

# Invest In Our Nation's Water Infrastructure



Our nation's drinking water and wastewater infrastructure is in desperate need of repair:

- Most of our buried drinking water infrastructure was built 50 or more years ago. In some older urban areas, many water mains have been in the ground for a century or longer.
- Investment needs for buried drinking water infrastructure total more than \$1 trillion nationwide over the next 25 years according to a study by the American Water Works Association.
- The American Society of Civil Engineers gives drinking water and wastewater systems a D grade in its Report Card on Infrastructure.
- The majority of the burden of upgrading our nation's water and wastewater infrastructure falls on the public sector, as approximately 85% of water systems are municipal-owned.

**As manufacturers of critical castings for water infrastructure including valves, fittings, pipes, pumps, water meters, manhole covers and fire hydrants, the American Foundry Society (AFS) supports three extremely valuable tools for water infrastructure finance:**

- Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)
- State revolving loan funds (SRFs)
- Private activity bonds

WIFIA is a cost-effective loan program to improve and rehabilitate our aging water and wastewater infrastructures. It complements the SRF programs by providing low-interest, long-term loans to projects that are beyond the scope of the SRFs. The SRF programs have provided support for both drinking water and wastewater projects. Congress provides states an annual allocation of federal tax-exempt private activity bonds. The annual volume cap hinders the use of these bonds, so we support its removal.

The House and Senate will be considering these programs in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2016 legislation. On April 28, the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee approved bipartisan WRDA legislation (S. 2848), which authorizes improvement and maintenance projects for a wide range of U.S. maritime, transportation and infrastructure programs. It also provides financial assistance to improve drinking water and wastewater systems.

## Message to Congress

**In the Senate and House, AFS urges lawmakers to include in its 2016 WRDA package (S. 2848 and House WRDA Bill):**

- **A permanent "American Iron and Steel" requirement in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) for iron and steel products that are produced in the U.S. The DWSRF is critical in helping communities improve their water infrastructure.**
- **The removal of state volume caps on private activity bonds for water and wastewater projects, freeing up billions of private capital dollars for investment in our nation's water infrastructure.**
- **Full authorization and funding for WIFIA, and for the drinking water and wastewater state revolving loan fund programs.**

### Senate:

- Staff contact: EPW Majority Staff Joe Brown at [Joe\\_Brown@epw.senate.gov](mailto:Joe_Brown@epw.senate.gov) or EPW Minority Staff Ted Illstone at [Ted\\_Illstone@epw.senate.gov](mailto:Ted_Illstone@epw.senate.gov).

### House:

- Staff Contact: Energy & Commerce Majority Staff Jerry Couri at [JerryCouri@mail.house.gov](mailto:JerryCouri@mail.house.gov) or Energy & Commerce Minority Staff Jackie Cohen at [Jackie.Cohen@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jackie.Cohen@mail.house.gov).

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