

May 16, 2005

RE: FY06 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill – Blending Amendment

Dear Member of Congress:

The organizations below strongly urge you to *oppose* any amendments to the *FY06 Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill* during House floor consideration that would prevent the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from issuing a final Clean Water Act (CWA) blending policy, or that would otherwise preclude the practice of blending.

Before you vote. . . . find out if your local wastewater utilities utilize blending as a wet weather management practice, whether there have been adverse health or environmental impacts from this decades-old practice, and how much it will cost local homeowners and businesses if blending were banned. We estimate that if blending were prohibited, the cost to cities and towns nationally would exceed \$200 billion. Blending has been used by municipalities for decades to treat significantly increased wastewater volumes in wet weather, avoid serious adverse impacts on plant operations, and protect public health and water quality.

There has been a lot of misleading information provided to Congress on the practice of blending. Blended discharges must meet all permit limits including those based on secondary treatment standards or any more stringent limitations necessary to attain water quality standards. Furthermore, blending protects public utility infrastructure, and prevents sewer backups into homes and businesses. A final blending policy will increase permitting consistency and make more information publicly available.

We urge you to oppose any amendment or legislative rider to the *Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill* that would impede EPA's ability to move forward and issue guidance on wastewater blending. Any effort that prevents cities and counties from blending represents an enormous step backward for clean water in America.

We urge you to oppose any amendment or rider that would prevent the EPA from concluding years of work and issuing a final guidance document on wastewater blending.

Sincerely,

THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN WATER AGENCIES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS AND TOWNSHIPS
NATIONAL RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION
WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES
ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES OF NEW JERSEY
ASSOCIATION OF OHIO METROPOLITAN WASTEWATER AGENCIES
ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
BAY AREA (CA) CLEAN WATER AGENCIES
CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SANITATION AGENCIES
CALIFORNIA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
CENTRAL STATES WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
COALITION OF GREATER MINNESOTA CITIES
CSO PARTNERSHIP
KANSAS WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
LEAGUE OF KANSAS MUNICIPALITIES
MAINE WASTEWATER CONTROL ASSOCIATION
MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER AGENCIES
MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE & ECONOMIC REVIEW BOARD
MISSOURI WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
NEW ENGLAND WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
NEW JERSEY WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
NEW YORK WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
OREGON ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN WATER AGENCIES
PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES ASSOCIATION
SOUTH CAROLINA WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION
TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF UTILITY DISTRICTS
TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
TENNESSEE WATER QUALITY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION
TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE AGENCIES
Tri-TAC (CALIFORNIA)
WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER AGENCIES, INC.
WESTERN COALITION OF ARID STATES
WEST VIRGINIA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
WEST VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION