



June 22, 2021

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester
Chairman, House Committee on
Energy and Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Katko
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Energy and Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative Blunt-Rochester and Representative Katko,

On behalf of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), I am writing today to thank you for introducing H.R. 0000, the Low-Income Water Customer Assistance Programs Act of 2021. This legislation will provide critical assistance to low-income water customers and small water systems in rural communities across the United States.

Water bills are on the rise in recent years as water utilities are presented with the convergent challenges of updating aging infrastructure, remediating for a growing list of harmful contaminants, and the need to increase resilience for existing infrastructure. Small and rural water systems feel these challenges to an even greater degree as they often have limited staff members and resources, and often do not have customer bases large enough to develop the economies of scale needed to finance major upgrades, especially in lower income communities. These issues, paired with insufficient federal assistance leads to individual households footing the bill for expenses in the form of increasingly unaffordable monthly rates.

While there are special grant programs for small, rural systems at EPA and USDA, they are often overdrawn and unable to cover the entirety of the need in our communities. The permanent low-income assistance program that your legislation would create would provide an invaluable lifeline to small systems throughout the country and would greatly reduce the burden felt by low-income households.

H.R. 0000 is a smart, bipartisan solution for low-income Americans and the water systems that serve them. RCAP looks forward to working with you to get this important program passed into law.

Sincerely,

Nathan Ohle, CEO
RCAP

