

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## National League of Cities Urges Passage of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA)

MAY 19, 2014

**Washington, D.C.** - The National League of Cities (NLC) calls on Congress to swiftly pass the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA), which authorizes 34 new lock, dam, levee, port and ecosystem restoration projects and includes a new pilot program that makes loans available to local governments building large water and wastewater-related infrastructure projects and activities.

Included in the bill is the new five-year, \$350 million Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA). Modeled after the successful Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), WIFIA would provide low-interest loans and loan guarantees for large water and wastewater-related infrastructure projects and activities that are at least \$20 million (or \$5 million for communities serving fewer than 25,000 people).

"The Water Resources Reform and Development Act is a positive first step toward providing communities with more financing options for large water and wastewater projects," said NLC Executive Director Clarence E.

Anthony. "We are pleased to see the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act included in WRRDA. We urge Congress to quickly pass the bill so cities across the U.S. can accelerate the modernization of the nation's aging infrastructure in our communities."

NLC remains concerned that tax-exempt municipal bonds cannot be used for the non-federal share of projects.

Other key provisions for local governments:

- **Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund** - NLC supports setting target expenditures for a gradual increase in the percentage of user fees that are spent through the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for harbor and port maintenance, reaching 100 percent by 2025. However, annual appropriations from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund remain discretionary.

- **Clean Water Act/State Revolving Loan Funds** - Amends the Clean Water Act to ensure that projects funded with State Revolving Loan Funds (SRF) maximize the potential for efficient water use, reuse, recapture and conservation. States may provide additional subsidization to local governments in the form of principal forgiveness and negative-interest loans. EPA is also required to conduct a review of the SRF state allotment formula.
- **Project Authorization** - Allows local project sponsors to submit proposals to the Army Corps of Engineers, which in turn would submit a list to Congress for authorization. The bill would allow local project sponsors to contribute their own funds to the Army Corps to carry out studies and move projects forward via the processing of permits.
- **Review Process** - Sets a three-year deadline for Army Corps feasibility studies and requires concurrent reviews of feasibility studies and environmental reviews.

The National League of Cities (NLC) is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.  
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