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May 12, 2020

Contact:

Heather Engel, Association of California Water Agencies
(760) 217-0626, heathere@acwa.com

Jennifer Capitolo, California Water Association
(916) 402-1155, jcapitolo@calwaterassn.com

Cristal Gonzalez, Clean Water Action
(408) 796-8717, cgonzalez@cleanwater.org

Matt Williams, California Municipal Utilities Association
(916) 841-4054, mwilliams@cmua.org

Jerry Jimenez, Community Water Center
(408) 219-9636, jerry.jimenez@communitywatercenter.org

Milena Paez, NextGen California
(916) 209-8604, milena.paez@nextgenpolicy.org

Daniela Arellano, NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)
(424) 268-6677, darellano@nrdc.org

Tim Douglas, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
(916) 207-8771, tdouglas@leadershipcounsel.org

Unprecedented Coalition of Water Stakeholders Urges Congress to Fund Critical Water Needs Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

***Measures will protect access to a critically important tool in fighting
the spread of COVID-19: washing your hands***

SACRAMENTO, Calif. - In a [letter to congressional leaders](#), a diverse coalition of water advocates today called on Congress to fund critical water needs that are impacting Californians amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter was addressed to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, and U.S. Senators Diane Feinstein and Kamala Harris.

The [coalition of 59 broad-based organizations](#), which collectively represents both California frontline communities as well as more than 450 California water agencies and multiple other water and environmental stakeholders, is urging the California Congressional Delegation to include funding for urgent water infrastructure and water affordability needs as part of the next federal stimulus package or other pending Congressional actions.

Together they are calling for the following steps as part of the next federal stimulus package or other pending water or infrastructure-related Congressional actions:

1. \$100 billion in new funding over five years for Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, with at least 20 percent of the new funding distributed to disadvantaged communities as additional subsidization (grants) rather than loans and eligibility for the new funding for all water systems, regardless of their organizational structure.
2. \$4 billion in immediate funding to the Environmental Protection Agency for grants to the states for a Low Income Households Drinking Water and Wastewater Assistance/Affordability Program to help struggling households pay for essential water and wastewater service.
3. Emergency funding for affected water utilities, particularly serving disadvantaged or hard-hit communities, to help offset lost revenue, the costs associated with moratoriums on shutoffs, and the essential public health protections being put in place by water utilities.
4. Shutoff moratorium/safe reconnection provision that ensures every American has access to water in their homes now and through the duration of the COVID-19 crisis and that allows for relief to vulnerable customers for a time afterwards to regain their financial footing while also providing needed fiscal support to water systems.

Taken together, these measures represent meaningful and necessary steps to meet both immediate and long-term drinking water needs for Californians. They will also help boost the economy and protect access to a fundamental tool in fighting the spread of COVID-19: washing your hands.

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