October 23, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Investment in water and wastewater infrastructure

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

In communities across America, an “invisible crisis” is disrupting daily lives, threatening jobs and businesses, and putting our communities’ health and prosperity at risk. Families from Flint, Michigan, to the Central Valley of California have experienced the devastating impacts of living—even a day—without water. We can’t wait any longer to act. Now is the time for America, and for Congress to commit to a future where everyone can count on reliable and safe water service—now, and for future generations. It is time to:

- Increase public and private investment in water infrastructure; and
- Ensure that water is affordable, reliable, and accessible to all communities and businesses.

The cost to replace, upgrade and repair our national water infrastructure will be expensive and cannot fall solely on the consumer. Action has been delayed far too long, as the invisible crisis of aging water systems has increased. October 23, 2019, has been designated Imagine a Day Without Water day by the Value of Water Campaign to raise national awareness of the value of this vital resource. A day without water is nothing short of a crisis. On this day of awareness, we call on Congress and the administration to prioritize investment in water infrastructure and water resources.

Every community, every person, every business, every child relies on water. Agriculture, energy, manufacturing, and tourism—more than one fifth of our nation’s economic output depends on water. Water is the most important thing in our daily lives—and most people don’t think twice about it. Our nation’s water and wastewater infrastructure is at risk. Every two minutes, there is a water main break in America. Many cities drinking water and wastewater systems are more than a century old. In 2019, the American Society for Civil Engineers again graded the nation’s drinking water system infrastructure a D.
Despite the vast challenges, there is great opportunity in infrastructure investment. A study conducted by the Value of Water Campaign found there is more than $220 billion in economic activity to be gained nationwide by closing the water infrastructure investment gap. Moreover, a May 2017 survey confirmed that Americans cite rebuilding our nation’s infrastructure as the issue they most want our elected officials to address.

NARUC is a bipartisan organization that represents the public service commissions in all 50 states and U.S. territories that regulate the utilities that provide essential services such as water, energy, telecommunications, and transportation. Our members work closely with water utilities that are grappling with the immense task of repairing and replacing aging infrastructure while keeping rates affordable, especially for vulnerable populations.

We are committed to working with members of Congress, the Administration, industry, and stakeholders to ensure that all communities have reliable and safe water.

If you have any questions please contact our Legislative Affairs Counsel for Water, Kenneth Mallory at 202-898-2205, kmallory@naruc.org or our General Counsel, Brad Ramsay, at 202-898-2207, jramsay@naruc.org.

Sincerely,

Nick Wagner

Mary-Anna Holden

NARUC President
Member, Iowa Utilities Board Utilities

Chair, NARUC Committee on Water
Commissioner, New Jersey Board of Public