



March 6, 2024

The Honorable Pat Fallon
U.S. House of Representatives
2416 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brittany Pettersen
U.S. House of Representatives
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Fallon and Pettersen:

On behalf of the National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC) I'm writing to thank you for your leadership in introducing the *Special District Grant Accessibility Act* (H.R. 7525). This critically important bill would establish a formal definition of "special district" in federal law, as well as require the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance to federal agencies requiring special districts to be recognized as local governments for the purpose of federal financial assistance determinations. We are extremely grateful to you for working closely with NSDC to develop this legislation, and we're pleased to provide our organization's full endorsement.

As you know, special districts are local governments created by the people of a community to deliver specialized services essential to their health, safety, economy and well-being. Nationwide, there are approximately 35,000 special districts that provide a broad range of public services, including fire protection, drinking water and wastewater services, healthcare, transit, natural resource conservation, mosquito abatement, and more.

Despite the prevalence of special districts throughout the United States, federal law lacks a consistent definition of special purpose units of local government. As a result, some special districts face challenges in accessing federal funding opportunities and are commonly omitted from the definition of eligible units of local government in legislative proposals that authorize federal programs and funding. Moreover, special districts lack official population figures and are therefore not recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau as "geographic units of government." As a result, special districts are unable to gain access to certain formula-driven grants and resources.

The *Special District Grant Accessibility Act* represents a long-overdue effort that would define special districts in a clear and consistent way and would ensure that special districts have the same access to federal resources as other units of local government. Again, we thank you for your leadership in introducing H.R. 7525, and we look forward to working with you to ensure its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann A. Terry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Terry
Chair, National Special Districts Coalition
CEO, Special District Association of Colorado