

April 22, 2020

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Environment and Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper
Ranking Member
Environment and Public Works Committee
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

Thank you for conducting an information gathering process to hear from stakeholders regarding America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 and the Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020. We appreciate the opportunity to share the cement industry's perspective.

The Portland Cement Association (PCA) represents 91 percent of the U.S. cement production capacity with a presence in all 50 states. Concrete forms when portland cement is mixed with water and aggregate (sand and rock) and allowed to harden. Cement holds the mixture together and has a similar role to flour in cake mix. Concrete plays an important role in the construction of water infrastructure projects across the country.

Our nation's waterways play a critical role in the movement of cement from manufacturing plant to market. Annually, the cement industry ships approximately 35 percent of our product from plants to terminals by barge demonstrating these systems are vital for American commerce. Additionally, water infrastructure construction is a critical market for cement in the United States. For every billion spent on water construction approximately 211,000 metric tons of cement will be consumed.

Passage of America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 is important to continuing the two-year cycle of passing legislation to authorize and advance new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects. PCA supports the authorization of new Chiefs Reports, including those focused on restoration, flood risk management, and hurricane and storm risk reduction totaling \$6.32 billion in capital investment in water infrastructure projects across the country. The legislation also initiates feasibility studies on a number of other projects, including a few in response to the severe flooding that occurred on the Mississippi River and Great Lakes last year.

The cement industry also supports the steps taken by America's Water Infrastructure Act to cut red tape by setting a goal for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete a feasibility study for a project within two years. Communities across the country are depending on advancing these water infrastructure projects. Completing a feasibility study in a timely manner is an important step to delivering these projects.

Not only will America's Water Infrastructure Act advance important ecosystem restoration, flood risk management, and hurricane and storm risk reduction projects, the legislation takes important steps to invest in needed public health water infrastructure projects in communities across the country. For these reasons, the cement industry supports the \$8.8 billion investment the bill makes in programs to help communities invest in their aging wastewater and drinking water infrastructure.

For example, the cement industry supports reauthorizing the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF). As our nation's wastewater infrastructure ages and the cost of compliance with environmental requirements continues to increase, communities are faced with growing difficulties in paying for critical improvements. The Clean Water SRF helps communities invest in these needed improvements. Additionally, since its first authorization in 2014 the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program has provided low-interest loans to communities to help make needed drinking water and wastewater infrastructure improvements. The cement industry is pleased WIFIA is reauthorized for three years as part of the legislation.

Additionally, the cement industry supports the policy and programs included in America's Water Infrastructure Act and the Drinking Water Infrastructure Act to improve the resiliency of the nation's water infrastructure. Over the past several years, the United States has experienced an increase in the number of natural disasters ranging from hurricanes to flooding that have put great pressure on the drinking water and wastewater systems of communities across the country. It is important to help communities invest in projects to improve their resiliency and adapt to the changing climate. For these reasons, we support the authorization of the Clean Water Resiliency and Sustainability Program to help wastewater systems plan, design, construct, and implement a program or project to increase the resiliency or adaptability of the water system to a natural hazard. Likewise, the cement industry supports the creation of the Midsize Drinking Water Resiliency Program to help drinking water systems do the same.

Again, thank you for your continued leadership in advancing critical water infrastructure legislation. PCA looks forward to working with you to advance both pieces of legislation. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (703) 321-6792 or soneill@cement.org.

Sincerely,



Sean O'Neill
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs