

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

We are writing to respectfully request that the EPA's budget request for FY 2021 include at least \$500 million for the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant program ("Section 221"). This funding level will significantly improve American communities' ability to meet their wastewater infrastructure improvement needs, including the elimination of combined sewer overflows.

The *America's Water Infrastructure Act* (P.L. 115-270), which was signed by the President in October 2018, authorized the EPA's Section 221 grant program. The program is designed to provide cost-share grants to States and municipalities for infrastructure improvements that address combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, and stormwater management.

According to the most recent EPA Clean Water Needs Survey, nearly \$50 billion is needed for combined sewer overflow correction. Combined sewer overflows occur when combined sewer systems, which serve hundreds of communities across the nation, release raw sewage into waterways. Such releases are commonly triggered by precipitation events that produce a volume of effluent exceeding the system's manageable levels. When such events occur, the combined sewer system is designed to discharge raw sewage and wastewater directly into a nearby body of water rather than allow plumbing to back-up in homes and businesses.

Although this problem impacts communities across our country, it has had a disproportionate impact on many disadvantaged communities. These areas are least able to afford the required improvements to wastewater infrastructure. While we appreciate the low-interest loans that have been provided for wastewater infrastructure improvements through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, our communities need grant assistance as well. Robust funding of the Section 221 grant program is the only way we will finally be able to prevent combined sewer overflows as well as sanitary sewer overflows.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure our public waterways are safe and clean.

Sincerely,


Lon Trahan


Gwen Moore



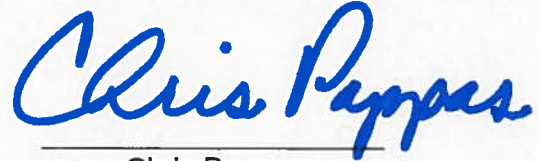
Eleanor Holmes Norton



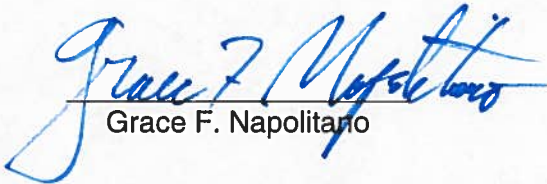
Sean Casten



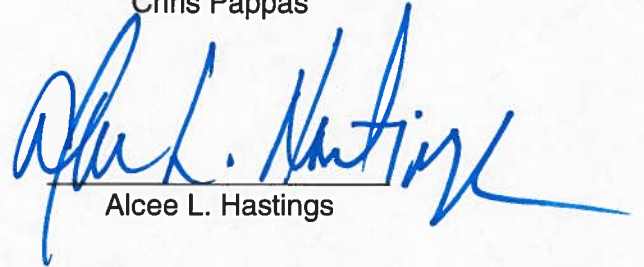
Nanette Diaz Barragan



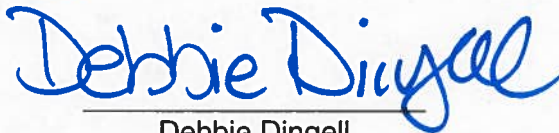
Chris Pappas



Grace F. Napolitano



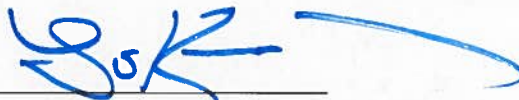
Alcee L. Hastings



Debbie Dingell



David Trone



Joseph P. Kennedy, III



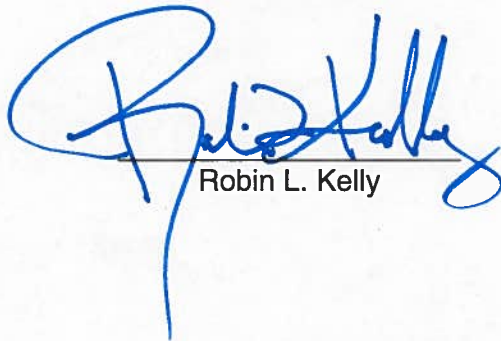
Kathy Castor



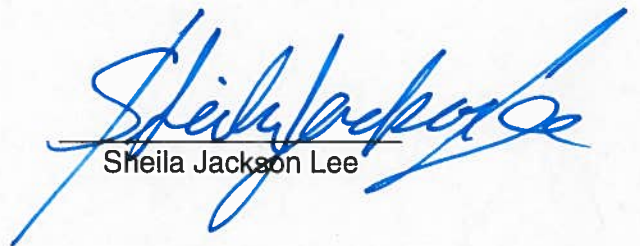
Tulsi Gabbard



Mark Pocan



Robin L. Kelly

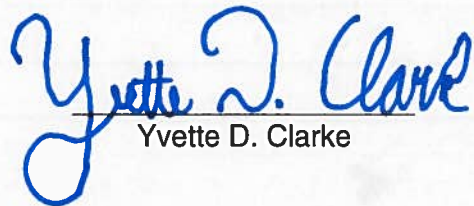


Sheila Jackson Lee


Nydia M. Velázquez


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