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February 15, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chairman Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support for Stormwater Provisions in Appropriations Omnibus Agreement**

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Shelby:

As you prepare your negotiations for an appropriations agreement for FY2022, the Stormwater Equipment Manufacturers Association (SWEMA) requests that you consider including of several important provisions regarding stormwater that were authorized under the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) (P.L. 117-58) but require appropriations.

As SWEMA members represent manufacturers of stormwater systems, we understand the urgency for supporting much needed stormwater infrastructure. Stormwater facilities are consistently under-funded - especially from federal sources - as recognized by the recent EPA report on funding needs in the stormwater sector. Only about a quarter of local governments that hold an MS4 permit have dedicated fees or taxes to support stormwater infrastructure. SWEMA member organizations have supported and contributed to water quality and local economies in virtually every state in the nation and have consistently voiced the need for more support.

The understanding of stormwater runoff and its impact on the environment has grown considerably over the last few decades. For the most part, past investment in stormwater infrastructure was not intended to protect the environment and has caused environmental degradation with loss of species and habitat, loss of recreational use, and tourism, as well as causing considerable public health concerns. Surface and ground waters are of national-security level importance as the US holds some of the largest reserves of fresh water in the world. The degradation of these water reserves due to the



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discharge of untreated and contaminated stormwater from poorly maintained, underfunded systems can be seen now. The requested funds will help protect the US water reserves into the future.

Significantly, changes to rainfall patterns, including increased rainfall intensity and frequency, have been observed over the past several years and are projected to continue. These changes are stressing existing infrastructure, and changing how stormwater systems need to be designed and upgraded. Considerable risks exist related to future runoff conditions and that failure to invest adequately now will almost guarantee much greater flooding and related disaster events in the future. Future disasters will come at a much higher cost to the environment and the national economy than making the investment today.

The American Society of Civil Engineer's 2021 Infrastructure Report Card included stormwater as a separate category for the first time with an inaugural grade of "D" given to stormwater. This reflects the dire condition of stormwater infrastructure. Results from the Water Environment Federation's 2020 Needs Assessment Survey suggests that an annual funding gap of \$8.5 billion exists in our sector.

Specifically, SWEMA requests that the following provisions authorized for funding in the IIJA be included in the FY2022 appropriations omnibus package:

- \$25M for establishment of 3-5 Centers of Excellence for Stormwater Control Infrastructure Technologies (CESCITs) (IIJA Sect. 50217)
- \$500M for the Healthy Streets program, which includes a focus on high albedo road surfaces and porous pavements (IIJA Sect. 11406)
- \$50M for community planning and implementation grants for stormwater or watershed-based planning investments (IIJA Sect. 50217)
- \$280M/yr for Overflow and Stormwater Grants (OSG) program over 5 years - \$1.4B total (IIJA Sect. 50204)
- \$125M/yr for resiliency grants over 5 years - \$625M total (IIJA Sect. 50205)
- \$125M/yr for alternative source water pilot program, including stormwater - \$625M total (IIJA Sect. 50203)
- \$50M over 5 years for small & medium POTW circuit riders technical assistance, including stormwater management (IIJA Sect. 50206)
- \$250M WIFIA over 5 years and only one credit rating letter requirement now (IIJA Sect. 50215)
- \$5M to complete the Clean Watersheds Needs Survey, including more data on stormwater infrastructure needs (IIJA Sect. 50220)
- New EPA rural and low-income ratepayer assistance program (IIJA Sect. 50109)
- Transportation Research Board stormwater impacts study and BMP recommendation (IIJA Sect. 11520)



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- US DoT shall update and reissue 1997 & 2014 stormwater BMP reports (IIJA Sect. 11521)

SWEMA looks forward to working with Congress to explore ways to promote and expand the investment in stormwater infrastructure across the country. If you need any additional information, please contact our Executive Director, Laurie Honnigford, at +1 (720) 353-4977 or [laurie@stormwaterassociation.com](mailto:laurie@stormwaterassociation.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Williams".

Greg Williams, Ph.D., P. Eng.  
SWEMA President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Holtz".

Jay Holtz  
SWEMA Government Affairs and Regulatory Committee Chair