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September 25, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper
Ranking Member, Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) appreciates the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works' inclusion of important provisions in America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (S.3021) that protect our nation's drinking water and environment.

Access to safe drinking water is vital in keeping our communities healthy. Unfortunately, due to outdated infrastructure and pollution many of our communities in the Southeast and across the nation are at risk. There are several provisions in Title II of the American's Water Infrastructure Act that can help address the threats to our drinking water, including:

- Section 2023 provides a significant increase in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) over three years that will double current funding levels to \$1.95 billion in Fiscal Year 2021. The DWSRF provides critical funding to states that can be used to repair and upgrade drinking water infrastructure.
- Section 1465 establishes a \$5 million per year grant program that can be used to monitor school drinking water and to replace lead-bearing drinking water fountains in order to better provide safe drinking water for students.
- Section 2021 requires water systems that serve more than 3,300 people to monitor for unregulated contaminants, such as polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS). There will be \$15 million a year available to carrying out the testing. Monitoring for such contaminants can help keep communities safe from toxic chemicals.

There is also language in Section 1149 that will help protect our waterways and their surrounding environment by requiring the Army Corps of Engineers to consider natural and nature-based features

alone or in combination with traditional infrastructure when working on projects. This will help to prompt the Corps to do more natural infrastructure projects which are more resilient to sea level rise and weather events as they work with the environment instead of controlling the environment.

The above mentioned provisions will improve our nation's waterways and water infrastructure which will in turn help to improve the health of our communities for generations to come. SELC supports the Environment and Public Works Committee including these important provisions in America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nat Mund', written in a cursive style.

Nat Mund
Director of Federal Affairs