

MEDIA STATEMENT
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NUCA Statement On House EPA Appropriations Bill
*Utility Contractor Association Appalled With Mammoth Cuts
To Promised Water Infrastructure Resources*

(Fairfax, Va.) – *The chief executive officer of the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA), Doug Carlson, issued the following statement on the actions taken today in the full House for the FY2024 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill, H.R. 4821:*

“Cutting infrastructure spending is bad policy. Funding our nation’s water infrastructure solely through earmarks is even worse policy.”

“Every American community deserves clean drinking water and safe wastewater management. To pick and choose winners through the lottery of House earmark appropriations on the critical subject of public health is fundamentally unfair to every American community, especially for something as essential as providing clean water to our citizens.”

“Taking away water infrastructure funding from the two EPA state revolving funds does not only hurt citizens in 2024—it shrinks the funding pool for years to come. Directed water infrastructure spending reduces the funds available over the long-term because earmarks are grants, rather than loans issued by the state revolving funds. States repay these loans, which are then recycled back as repaid capital. Earmarks do not repay these funding resources, and ultimately cost states an additional \$458 million.”

“Water and wastewater projects are the foundation every community uses for building a healthy, vibrant economy. America's water and wastewater systems are already deficient, and the best hope millions of Americans had to repair these aging systems was found in the 2021 infrastructure bill. The catastrophic funding cuts in this bill of nearly \$2 billion from the EPA's Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund will harm millions of Americans. Make no mistake: projects of critical importance to communities all over the United States will not move forward as a direct consequence of this bill.”

“The massive annual appropriations cuts passed in the House's EPA appropriations bill to water and wastewater programs are counter-productive – not only do water infrastructure projects

provide clear and tangible benefits to the economy, as any NUCA member can tell you, emergency repairs are expensive. These cuts will not reduce the deficit, but increase it."

"If these cuts are not reversed by the Senate and in the final bill, the House will have put many American communities at risk. Communities should not be forced to make hard choices about who can and cannot have their water infrastructure needs met, and this bill will force them to do just that. Congressional leadership knows this bill is fatally flawed. NUCA is encouraged to see the adoption of several messaging amendments recognizing the shortfall, but the underlying legislation still does not provide the necessary funding."

"Nothing is more fundamental for human life than safe, clean water. NUCA strongly urges that today's Congress restore and increase the resources promised in 2021 by Congress to restore and rebuild our nation's water and wastewater infrastructure. Until the legislation fully restores the funding, NUCA must recommend members of Congress vote against H.R. 4821."

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About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents almost 2,000 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is found online at www.nuca.com, and can be followed on Twitter at **@NUCA_National**. The association's Twitter hashtags are #WeDigAmerica and #NUCAdigs.