



AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

Your Comprehensive
Public Works Resource

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April 2, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the more than 30,000 members of the American Public Works Association (APWA), we appreciate your swift action in passing Public Law (PL) 116-123, the *Coronavirus Preparedness & Response Supplemental Appropriations Act*, and PL 116-127, the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*, and most recently PL 116-136, the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*.

APWA includes personnel from local, county, state, and federal level agencies, operating in both the public and private sectors. Our members have direct oversight and responsibility for all facets of infrastructure including water, transportation, and emergency management. As you work to craft a potential fourth coronavirus legislative package, APWA urges you to provide support for broad infrastructure investment. State and local governments are vested in our nation's infrastructure and outspend the federal government in every infrastructure category. During this unprecedented time, federal assistance is needed to operate, maintain, and improve our nation's critical infrastructure.

We are encouraged to hear about conversations happening in both Chambers of Congress, and comments made by President Trump that a potential fourth coronavirus package should include a robust federal infrastructure investment. This investment is so important as we all work to ensure the long-term health and economic well-being of the country, and as we work to resolve the coronavirus crisis and reinvigorate our citizens and economy to be stronger and more resilient than ever.

APWA strongly supports the following infrastructure investments be included in a future coronavirus package:

Transportation

- With the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act expiring September 30, 2020, now is an opportunity to complete a reauthorization measure early;
- By all measures, the FAST Act has been a legislative success in having provided 5-years of funding certainty and investment increases, APWA calls for the next surface transportation reauthorization to be implemented for at least 6-years and include federal investment above FAST Act enacted levels;

PRESIDENT
William E. (Bill) Spearman III, PE.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Scott D. Grayson



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- APWA’s priority areas for the next reauthorization are funding, streamlining, and safety and therefore, strongly encourages Congress and the Trump Administration to:
 - Increase and index the federal motor fuel tax in the short-term to secure and sustain the Highway Trust Fund, while also implementing a vehicle-miles traveled program, or similar mechanism, for the future where all infrastructure users of all modes pay into the system;
 - Continue support for successful and proven programs such as the Federal Highway Administration’s Every Day Counts, Traffic Incident Management, and the Transportation Alternatives Program, as each of these contribute to project efficiencies, the safety of incident responders, and the safety of pedestrians and the traveling public broadly;
 - APWA strongly supports a multi-modal transportation system and calls for continued strong support and robust funding to federal programs supporting increased investment in local bridges, and bridges not on the National Highway System, the High Risk Rural Roads Program, programs supporting operational improvements on highways, local streets, modernizing bus and rail transit, and for safe bikeways, pedestrian crossings and pathways, as well as airport improvements;
 - Continue programs such as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grants, and the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grants;
 - Continue the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program currently scheduled to expire with the FAST Act;
 - Finally, it is important that there continue to be investment in transportation technologies and advancements to support a modernized transportation network.

Water

- Provide supplemental appropriations for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA);
- Provide supplemental appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF); and
- Provide supplemental appropriations for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF).
- In terms of policy changes to assist the water sector, APWA’s public policy priorities call on Congress and the Trump Administration to:
 - Extend permit limits beyond 5-years so communities can properly budget the cost of compliance while addressing other non-permit required priorities associated with the quality of our nation’s waters;
 - End the isolated approach to permitting and move towards a “One Water” stance by applying a comprehensive, integrated planning approach to all Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) permitting (drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, combined sewer overflow) so that maximum flexibility and cost effectiveness is implemented into the decision-making process; and

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- Include affordability and cost effectiveness, both for the service provider and the customer, as a basic belief within the SDWA and CWA permitting processes along with an understanding that affordability varies by community, region, and economic conditions.

Emergency Management

- Provide additional federal funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Relief Fund (DRF);
- Provide additional federal funding for FEMA Grants to assist state, local, territorial, and tribal governments in the efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

During this crisis, public works professionals, designated as first responders through Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-8), are responsible for providing critical services that are imperative to the health of our communities to include monitoring the water supply, providing sanitation services, and coordinating with our emergency response partners. These types of public works services are necessary not only to daily life, but their importance is even greater during a public health crisis like what our country is facing currently.

In any legislation that provides federal funding and resources for our nation's public works it is vital that the local perspective be heard. Any future legislation to combat the pandemic should enhance state and local control regarding public works projects as a key to successfully designing, maintaining, and operating our infrastructure. APWA opposes unfunded mandates and any effort to impede the appropriate use of public right-of-way and strongly encourages the federal government and industry to coordinate with state and local governments on all infrastructure projects, including installation of broadband internet technology.

Thank you for your consideration of the priorities outlined above. Please know APWA stands ready as a resource and partner in addressing the needs of our country through this current crisis, and into our future recovery. Please feel free to call on APWA if we can provide any measure of support or assistance by contacting APWA's Director of Government and Public Affairs Andrea Eales at (202) 218-6730.

Sincerely,

William E. (Bill) Spearman, III, P.E.
APWA President

Scott D. Grayson, CAE
APWA Chief Executive Officer

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