

Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Statement for the Record by Senator Tammy Duckworth on Draft Legislation entitled,
“America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 and The Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of
2020”
April 22, 2020

Thank you to this Committee, particularly Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper, for its leadership in drafting legislation that makes critical investments in our Nation’s water infrastructure. As members of this Committee are well aware, access to quality drinking and wastewater services is necessary to ensuring that every American has a shot at living a healthy life. This priority is even more important today, as millions of Americans have been asked to shelter in place and avoid the spread and subsequent injury that COVID-19 can cause.

While I look forward to receiving input from stakeholders with expertise in the issues of water and related infrastructure, there are several provisions from these draft bills that I strongly support. First, I applaud that Committee for making a historic reauthorization of the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund and dramatically increasing its investment. I strongly support the Committee’s efforts of making existing federal programs more accessible to the communities that need them the most like low income, rural and communities of color. By lowering or eliminating the local cost share, increasing funding for technical assistance and direct grants, we can assist these communities in their efforts to deliver quality drinking and wastewater services. I also believe that the investments in innovative technologies and reducing lead exposure are key provisions that are necessary to reducing public health threats that persist in communities across my home-state and the Nation.

I also want to applaud Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee Chairwoman Capito and Ranking Member Cardin for their leadership in advancing *the America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 draft* to provide for critical U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects in Illinois and across the Midwest. As drafted, WRDA 2020 includes some of my top infrastructure priorities such as an Inland Waterway Trust Fund cost share modification that will help upgrade locks and dams more quickly along the Illinois and Mississippi River, helping farmers and other industries maintain their global competitiveness. At my request, the bill also authorizes the Brandon Road

project that will help protect the Great Lakes from Asian Carp, provide further federal support to restore and enhance the Chicago River, and help distressed communities in flood-prone areas along the Mississippi River rebuild outdated pump stations.

I'm proud of the bipartisan cooperation this Committee has exhibited during the COVID-19 pandemic to advance this critical legislation and address the infrastructure needs of our states and communities.