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May 08, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representative
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
Chair
Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
585 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Chair Napolitano:

The Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) would like to thank you for introducing the “Clean Water for All Act.” This bill recognizes the importance of the Clean Water Act and its purpose to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.” The Act also recognizes the detrimental impacts the “Navigable Waters Protection Rule: Definition of ‘Waters of the United States’” would have on our Nation’s waters and therefore prohibits its implementation.

The “Navigable Waters Protection Rule” severely restricts the definition of “waters of the United States” in the Clean Water Act and thereby eliminates clean water protections for many wetlands and streams. This approach is inconsistent with established science and puts our Nation’s waters at risk of degradation and destruction which in turn puts the drinking water sources for more than 200 million Americans at risk including seven out of ten Southerners. By blocking the implementation of this ill-conceived rule the “Clean Water for All Act” will ensure that our waterways and wetlands continue to be protected.

SELC also appreciates the parameters the Act sets out for the promulgation of a new rule to define “waters of the United States.” The Act ensures that a new rule will be in accordance with the purpose of the Clean Water Act and that our Nation’s waters are not degraded, that flood-risk is not increased, and that there are no disproportionate impacts to communities of color or low-income populations.

SELC gives our full support to the “Clean Water for All Act” and greatly appreciates your commitment to protecting our waterways and wetlands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan Boian".

Meghan Boian
Legislative Counsel