

MRBPLG
The Maumee River Basin Partnership
of Local Governments



August 18, 2010

RE: URGENT ACTION NEEDED!!

We are writing you today to strongly encourage you to **please contact your Senators immediately in Washington, D.C. and ask them to support prompt consideration and passage of the Water Infrastructure Financing Act (S. 1005)!** This legislation would authorize \$39 billion in federal spending to upgrade drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities across the country **which includes \$1.8 billion in grants to address combined and sanitary sewer overflows (CSOs and SSOs).**

These federal grants would greatly assist our communities by helping to off-set our cost burden towards meeting EPA water and wastewater mandates. Our citizens cannot afford to continually have their water and sewer rates increased. Clean drinking water and sanitary waste services must be affordable for everyone.

Since the U.S. House of Representatives has already passed its version of S. 1005 (H.R. 1262), *now is the time to act so the U.S. Senate can also pass this important legislation!* We must show strong support from all of our communities, speak with a unified voice, and send a strong message to Washington, D.C.!

The bill was placed July 2010 on the U.S. Senate's calendar for consideration, meaning it can come up at any time for floor action. That said, the Senate is quickly running out of floor time. They are off on the August work period/recess right now, and will only have about 4 weeks in session before breaking for the November elections. If the bill, S. 1005, is to move this Congress, it will need to come up either in the September session or the lame duck session following the elections. **Putting immediate pressure on the legislators to support the bill and support its consideration will be necessary – there are a lot of bills competing for attention and your Senators need to hear that this bill should take priority.** Any communication with the Senators will be helpful – e.g., materials, letters, phone calls, participation in local meetings with the Senators and/or their staff, etc.

Background

In June 2006, the MRBPLG completed a document titled “Under Funded and Over Burdened: An Analysis of the Impacts of Water Quality Mandates on Maumee River Basin Communities”. This study updated a previous document produced by the MRBPLG in 2004. The purposes of completing the study were to highlight the environmental and economic importance of the Maumee River and Lake Erie and the trend towards decreasing federal funding for wastewater infrastructure projects, as well as, expose the economic burden that unfunded water quality mandates are having on Maumee River Basin communities. Further, the study calls for the

allocation of federal funding that will provide regulated urban communities with financial relief. A copy of this study is included on the enclosed CD which has also been provided to all US Congressional Representatives in the Maumee River Basin.

In February 2009, the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), Northwest Ohio Mayors & Managers' Association (NOMMA), and the MRBPLG partnered to produce a white paper, titled "SANITARY SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE, NORTHWEST OHIO – SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN – NORTHEAST INDIANA" which is also included on this CD. MRBPLG Partners have utilized both of the above noted documents to assist them with on-going water infrastructure funding lobbying efforts.

Using inflation rates of 5% annually for waste water treatment, CSOs, and SSOs and 10% annually for the NPDES Municipal Stormwater program since associated costs were underreported in 2006, the MRBPLG projects that the 2010 overall, basin-wide total need to address these programs is conservatively estimated to be \$1.445 billion.

MRBPLG Information

The Maumee River Basin Partnership of Local Governments (MRBPLG) was established to function as a regional network of local governments and other partners within the Maumee River Basin that evaluates policies and supports and promotes issues, programs, and activities that will benefit water quality within the tri-state region. The MRBPLG is a consortium of cities, towns, villages, townships, counties, watersheds, and the regional community that reaches across three state boundaries and focuses on a watershed-based approach to water quality management.

The MRBPLG is genuinely interested in the water quality of the Maumee River Basin, which includes not only the EPA mandated CSO and stormwater programs but other water quality and quantity issues within the Basin. Please visit our website at www.mrbplg.org for more information including meeting dates.

Lobbying Assistance Tools on the Enclosed CD

The enclosed CD includes materials to assist you with drafting a letter to your Senator. The CD includes each Senators' contact information, a template letter, copies of the MRBPLG cost study info and TMACOG paper, copies of S. 1005 and H.R. 1262, a sample media release and letter to the editor, as well as other support materials.

When communicating with your Senators, please cite specific examples of how this legislation can help improve conditions in your community. Personal stories, your own as well as those from your constituents, make the most compelling arguments and help lend authenticity to your request for support.

We sincerely appreciate your time and consideration to support the Water Infrastructure Financing Act, S. 1005. Please feel free to contact either or both of us if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



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