

# Water Infrastructure Alliance

c/o The Engineering Center  
One Walnut Street  
Boston, MA 02108

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October 7, 2019

Honorable Aaron Michlewitz, Chair  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 243  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Honorable Michael Rodrigues, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 212  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Chair Michlewitz and Chair Rodrigues:

On behalf of the Water Infrastructure Alliance, we write in strong support of three items within the Governor's recently filed supplemental budget request (HB4067) that will help address the needs of our water infrastructure systems. In particular, we urge you to include funding for the Clean Water Trust's efforts to meet the Commonwealth's overall water infrastructure needs, address the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in certain water supplies, and the discovery of lead in school water fountains.

In particular, the Water Infrastructure Alliance asks you to consider the following:

1. Additional Funding for the Clean Water Trust. (1595-1205). Massachusetts has a significant funding gap in addressing its water infrastructure needs over the next twenty years. The 2012 report of the Massachusetts Water Infrastructure Finance Commission and a 2017 report from the Office of the Auditor found that the Commonwealth and its municipalities have a \$18 billion to \$21 billion funding gap in meeting their drinking and wastewater infrastructure needs. Recognizing the need to assist municipalities and regional water authorities in addressing this problem, the Massachusetts legislature has given greater flexibility to the CWT in recent years to provide additional financial assistance for eligible projects that have met a series of reasonable best management practices (i.e. development of an asset management plan, etc.). The additional funding proposed in HB 4067 will allow the CWT to work with municipalities and regional water systems to meet our shared water infrastructure needs.
2. Addressing the Emerging Presence of PFAS (1595-1200 / 2250-2002). PFAS is contained in man-made products including stain- and water-repellent fabrics, nonstick products (e.g., Teflon), polishes, waxes, paints, cleaning products, and fire-fighting foams. PFAS is an example of an emerging contaminant which poses daunting challenges for public water systems on every conceivable front, including, but not limited to, the introduction of new sampling protocols, a paucity of reliable analytical resources, water treatment uncertainties, and, most notably, unprecedented cost, funding, and risk

communication obligations. The funding proposed in HB4067 will allow for the identification of potential PFAS contamination in our water systems and, then, provide the initial resources necessary to address its presence in certain communities. The funding proposed by the Governor is a good start to an issue that will be an ongoing concern for municipalities and regional water authorities for the foreseeable future.

3. Remediating Lead in Schools. (Outside Section 35, with amendment). In recent years, the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (CWT) has made significant resources available for testing for lead in drinking water fountains within our public schools. Unfortunately, the results of this testing have shown that many schools have lead within these same fountains. Accordingly, funding is now needed to remediate these conditions so that children are not further exposed to this harmful contaminant. HB4067 provides a mechanism to access previously appropriated funds so that funding can be made available as soon as possible. Please note that the language of Section 35 should be amended to reflect the \$5 million limit described by the Governor in his cover letter that accompanied this legislation. This will ensure that some of the funds remain dedicated to the Commonwealth's overall efforts to address our water infrastructure funding gap.

The Water Infrastructure Alliance, comprised of a diverse array of environmental groups, construction and engineering associations, public water supply operators, and municipal and regional advocacy organizations, respectfully urges the Massachusetts legislature to follow through on its foundational work the Chapter 259 of the Acts of 2014. The aforementioned appropriations will continue to move the Commonwealth closer to meeting its water infrastructure needs. In doing so, residents and businesses alike will continue to benefit from a water infrastructure system that protects the environment, ensures public safety, improves public health and allows for future economic development.

We thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Abbie Goodman, Executive Director  
American Council of Engineering Companies  
of MA, Co-chair Water Infrastructure  
Alliance

Suzanne M. Bump, Auditor of the  
Commonwealth  
Office of the State Auditor

Marc D. Draisen, Executive Director  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Geoffrey C. Beckwith, MMA Executive  
Director & CEO, Massachusetts Municipal  
Association



Jennifer A. Pederson, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Water Works Association, Co-  
Chair, Water Infrastructure Alliance

Jeremy Thompson, Manager of Policy &  
Planning, 495/MetroWest Partnership

Mickey Nowak, Executive Director.  
Massachusetts Water Pollution Control  
Association

Mary Barry, Executive Director  
New England Water Environment  
Association

John M. Pourbaix, Jr., Executive Director  
Construction Industries of Massachusetts

Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director  
MWRA Advisory Board

Philip D. Guerin, President  
Massachusetts Coalition for Water Resources  
Stewardship

Tamara Small, Chief Executive Officer,  
NAIOP Massachusetts, The Commercial Real  
Estate Development Association

Kirsten King, Executive Director  
New England Water Works Association

Julia Blatt, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Rivers Alliance

Leanne Monahan, President, Plymouth  
County Water Works Association

Anne Klayman, Executive Director  
Utility Contractors' Association of New  
England

Karen Lachmayr, Chair, Wastewater  
Advisory Committee to the MWRA

Lexi Dewey, Executive Director  
Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee

Steve Long, Director of Government  
Relations, The Nature Conservancy in  
Massachusetts

Cc: Honorable Robert DeLeo, Speaker  
Office of the Speaker of the House

Honorable Brad Jones, Minority Leader  
Office of the House Minority Leader

Honorable Karen Spilka, Senate President  
Office of the Senate President

Honorable Bruce E. Tarr, Minority Leader  
Office of the Senate Minority Leader