

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

**Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
Hearing on
“Trusting the Tap: Upgrading America’s Drinking Water Infrastructure”
March 29, 2022**

Mr. Kareem Adeem, Director of Water and Sewer Utilities, City of Newark, New Jersey

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE)

1. Climate change is creating more frequent and stronger storms—making infrastructure upgrades, including drinking water upgrades, more costly. In Delaware, as the state with the lowest lying mean elevation in the country, we see the impacts of climate change every day.
 - a. How does climate change impact our water systems?

RESPONSE: In New Jersey we share much of the same oceanfront and bayfront topography and conditions as Delaware and both states suffered fatalities and devastating loss of property from hurricanes Irene, Sandy, and Isaias in the last 12 years. Flooding from rainfall and tidal surges have swamped water and sewage treatment plants, forcing boil water mandates after storms. With sea levels rising and the intensity of storms becoming more powerful, the infrastructure bill can help fund these costly but important flood mitigation projects.

For cities like Newark that draw from outdoors reservoirs the growing intensity of storms is real problem. Inundating rains create more runoff, more sediment, and natural bacteria to increase the turbidity of our water supply. The infrastructure bill could help cities purchase more land around reservoirs to act as natural filters and help them improve their water quality monitoring systems. In Newark we have state-of-the-art analytics and artificial intelligence monitoring and reporting controls. We are also introducing a Dissolved Air Flotation to better scrub impurities our drinking water sources. All of this is costly and money from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law could help cities expand their technologies.

- b. How will the investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law help to make the drinking water systems in those communities most vulnerable to climate change more resilient?

RESPONSE: As stated, most urban cities areas draw from outdoor reservoirs and more intense rainfalls and drought put environmentally disadvantaged communities at greater risk. Additionally, rising seas levels and magnified storms create flooding hazards and potential raw sewage spill overs into streets and even some water treatment plants. I've enclosed the link to long-term flood mitigation plans for the Newark metro area with a estimated \$4 billion price tag. This is an investment in the health and safety of our people and their property and may curtail FEMA payouts in the future. Certainly, Bipartisan Infrastructure money would be welcomed to defray costs.

https://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/pdf/CSO_SIAR_PVSC_20201001.pdf