



January 20, 2015

The Honorable Governor Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

The Honorable Governor Chris Christie:

As a leading New Jersey business association and supporter of the Water Infrastructure Protection Act (A-3628/ S-2412), I am writing to urge you to sign this critical act. In doing so, New Jersey will take an important step to investing in the state's crumbling water and sewer systems, create well-paying private sector jobs, and improve the economic competitiveness of the state.

In most areas of New Jersey, water and wastewater systems were installed many decades ago with limited proactive investment. Now much of that infrastructure in service is well beyond its designed life expectancy, which has led to system failure, main breaks, and degrading water quality. A recent NJ Spotlight article highlighted that between 20 and 22 percent of the state's drinking water is lost before reaching consumers due to outdated infrastructure. When these systems fail businesses and residents are adversely impacted and economic productivity is limited. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that New Jersey's water and wastewater infrastructure will need \$41 billion in investments over the next 20 years.

When municipalities are faced with the immense financial burden that comes with aging systems, looming capital improvements, and emergency repairs all often funded by bonded debt they sacrifice investment into other important improvements. The Water Infrastructure Protection Act can help provide municipalities options to expediently relieve this burden, repair systems, and free up financial resources that can be better used to make municipalities more attractive to businesses and build the tax base.

In New Jersey, there are 272 community water systems that are already operated by private water companies. These systems have a proven track record of providing safe, reliable, and high quality water and service that meeting or exceeding the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's standards. Business customers of these systems can also benefit from economies of scale and long-term capital planning that ensures the highest quality service delivered at a fair price regulated by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. Working through

this process will create much needed cost predictability for small businesses on Main Street and elsewhere.

We strongly believe that the Water Infrastructure Protection Act is a financially responsible and timely way to address the investment and infrastructure crisis facing New Jersey's water and wastewater systems, create private sectors jobs, and improve the financial health of the state's municipalities. Modern and reliable water and wastewater systems are essential to the economic competitiveness of the state, the strength of the workforce, and viability of most businesses large or small.

We respectfully ask for your support in signing this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Marlene Z. Asselta
President, SNJDC