May 31, 2019 – VOLUME 16, ISSUE 5

House Bill Would Give Big Boost to Drinking Water, But for Now It’s Just a Pipe Dream

The House Energy & Commerce Committee unveiled legislation May 15 aimed at boosting federal investment in several infrastructure areas, including water. The Lifting Infrastructure for Tomorrow’s (LIFT) America Act (see H.R. 2741 in the legislative results below in the “Pressure Pipe Post”) would authorize more than $100 billion in investment in clean energy, broadband internet, health infrastructure and drinking water over the next several years.

The bill includes language to extend and increase authorizations for the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF), the Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program, School and Child Care Program Lead Testing grants, Lead Drinking Fountain Replacement, Community Water System Risk and Resilience grants, and Public Water System Supervision grants to states. The bill’s drinking water subtitle would also extend Buy American requirements for drinking water projects.

Under the proposal, the authorization for DWSRF would be extended through FY 2024 (it’s currently set to expire at the end of FY 2021) and the amount authorized for DWSRF capitalization grants would increase from $1.174 in FY 2019 to $5.5 billion in FY 2024.

While the water infrastructure investment provisions of the legislation would be good news for pipe manufacturers, it’s a very long way from becoming law. Seen in its proper context, the bill is just the first version of the Commerce Committee’s contribution to a larger infrastructure package the House and Senate could eventually consider.

Although infrastructure is one of the few priorities congressional Democrats and the White House apparently have in common, the chance of rapid progress on a comprehensive bill faded significantly this month after a much-anticipated meeting between the president and Democratic leaders quickly collapsed in a well-publicized squabble over the results of the Mueller investigation.

Since that meeting, President Trump has traded public jabs with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), who is under pressure from the liberal wing of the Democratic Caucus to start impeachment proceedings against the president. Should the House do so, it would become a major political distraction that would almost certainly end any possibility of cooperation between the House Democrats and the White House. For his part, the president has shifted his policy messaging in recent days from infrastructure to imposing tariffs on Mexico
to punish the country for not doing more to stop Central American immigrants to (paradoxically) passing a new trade deal with Canada and Mexico.

While the federal drinking water finding is on relatively solid footing for the next two and a half years, the highway community is growing increasingly nervous that Congress will miss next year’s deadline to reauthorize the federal highway program. Avoiding the looming authorization lapse for road and bridge spending is complicated by the fact that revenues to the federal highway trust fund from the gas tax and other user fees fall well short of the amount need to maintain current investment levels. Taking the dramatic step of increasing the gas tax or creating new user fees will require focused presidential policy leadership and bipartisan cooperation. Both are in short supply at the moment in Washington, D.C.

EPA Announces Availability of $2.6 Billion in New Funding for U.S. Water Infrastructure

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced May 9 the availability of $2.6 billion in new funds to assist states, tribes and territories with improving drinking water and wastewater infrastructure across the country.

The investment will be provided through the Clean Water and Safe Drinking State Revolving Funds (SRFs), which require a state match and loan repayments with interest that flows back to the funds. Through the SRF programs, EPA provides funding to all 50 states and Puerto Rico to capitalize SRF loan programs. The states and Puerto Rico contribute an additional 20 percent to match the federal grants. The 51 SRF programs function like infrastructure banks by providing low-interest loans to eligible recipients for drinking water and clean water infrastructure projects. As the loan principal and interest are repaid over time, it allows the state’s funds to be recycled or “revolve.” As money is returned to the state’s revolving loan fund, the state makes new loans to other eligible recipients.

In 2018, the SRFs committed $9.6 billion in drinking water and clean water infrastructure loans and refinancing and disbursed $8.8 billion for drinking water and clean water infrastructure. Over the past three decades, approximately $80 billion has been invested through the SRF programs. Over that time period, EPA estimates that through loan repayments and investment earnings, the SRFs have leveraged the federal contributions to provide more than $170 billion in financial assistance to over 39,900 water quality infrastructure projects and 14,500 drinking water projects across the country. Of course, that’s just a drop in the bucket compared to the more than the $700 billion EPA itself has estimated is needed for water infrastructure improvements.
This year, EPA is making available more than $1 billion in new federal grant funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This funding can be used for loans that help drinking water systems install controls to treat contaminants and improve distribution systems by removing lead service lines. In addition, more than $50 million in DWSRF grant funding is available to tribes, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia to use for drinking water system upgrades.

EPA is also providing approximately $1.6 billion in new federal grant funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). This funding is available for a wide range of water infrastructure projects, including modernizing aging wastewater infrastructure, implementing water reuse and recycling and addressing stormwater. More than $64 million in CWSRF grant funding is available to tribes, certain U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia for infrastructure projects.

More information is about the programs is at www.epa.gov/drinkingwatersrf and www.epa.gov/cwsrf. Information about the resources available for each state is available in the EPA’s online newsroom.

House Panel Approves FY 2020 Water Infrastructure Funds

The House Appropriations Committee May 22 approved the FY 2020 Interior, Environment & Related Agencies appropriations bill on a party-line vote of 30 to 21. The legislation is the annual vehicle by which Congress “writes the check” to provide funds for the EPA-administered state revolving fund (SRF) programs. The SRF money is part of a bigger package that also includes funding for programs within the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other related agencies, including the Indian Health Service.

The $37.28 billion interior-environment appropriations bill includes $3.11 billion for the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs, an increase of $345 million above the 2019 enacted level and $1.13 billion above the President’s budget request. It would also provide $70 million for targeted grants for drinking water contaminants like lead, nitrates, or other health hazards.

The long-term outlook for the legislation is uncertain. While SRF funding generally enjoys bipartisan support, other provisions of the bill related to federal environmental policy are often more controversial. If past years are any indication, it’s likely that few of the appropriations bills will be enacted on an individual basis. The more-likely scenario is that Congress and the president will agree on a larger omnibus appropriations bill after considerable partisan bickering.
To keep members aware of the activities of government and standards organizations, we regularly sweep public databases and publications for the industry-specific terms indicated below. We then provide our members with links to documents identified in the search. Please note that in some cases the URLs may link to subscription-only databases. The purpose of this service is to identify emerging threats and trends as well as opportunities for collective action by ACPPA.

NEWS RESULTS

Aging Infrastructure

Time for Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal
05/22/2019  https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/time-for-infrastructure-deal-that-is-bipartisan
Great nations build and invest in great infrastructure Opens a New Window. But America’s crumbling roads and bridges, clogged ports and waterways, congested airports and water supply breakdowns betray the hard work of past generations and undermine our shared commitment to being a nation of growth, progress and opportunity.

Our Aging Infrastructure: Peril and Opportunity
05/08/2019  https://therivernewsroom.com/2019/05/08/our-aging-infrastructure-peril-and-opportunity/
“Infrastructure” is a word that covers a lot of territory. Roads and bridges immediately come to mind, but the term encompasses many of the systems that support civil society: energy, broadband, schools, water, waste, railways, and other public transportation. As a nation, we’re not doing very well at keeping our systems running.

America’s Aging Infrastructure: What Would $2 Trillion Actually Buy?
Even as partisan conflict divides Washington, lawmakers across the political aisle agree on one thing: America’s crumbling and outdated roads, bridges, levees and other vital infrastructure are in dire need of repair. There’s even general consensus -- at least in principle -- about what that mammoth rebuild might cost: $2 trillion over 25 years.
**Cement**

**Cement Plays the Waiting Game**  
There were two main takeaways from the Global Future Cement Conference that took place in Brussels last week. Firstly, there are not any obvious alternatives to using cement and concrete. Secondly, serious at-scale commercial investment on capturing CO2 process emissions from clinker production is still waiting for the right economic conditions.

**B.C. Cement Plant Switching to Lower Carbon Fuel System**  
Cement producer Lafarge is aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at its cement production facility in Richmond by switching over to a lower carbon fuel system that uses non-recyclable waste.

**Coal Ash/Fly Ash**

[Alabama] **OUR VIEW: No Easy, Cheap Options for Coal Ash Ponds**  
Sometimes there simply isn’t an easy or cheap fix for a big-time problem. Consider the situation at Alabama Power’s Gadsden Ash Pond.

[New York] **Coal Fly Ash Could Be Converted into Concrete At San Juan County Industrial Park**  
Two of the companies interested in locating at the San Juan County Industrial Park plan on taking fly ash from power plants and converting it into concrete products.

**Trump’s EPA Shifts More Environmental Enforcement to States**  
Around the country, the EPA under Trump is delegating a widening range of public health and environmental enforcement to states, saying local officials know best how to deal with local problems. Critics contend federal regulators are making a dangerous retreat on enforcement that puts people and the environment at greater risk.

**U.S. Congressman Opposes Osceola Decision to Import 325,000 Tons Of Coal Ash From Puerto Rico**  
State and federal lawmakers are speaking out against a recent decision that allows a private corporation to dump up to 650 million pounds of coal ash from Puerto Rico at an Osceola County landfill this year.
Drought

California and National Drought Summary
05/30/2019
During this U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) week, a strong high pressure ridge was anchored over the southeastern contiguous U.S. (CONUS) while an upper-level trough dominated the West. This pattern set up a southwesterly flow across the central part of the country, which funneled moist and unstable air from the Gulf of Mexico into the Plains.

Funding

After House Approval, Clean Water Funding Plan Heads to Scott's Desk
05/22/2019
The Vermont House of Representatives agreed Wednesday to support a Senate proposal to fund clean water projects without raising new taxes, a feat made possible by unexpectedly robust state revenue collections.

Appropriations Committee Approves Fiscal Year 2020 Energy and Water Development Funding Bill
05/21/2019
The House Appropriations Committee approved the fiscal year 2020 Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies bill on a vote of 31 to 21. The legislation funds the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Interior programs, the Department of Energy, and other related agencies.

EPA Announces Availability of $2.6 Billion in New Funding to Improve Water Infrastructure Across the United States
https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-availability-26-billion-new-funding-improve-water-infrastructure-across-0
05/08/2019
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of $2.6 billion in new funds to assist states, tribes and territories with improving drinking water and wastewater infrastructure across the country. This funding advances President Trump's efforts to rebuild the country's aging water infrastructure, create local jobs, and ensure all Americans have safe and clean water.

Environmental Groups Say More Is Needed to Fund Water Infrastructure Projects
https://www.wamc.org/post/environmental-groups-say-more-needed-fund-water-infrastructure-projects
05/01/2019
New York state's new budget passed overnight Sunday into Monday includes $500 million in clean water infrastructure. Environmentalists say that while they appreciate the allocation, it's just a dent in the state's water infrastructure needs. State officials say it builds on New York's historic $2.5 billion investment.
Sewer Pipe

GRU Contracts Independent Company to Replace Miles Of Pipeline
Gainesville Regional Utilities has contracted an independent company, Insituform Technologies, to replace about 2 miles of pipeline around Northwest 55th Street.

[iowa] Sewage Drains into Cedar River in Waterloo
A leaky sewer pipe is causing big headaches for city officials in Waterloo.

[Connecticut] Water Board Approves Payment for Three Ansonia Sewer Collapses
Members who attended a special emergency meeting of the city’s Water Pollution Control Authority voted unanimously to pay Frank Pepe Construction’s full $915,738 bill for repairs to the recent sewer collapses on Pershing Drive, Woodlawn Avenue and Hull Street.

[Ohio] Residents with Rare Sewer Pipe Setup in Kettering May Get Relief Soon
The older homes on Maplecrest Drive come with a lot of charm. But what’s underground, the sewer system, has unique characteristics that give particular concern.

[Vermont] Sewer Pipe Collapse Caused Discharge in Newport City
05/02/2019  https://www.whio.com/news/local/residents-with-rare-sewer-pipe-setup-kettering-may-get-relief-soon/C32H0fFWtila5CgoTOFhrN/
The break caused sewage to bubble up through the pavement every time the pump stations turned on, Public Works Director Thomas Bernier said.

Wastewater

[Florida] Wastewater/Stormwater Partnership Initiatives Making Headway
05/28/2019  https://www.tbnweekly.com/pinellas_county/article_c945bac0-815e-11e9-a276-cfd88e66da6b.html
County, city and agency partners that make up the Wastewater/Stormwater Partnership met May 23 to present updates regarding the progress and outcomes of projects to improve the resilience of the county’s wastewater and stormwater systems.
**Water Infrastructure**

**Water Infrastructure Woes: Coming Out of Retirement to Help a Local Water Plant**
05/30/2019  

Kentucky is a water-rich state, with 90,000 miles of rivers, lakes, and streams. So managing that resource is important, and the Commonwealth is struggling to find people to operate water treatment plants. Some operators are even coming out of retirement to train people in other districts.

**2020 Hopeful Delaney Announces $2T Plan to Address Infrastructure Crisis**
05/29/2019  

Former Rep. John Delaney’s (D-Md.) presidential campaign on Wednesday announced a sweeping infrastructure plan, pledging $2 trillion to repair and upgrade roads, bridges and water systems.

**Water Infrastructure Projects Funded in Saskatchewan**
05/28/2019  

In Saskatoon, funds will be used to build a fourth digester tank with associated heating plant upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant. Crews will also be building a new reservoir in northeast Saskatoon to increase drinking water storage capacity.

**Water Infrastructure Investment Makes Dollars and Sense**
05/17/2019  
[https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2019/05/17/water_infrastructure_investment_makes_dollars_and_sense_110444.html](https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2019/05/17/water_infrastructure_investment_makes_dollars_and_sense_110444.html)

The good news is that even in these uniquely polarized times, there is widespread bipartisan agreement in Congress on the need to dramatically increase federal investment in our nation’s water infrastructure.

**Rep. John Katko Wants to Create Trust Fund for Water Infrastructure Projects**
05/17/2019  

U.S. Rep. John Katko is partnering with an Oregon Democrat to push for the creation of a federal trust fund to support water infrastructure projects across the country.

**Investment in Water Infrastructure is Critical: Op-Ed**
05/16/2019  

Connecticut's infrastructure discussion has been focused on transportation, but the fact is, there are critical infrastructure needs across all sectors, including America's water infrastructure.
**Water Supply**

[Idaho] Whitefish Imposes Water Conservation Rules  

Workman said the goal of the ordinance is to conserve water, which can be considered an interim additional water source until new water sources are developed and brought online. Although infrastructure upgrades are planned to the system, Workman noted, additional water supply won’t be in place for two to three years.

The US Drinking Water Supply is Mostly Safe, But That’s Not Good Enough  

Most Americans take clean drinking water for granted as a convenience of modern life. The United States has one of the world’s safest drinking water supplies, but new challenges constantly emerge.

Toledo Prepares Its Water Supply If Storms Hit NW Ohio  
05/28/2019  [https://www.13abc.com/content/news/Toledo-prepares-its-water-supply-if-storms-hit-our-area-510531351.html](https://www.13abc.com/content/news/Toledo-prepares-its-water-supply-if-storms-hit-our-area-510531351.html)

Amid a tornado outbreak in Dayton into Tuesday morning, one of Dayton's big issues is its water supply. The city issued boil advisories for several parts of the city after losing power at its water treatment plant.


Back in 2000, the Honolulu Board of Water Supply paid $30 million for an automated meter reading system to help it measure the monthly water use of its 170,000 residential and business customers. But a former meter reader said the automated system has been flawed ever since its launch nearly two decades ago.

Beer Makers Teaming Up to Protect Arizona’s Water Supply  

The next time you grab a nice, cold beer, you may want to ask the brewer what work went into that glass.

City: Almost 3 Decades to Do ‘Urgent’ Repairs on Water Mains  
05/17/2019  [https://bc.ctvnews.ca/almost-3-decades-to-do-urgent-repairs-on-water-mains-city-1.4427861](https://bc.ctvnews.ca/almost-3-decades-to-do-urgent-repairs-on-water-mains-city-1.4427861)

It’s going to take almost three decades to fix the worst of the aging municipal water pipes at current rates – meaning residents may have to expect more burst pipes like the one in East Vancouver, city officials say.
Infrastructure and Today's Drinking Water
05/08/2019  https://www.al.com/opinion/2019/05/infrastructure-and-todays-drinking-water.html
Municipal water systems are a more recent development than many realize. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, workers and their families moved from rural areas, and cities grew to support the factories driving the Industrial Revolution.

REGULATORY RESULTS

Clean Water

Environmental Protection Agency | Final Rule | National Priorities List
The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 as amended, requires that the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan include a list of national priorities among the known releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants throughout the United States. The National Priorities List constitutes this list. The NPL is intended primarily to guide the Environmental Protection Agency in determining which sites warrant further investigation. These further investigations will allow the EPA to assess the nature and extent of public health and environmental risks associated with the site and to determine what CERCLA-financed remedial action(s), if any, may be appropriate. This rule adds seven sites to the General Superfund section of the NPL and changes the name of an NPL site.

Environmental Protection Agency | Notice | Environmental Impact Statements; Notice of Availability
Section 309(a) of the Clean Air Act requires that EPA make public its comments on EISs issued by other Federal agencies. EPA’s comment letters on EISs are available at: https://cdxnodengn.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-public/action/eis/search.

Sewer

National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities | Notice | National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures
This document contains the final National Endowment for the Humanities procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. This action is necessary to implement these procedures and make them available to the public on NEH's internet site.
**Water Systems**

Environmental Protection Agency | Notice | Notification of a Public Meeting and Webinar: Development of the Fifth Proposed Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5) for Public Water Systems
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or Agency) Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, Standards and Risk Management Division’s Technical Support Center announces a public meeting and webinar to discuss potential approaches to developing the proposal for the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5) for public drinking water systems. The EPA will discuss issues related to UCMR 5, including: The impacts of the America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018; analytical methods and analytes the Agency is considering, including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS); sampling design; minimum reporting levels; and other possible requirements.

**LEGISLATIVE RESULTS**

**Water Infrastructure**

To establish a Water Infrastructure Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2741 | Introduced by Rep. Pallone, Frank, Jr. [D-N.J.] | [The LIFT America Act] To rebuild and modernize the Nation’s infrastructure to expand access to broadband and Next Generation 9-1-1, rehabilitate drinking water infrastructure, modernize the electric grid and energy supply infrastructure, redevelop brownfields, strengthen health care infrastructure, create jobs, and protect public health and the environment, and for other purposes.
As of Actionline’s publication, a summary or text of the bill was not yet available.

H.R. 2470 | Introduced by Rep. Carbajal, Salud [D-Calif.] | Clean Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Act
To direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program to make grants to eligible entities to increase the resilience of publicly owned treatment works to natural disasters.
**Water Resources**

To promote water supply reliability and improved water management for rural communities, the State of California, and the Nation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2458 | Introduced by Rep. Mucarsel-Powell, Debbie [D-Fla.] | WISE Act  
To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to require a certain percentage of funds appropriated for revolving fund capitalization grants be used for green projects, and for other purposes.