



**STATEMENT ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 APPROPRIATIONS OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**SUBMITTED TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**SUBMITTED BY THE
ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE AGENCIES
(AMSA)
KEN KIRK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

MARCH 18, 2005

REQUEST SUMMARY

AMSA recommends that the following funding be appropriated for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the fiscal year (FY) 2006 appropriations bill:

- **For the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF): at least \$1,500,000,000**
- **For the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF): at least \$850,000,000**
- **For the Water Quality Cooperative Agreements Program (104(b)): \$19,000,000**
- **For the National Biosolids Partnership: \$1,000,000**
- **For the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Water ISAC): \$2,000,000**

CRITICAL NEED FOR CONTINUED FUNDING

AMSA represents nearly 300 clean water agencies across the country that treat more than 18 billion gallons of wastewater each day and serve the majority of the U.S. sewered population. On behalf its membership, AMSA would like to thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. Specifically, AMSA urges the Committee to provide the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) with at least \$1.5 billion and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) with at least \$805 million. AMSA also recommends that the EPA budget include appropriations for Section 104(b)(3), which supports the Water Quality Cooperative Agreements program, at \$19 million, \$1 million for the National Biosolids Partnership, and \$2 million for the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Water ISAC).

Federal funding of these important environmental programs have benefited our nation's streams, rivers, lakes and oceans which now are cleaner today than they have been in over half a century. This has been accomplished by the unparalleled efforts of the many cities, special districts, municipalities, and industries that discharge treated effluent into the waters of the United States. The backbone of the transformation of America's waters has been the federal Clean Water Act. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent by the federal government, states, industries, and municipalities around the country to bring our nation's waters to their current condition. This funding partnership must continue to maintain the improvements we have achieved to date and to build upon them. In spite of the great progress made under the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that nearly 45% of the nation's waterways remain impaired. EPA also estimates a national clean water funding gap in the hundreds of billions of dollars which, if unaddressed, could return this country to pre-Clean Water Act water quality standards in the near future.

CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND

The Bush Administration has proposed to drastically cut EPA's budget for fiscal year (FY) 2006 by \$500 million (from \$8.1 billion to \$7.6 billion). The vast majority of this reduction would be achieved through a proposed cut of \$360 million (from \$1.09 billion to \$730 million) to the Agency's CWSRF program. The CWSRF, a loan program that helps local communities repair and replace aging treatment plants and pipes, has been the primary source of federal support for clean water infrastructure projects since its creation in 1987. AMSA supports both full funding for the CWSRF in the short-term, and a dedicated trust fund to guarantee clean and safe water in America for the long-term.

This investment in the CWSRF is a much-needed down payment to improve our nation's water and wastewater treatment plants. Your support for additional funding for the SRFs would help stimulate the economy, create jobs and provide funds for securing our water infrastructure for generations to come. Water infrastructure in the U.S. has become antiquated, with many pipes as much as 50-100 years old. The funding increase provided by this amendment is essential to protect our nation's rivers and lakes and to assure clean water for communities across the country. Without CWSRF funding, many communities will not be able to tackle essential capital replacement projects needed to meet federal Clean Water Act mandates and improve the quality of the nation's waters.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 104(B)(3) — WATER QUALITY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS/GRANTS

Congress funded 104(b)(3) at \$19 million in FY '05 and AMSA requests that funding for this program remain steady in EPA's FY '06 budget. This key program makes grants available to state water pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, municipalities and other nonprofit institutions to promote the prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution. Treatment plants have used this funding for several critical water quality programs in various issue areas, including wet weather (sanitary sewer overflows, combined sewer overflows and stormwater), water use efficiency, biosolids, national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) streamlining tools, pretreatment and environmental management systems. AMSA believes that

funding Section 104(b)(3) is vital to continuing to build on the water quality gains that were made possible by these grants and, again, urges Congress to appropriate \$19 million for the program in FY 2006.

NATIONAL BIOSOLIDS PARTNERSHIP

The National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) is an alliance of AMSA and the Water Environment Federation, with advisory support from the EPA. It is committed to developing and advancing environmentally sound and sustainable biosolids management practices that go beyond minimum regulatory compliance. The Partnership is encouraging wastewater treatment agencies to implement an environmental management system (EMS) that helps the public understand and accept local biosolids management practices. It was agreed that a uniform third-party biosolids program would be the most efficient and effective way to manage the growing volume of biosolids throughout the country. Participants in the NBP EMS program undergo a rigorous third-party audit to achieve certification that is equal to or more stringent than International Standards Organization (ISO) certification for the private sector.

Congress funded the National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) at nearly \$1 million in fiscal year 2005 to support this model, award-winning EMS program. It will, however, take several more years for full national implementation. AMSA requests the Subcommittee's assistance to ensure that \$1 million is included in EPA's budget in the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2006. The Subcommittee's endorsement of this critical EMS program will help treatment facilities across the country ensure the safe and environmentally sound use and disposal of biosolids.

WATER INFORMATION SHARING AND ANALYSIS CENTER (Water ISAC)

The Water ISAC is a nonprofit entity designed to gather, analyze and disseminate sensitive water security information to water and wastewater systems, most of which are operated by local governments. The types of information shared with these utilities include warnings of threats, white papers on chemical and biological agencies, a database of contaminants, training aids to help utilities conduct vulnerability assessments, and a library of information. For the past two fiscal years, Congress has approved language supporting the Water ISAC at \$2 million per year. AMSA supports continued funding for the Water ISAC at \$2 million in FY 2006.

AMSA appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony to the Subcommittee. For further information, contact AMSA Executive Director Ken Kirk at (202) 833-4653.