



N A R U C

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

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NARUC Support of National *Imagine a Day Without Water* Campaign to Raise Awareness About Vulnerable Infrastructure Systems

WASHINGTON— Today, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners joins elected officials, drinking water and wastewater providers, community leaders, business and labor groups, policy experts, advocacy organizations and infrastructure experts in supporting *Imagine a Day Without Water*, an effort to educate the public about the water infrastructure crisis currently facing the United States. Organized by the Value of Water Coalition, hundreds of organizations across the country will partake in helping to raise awareness about the crucial need for investment to ensure that no community in America is left without water and critical the infrastructure that brings it to and from homes and businesses.

Recognizing that an investment in our drinking water and wastewater systems is essential to securing a bright and prosperous future for generations to come, NARUC calls for a renewed focus on investment in water and wastewater infrastructure. Specifically, NARUC sent letters to leadership of the House of Representatives and Senate calling on them to prioritize investment in water infrastructure and water resources.

“NARUC and its members understand the immense challenges facing the water sector and its aging infrastructure. Clean water is more than a convenience—it is a necessity,” said NARUC President Travis Kavulla of Montana. “The costs to replace, upgrade and repair our national water infrastructure will be expensive and cannot fall solely on the ratepayers. All levels of government can play a role in meeting this challenge. NARUC pledges to work with all stakeholders on innovative new funding ideas, federal loans and grants, tax incentives and public private partnerships to address this challenge,” added NARUC Committee on Water Chairman Alaina Burtenshaw.

The problems our drinking water and wastewater systems face are multifaceted. Each community faces distinct challenges and will require locally crafted solutions to solve their biggest water problems. Drought, flooding, infrastructure failure, sewer overflows, poor water quality and climate change are stressing our water and wastewater systems. In some communities, families and businesses have experienced the impossible struggle of a day without water. *Imagine A Day Without Water* tells their stories, as well as the stories of innovative solutions to our nation’s water challenges, so that no one ever has to experience another day without water.

Frequently, public attention on infrastructure typically focuses on the things we see every day, like roads, bridges and tunnels. Yet, the hidden infrastructure that reliably brings clean water to homes and businesses and takes it away after it has been used, is actually far more vast than our highway system – National Geographic estimates that the country’s 1.2 million miles of water mains translates to 26 miles of pipes for every mile of interstate highway. And, whereas

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the interstate system was built in the late 20th century, many of the water systems that our country's biggest cities rely on were built in the 1800s or early 1900s.

Those systems are now showing the effects of a century, or more, of running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. A water main breaks somewhere in America every two minutes. The American Society of Civil Engineers gave a grade of "D" to our drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Without further investments, these systems will experience more frequent failures and disruptions as they try to keep up with the needs of both the modern metropolises and rural and agricultural areas they serve.

For more information and to learn how to participate, visit the campaign website at <http://bit.ly/1VroqMJ>.

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NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.