The Honorable [First Name] [Last Name]

United States [House of Representatives/Senate]

Washington, DC

[20515/20510]

Dear [Representative/Senator] [Last Name]:

Our nation must make significant investments to install, upgrade, or replace our drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Much of our drinking water infrastructure ̶ the more than one million miles of pipes beneath our streets ̶ is nearing the end of its useful life and will soon be required to be replaced. In addition, shifting population has brought significant growth to some areas of the country, requiring new or larger pipe networks to provide water service to burgeoning communities. For too long, the needs of our nations aging water infrastructure systems, like the infrastructure itself, has been buried out of sight to those it serves and out of mind of policymakers that must make meaningful commitments to modernize and expand this critical infrastructure.

Much of the nation’s water and wastewater infrastructure was constructed generations ago. It served a growing nation well, providing much needed safe drinking water and wastewater treatment to communities across the United States. The backbone of this nation’s waterworks infrastructure, the ductile iron pipe installed by our great-great grandparents, has proven resilient, its corrosion resistance, strength and ductility all contributing to its extraordinary length of time in service. This infrastructure has lasted generations, but won’t last forever. Investments must be made to replace our aging infrastructure with new, state-of-the art durable and safe ductile iron products. It is critical that policymakers make significant investments in our waterworks infrastructure to ensuring the health and wellbeing of our communities for generations to come.

The United States’ water infrastructure needs are great. The American Water Works Association (AWWA) estimates that buried drinking water infrastructure improvements will require more than $1 trillion nationwide over the next 25 years. The AWWA further estimates that over the coming 40-year period, through 2050, these needs will exceed $1.7 trillion, the majority of which is attributable to replacement costs associated with aging U.S. infrastructure.

These needs, unfortunately, far outpace current funding for water infrastructure. As far back as 2002, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that if investment in water and wastewater infrastructure remains static, that resulting funding shortfall will be unable to address the nation’s drinking water and clean infrastructure needs. The EPA estimates a funding gap of $122 billion for costs associated clean water infrastructure improvements and $102 billion for costs associated drinking water infrastructure improvements will accumulate over the next twenty years.

Although buried out of sight, we can no longer afford to ignore our waterworks infrastructure and its investment needs. Rather, policymakers must make meaningful commitments to modernize and grow our drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, ensuring that a system installed to serve a twentieth century nation can serve that nation into the twenty-first century and beyond. I therefore urge your support for policies that increase funding, financing and investment opportunities in this nation’s critical drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

Sincerely,