WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Investments in Water Infrastructure & Water Quality Protection

Support appropriating the full authorized funding levels for water, wastewater, stormwater, and water reuse programs, including the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs, the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) and for state programs including grants for local governments and water utilities, and stormwater local assistance funds. Specifically, continued support for the Washington Metropolitan Area Backup Water Supply Feasibility Study. COG supports funding state revolving funds (SRFs) at the maximum authorization in federal law and making sure that funding for congressionally directed spending projects is in addition to the authorized SRF funding levels. Ensure that local water infrastructure investments to meet water quality permit load allocations and handle future population and economic growth are protected, specifically in the implementation of the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Invest in workforce training and development to ensure the availability of skilled workers to fill water sector jobs. Support funding for agricultural conservation programs.

Support Climate & Resiliency Initiatives

Support funding and policy to address robust scientific climate change analysis, adaptation and resiliency planning and coordinated local best practices for flood control, drought, and water storage and reuse. Support drinking water security and resiliency through research, planning, programs and funding to ensure a resilient, reliable, and clean drinking water supply for the region.

Ensure Regulatory Feasibility & Flexibility

Support actions that provide for flexible implementation and a feasible pace for future stormwater, water, and wastewater permits and other regulatory requirements, including reasonable reporting requirements. Support cost-effective scheduling and financing of water quality programs including streamlining permits, flexibility to achieve nutrient and sediment reduction across wastewater, stormwater, and other sectors to protect affordability of water. For PFAS regulation, COG supports policies that enforce the "polluter pays" principle for PFAS cleanup, ensuring those responsible for contamination are held accountable. In addition, COG supports an explicit legislative exemption from liability under CERCLA (Superfund) for water and wastewater systems, which are passive receivers of these pollutants.

Ensure Local Government Input

Ensure that local governments and wastewater and drinking water utilities are given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on the implementation of the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, as well as legislation and management decisions affecting the Chesapeake Bay and local water quality. Encourage regional collaboration on updates to land-use policies around waterways and riverways.