

Thank you.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee to discuss the priorities of my constituents in the Fifth District of Connecticut.

On December 13, 2025, just as Connecticut families were bracing for some of the coldest temperatures of the season, a high-pressure water main failed in the city of Waterbury, the largest city in my district.

The water main break disrupted service to more than 60% of the city, with the nearby towns of Wolcott and Watertown also affected.

Over 100,000 people were left without running water for six days.

Hospitals were instructed to cancel surgeries, restaurants were forced to shutter their doors ahead of the holiday season, and Waterbury public schools were closed.

With the help of the Connecticut National Guard and state and local partners, water distribution sites were set up across the city.

After two weeks, repairs were completed at a cost of nearly \$3 million.

Days later, my district was faced with another water infrastructure crisis on Christmas Day.

A water main break in Danbury left 30,000 people without drinkable water.

Once water was restored, residents were under boil-water advisories for hours to mitigate the risk of water contamination, again relying on water distribution sites across the city.

Water infrastructure failures are not inevitable.

Federal investments can help states acquire the resources to replace outdated pipes and other essential water infrastructure.

As the Committee works to develop priorities for the remainder of the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, I urge my colleagues on this Committee to support critical programs that will allow states to address water infrastructure needs.

In particular, the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF), the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), and programs supported by the *Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014*.

Many of these programs were included in the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021*, which delivered more than \$50 billion to improve drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure across our country.

Further, as the Committee prepares to develop the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2026*, I urge Members to prioritize provisions that address flood mitigation and climate resilience.

Extreme weather events in recent years underscore the need for investment in these programs.

In August 2024, during a thousand-year storm, municipalities in my district saw up to 12 to 15 inches of rainfall.

Approximately 700 residents reported damage as a result of the storm.

While FEMA funding was critical to helping towns recover, water infrastructure dollars, as included in previous Water Resources Development legislation, would have made a meaningful difference for towns like Southbury, where the collapse of a local dam unleashed 80 million gallons of water into the town center.

We do not have to wait until devastating storms, natural disasters, or water infrastructure breakdowns occur.

We can make the federal investment in our communities now.

Thank you. I yield back.