

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 2, 2007

Stephen L. Johnson
Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency
Room 3000
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Johnson,

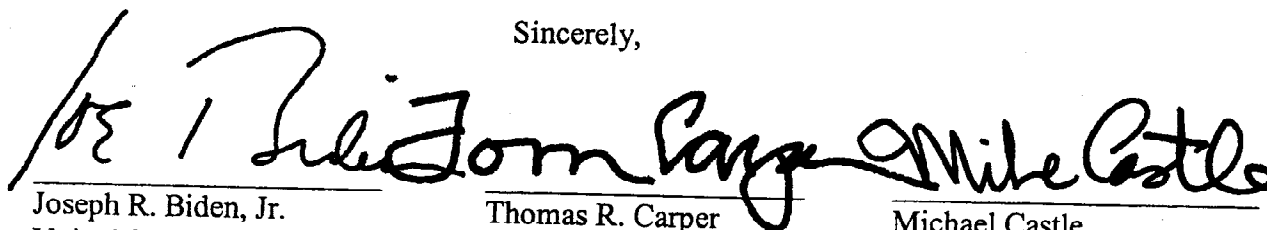
The Joint Funding Resolution, H.J. RES 20, making further continuing appropriations for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2007, has passed the House and soon will be considered in the Senate. We are writing to urge you to utilize funds provided in that bill for the rural water associations' grassroots technical assistance initiatives currently operating in our State of Delaware.

We hope you will prioritize rural water funding within EPA's FY07 appropriations, specifically through the Environmental Programs Management account, because this is what small communities, like ours, depend upon to protect their drinking water quality and to comply with federal mandates. Small communities are most in need of assistance for EPA compliance because of their limited technical and financial resources. Rural Water is often the only understandable assistance small communities receive to operate water supplies, comply with federal rules, and apply for federal funding.

In our State, the Delaware Rural Water Association provided technical assistance to the City of Seaford when serious flooding resulted in problems with the wastewater treatment facility. They have also assisted the Delaware General Assembly and local school boards in addressing concerns about lead found in public school water fountains, including providing the training and equipment to test the water. This kind of support to rural areas and small towns is invaluable.

As you consider how to allocate the funds provided in the Joint Funding Resolution, we urge you to include funding for important rural water initiatives at a level that allows all the local field-staff to continue their important work in rural and small town Delaware. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have additional questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Borin in Senator Biden's office at 224-8256, Beth Osborne in Senator Carper's office at 224-3022 and Olivia Kurtz in Congressman Castle's office at 225-4165.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senator

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

Michael Castle
United States Representative



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR - 2 2007

OFFICE OF
WATER

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Biden:

Thank you for your letter of February 2, 2007, to Stephen L. Johnson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), expressing your support for provision of funding to the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) from discretionary money that may be available to the Agency in the final Fiscal Year 2007 budget. I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of the Administrator. EPA agrees with you that it is critical to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking water systems to ensure that they are able to comply with standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

As you know, the NRWA receives financial assistance through Congressionally-directed funding in EPA's appropriations bills. EPA is reviewing the final appropriations language and will evaluate funding options in light of mandatory fixed costs and other priorities.

Irrespective of our final decision on funding for NRWA, I want to assure you that EPA will continue to support small systems through our other activities. The Agency supports training and develops targeted tools to help support small system implementation of regulatory requirements. States can also use funding from their Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) grants to support small systems. In addition to the \$14 million expended in FY 2006 for technical assistance to small systems, states also expended an additional \$38 million for other set-aside activities that primarily benefit small systems.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may call Steven Kinberg, in EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, at 564-5037.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. H. Grumbles".

Benjamin H. Grumbles
Assistant Administrator



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR - 2 2007

OFFICE OF
WATER

The Honorable Michael Castle
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Castle:

Thank you for your letter of February 2, 2007, to Stephen L. Johnson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), expressing your support for provision of funding to the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) from discretionary money that may be available to the Agency in the final Fiscal Year 2007 budget. I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of the Administrator. EPA agrees with you that it is critical to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking water systems to ensure that they are able to comply with standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

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Benjamin H. Grumbles
Assistant Administrator



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR - 2 2007

OFFICE OF
WATER

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

Thank you for your letter of February 2, 2007, to Stephen L. Johnson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), expressing your support for provision of funding to the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) from discretionary money that may be available to the Agency in the final Fiscal Year 2007 budget. I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of the Administrator. EPA agrees with you that it is critical to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking water systems to ensure that they are able to comply with standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

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