ACWA
Association of California Water Agencies

Bringing Water Together

November 20, 2026

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United State Senate

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives

Chair Murkowski, Chair Graves, Ranking Member Whitehouse and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), I write to thank you for your work on the 2026 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and to urge you to continue your efforts and enact WRDA before the end of the 119th Congress. ACWA is the largest statewide coalition of public water agencies in the United States. We represent over 470 member agencies that are responsible for delivering about 90 percent of the water to communities, farms, and businesses in California. Passing WRDA in the 119th Congress would demonstrate a testament to the importance of water infrastructure nationwide. ACWA supports efforts in developing legislation for a sustainable water future and respectfully requests that you ensure final passage of WRDA 2026.

The biennial WRDA bill authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to implement critical infrastructure projects, studies, and policies related to our nation's waterways. WRDA 2026 will provide much-needed support for critical water resources projects to improve water storage and water management, strengthen flood control, mitigate drought, enhance community resilience, and support ecosystem and wetland restoration. Many ACWA member agencies work closely with USACE.

As you work through the conference process, ACWA encourages you to retain provisions establishing four offices within the Directorate of Civil Works focused on inland navigation construction management; water supply, water conservation, and drought resiliency; technical assistance and community outreach; and alternative delivery methods. We are especially supportive of the creation of an Office of Water Supply, Water Conservation, and Drought Resiliency within the Directorate of Civil Works (Sec. 101, H.R.9497). This will enhance work already underway and help prepare the nation for future water supply challenges brought on by record-breaking drought conditions. Drought is affecting regions throughout the nation with some 84 million Americans currently living in drought affected areas.

ACWA also supports the creation of a Continuing Authority Program focused on drought resiliency (Sec. 109 of H.R.9497), explicit authorization for USACE to allow financial assistance in the form of grants or reimbursements to cover project costs (Sec. 1301, S.4949), reauthorization of FEMA's National Dam Safety Program (Sec.1375 of S.4949, Sec. 501 of H.R.9497) and various EPA clean water and drinking water funding programs (Title I and Title II, S.4949). We also support provisions that would improve

USACE communication with congress and the water managers (Sec. 1104, Sec. 1107, Sec. 1115 S.4949, and Sec. 135 of H.R. 9497). Collectively, these provisions would provide expanded federal support, resources, and funding opportunities to advance critical water infrastructure projects, strengthen drought preparedness, and ensure reliable access to clean and safe drinking water in communities across the country.

The ongoing pressures on water infrastructure, not only in California but nationwide, underscore the urgency for continued investments in water resources. ACWA believes WRDA 2026 is a critical piece of legislation to help address significant water challenges facing communities, businesses, and ecosystems. ACWA member agencies are prepared to help implement WRDA policies that effectively support sustainable management of water resources.

Again, thank you for your leadership in ensuring a bipartisan Water Resources Development Act of 2026. Please let us know if we can provide additional information or be of assistance. If you have any questions or would like to follow up on this matter, please contact ACWA Director of Federal Relations, Ian Lyle, at ianl@acwa.com or (202) 434-4765.

Respectfully,

Ian Lyle
Director of Federal Relations
Association of California Water Agencies

CC
The Honorable John Thune
Republican Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives