source systems, including water reuse systems.

The WaterReuse Association is a not-for-profit trade association for water utilities, businesses, industrial and commercial enterprises, non-profit organizations, and research entities that engage in and on water reuse. WaterReuse and its state and regional sections represent more than 200 water utilities serving over 60 million customers, and over 300 businesses and organizations across the country.

Communities across the United States are facing unprecedented water crises, be it recurrent and severe drought, disastrous flooding events, or water quality impairment. The Pilot Program for Alternative Water Source Grants (33 U.S.C. 1300) can help communities invest in long-term solutions to address these water resource challenges.

Water reuse, also known as water recycling, is the process of intentionally capturing wastewater, stormwater, or graywater and cleaning it as needed for a designated beneficial freshwater purpose, such as drinking, industrial processes, irrigation, groundwater replenishment, and watershed restoration. The fundamental principle of water reuse is using the right water for the right purpose, everywhere and all the time.

The drivers for water reuse are many. In recent years, droughts have brought severe conditions including wildfires, heat waves, severely depleted water sources, and reduced crop production

across the country. Despite last year's snowpack and rain events, conditions in the West were recently at their driest point in 1,200 years and will almost certainly worsen. In parts of Pennsylvania, Illinois, New England, and other regions across the country, communities have faced significant and even extreme drought conditions over the last three years. In addition to combatting supply constraints, communities and industries are also turning to water reuse to meet stringent discharge regulations and reduce pollutant loads to receiving waters.

Across the country, WaterReuse Association members are demonstrating that water recycling can be a central feature in innovative, integrated approaches to solving water management challenges. From California to Virginia, and Texas to Ohio, rapid and anticipated business and population growth is driving significant investment in water recycling.

In Texas, every major city, including San Antonio, Austin, El Paso, Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth, is practicing or planning on water reuse. The state will soon host the first direct-to-distribution potable reuse system in the country. In Arizona, communities are actively seeking to expand the beneficial reuse of treated wastewater to address an array of water resource challenges. Arizona's recent promulgation of direct potable reuse standards will further drive and enable water recycling in the state. In Ohio, interest in water recycling grew dramatically over the last two years in response to rapid industrial development. State regulators, businesses, utilities, and other stakeholders have been working to ensure that water reuse is a central feature of the state's business development and resource protection strategy.

In Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, communities use water recycling as a multi-benefit tool to protect water quality and aquatic wildlife while also ensuring reliable water supplies. Idaho Department of Environmental Quality data indicate that over 8 billion gallons of water are reused every year in Idaho. In Washington, water reuse is a critical tool for addressing both water quality challenges and water supply limitations in Puget Sound. The State or Oregon recently passed legislation directing the Department of Environmental Quality to develop more robust standards to enable broader water recycling.

Water recycling has been a key water management tool in California, Nevada and Colorado for many years. All three states have used water recycling to develop reliable, drought-proof water supplies; and Colorado and California recently became the first and second states in the country to codify direct potable reuse regulations. In South Carolina, the State is working with stakeholders to develop robust water reuse regulations, which, as in Oregon and Arizona, will support an expansion of water recycling across the state.

In Florida and across the Mid-Atlantic, communities have led the way in using water recycling to combat coastal land subsidence and saltwater intrusion into aquifers. Moreover, Florida faces a statewide ban on nearly all surface water discharges beginning in early 2032. Given that upwards of 90 percent of Florida's high-quality treated wastewater is currently discharged into the ocean and other surface waters, the state anticipates a dramatic increase in demand for water recycling

investments in the coming years. Despite the need, there is currently no active federal program dedicated advancing water reuse in non-arid regions of the country.

By investing in the Pilot Program for Alternative Water Source Grants, Congress can begin to give communities in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico the tools and resources they need to protect public health and the environment, support economic development, and create long-term solutions for future generations. We strongly urge you to support these investments by including **no less than the House FY 2025 funding level of \$3 million for the Pilot Program for Alternative Water Source Grants, Section 220 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1300)** in final FY 2025 appropriations legislation.

Sincerely,



Patricia Sinicropi  
Executive Director  
WateReuse Association



Erin Young  
President  
WateReuse Arizona



Royce Davis  
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WateReuse Pacific Northwest



Roger Bailey  
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