

**David B. McKinley Opening Statement (6/16/21)**

**Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee Markup**

**Drinking Water Legislation**

*As prepared for delivery*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman Today's markup will cover three bills, only two of which have had a hearing during this congress. The AQUA Act will make significant changes to our drinking water laws. While well intentioned, I have some concerns with this bill. It removes the cost-benefit requirement and the small systems variance from the safe drinking water act. The cost-benefit analysis is an important tool to evaluate the impacts of our policy choices when developing drinking water regulations and the variance allows eligible systems serving 3,300 people or fewer, like many of those in my district, to apply to EPA to use treatments technologies that they can actually afford.

I intend to offer an amendment to this bill to ensure these important provisions remain part of our drinking water laws. The subcommittee will also markup the "low-income water customer assistance programs act of 2021"

This legislation will create a permanent rate assistance program for low-

income water customers. And lastly, the subcommittee will markup the PFAS Action Act. We haven't had a hearing on PFAS in two years and nearly a quarter of our members are new to the committee. The science on PFAS has evolved since our last hearing and this is a non-scientific approach to dealing with PFAS. PFAS is a large class of different chemicals over 9,000 with different properties and characteristics, and different hazard and risk profiles. So we shouldn't pursue a one-size-fits-all approach. And EPA has made significant progress in addressing this issue since this bill passed the house last year. In fact, EPA is moving forward with: Drinking water regulations; Hazardous substance designations under superfund; and Toxicity assessments for certain PFAS.

And congress has passed key bipartisan laws to address PFAS like:

- Requiring the defense department to stop using PFAS-containing fire-fighting foams;
- Requiring EPA to mandate that drinking water systems monitor for certain unregulated pfas; and
- Requiring EPA to restrict new uses of PFOA and PFAS

Even the defense department is voluntarily cleaning up their contaminated sites.

Mr. Chairman, our committee has yet to have EPA testify on this legislation. Will you commit to holding a hearing with EPA before moving this bill to the full committee? We should take the time to address this issue in a more thoughtful manner. I look forward to a thoughtful markup and I yield back.