

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 14, 2007

The Honorable Stephen L. Johnson  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Mail Code: 1101A  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Johnson:

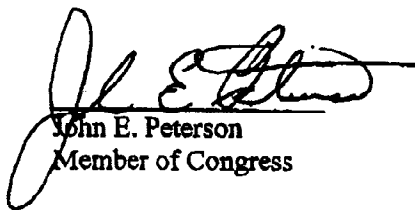
As the EPA begins to develop its priorities for the remainder of the 2007 fiscal year now that H.J.Res. 20 has been passed by Congress, we ask that you provide funding for the source water protection program operated by the National Rural Water Association. In the House passed FY07 Interior Appropriations bill, the association was in line to receive an \$11 million appropriation, similar to funding levels provided by Congress in past years. It is our hope that you will maintain these important dollars that go so far to providing technical assistance to small communities in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation.

Because of the important support of EPA, NRWA was able to develop source water protection plans for 13 new communities in Pennsylvania last year, advancing the state toward the goal of source water protection plans for every community in Pennsylvania. EPA funds also provided classroom training and onsite technical assistance by NRWA, helping Pennsylvania water and wastewater system operators become certified or maintain their certification. These funds sponsored more than 40 classroom trainings to more than 1,500 students and provided over 7,000 contact hours of training. These small investments in training and planning go a long way towards accomplishing EPA's larger goal of protecting our nation's environment.

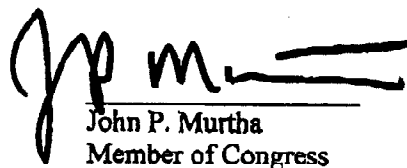
While we understand that process for assembling EPA's funding priorities for the 2007 fiscal year is a work in progress, we request your immediate attention to this matter. It appears that without an agency decision, NRWA technical assistance operations currently operating in Pennsylvania would be terminated on February 15, 2007. The impact of such a termination would be devastating to our small communities within Pennsylvania.

We thank you for your continued support of these rural water initiatives, and look forward to your timely action.

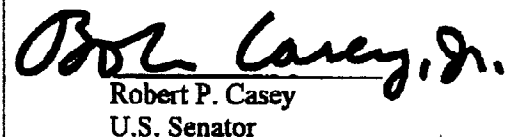
Sincerely,



John E. Peterson  
Member of Congress



John P. Murtha  
Member of Congress



Robert P. Casey  
U.S. Senator

*Tim Holden*

Tim Holden  
Member of Congress

*Phil English*

Phil English  
Member of Congress

*Paul E. Kanjorski*

Paul E. Kanjorski  
Member of Congress

*Bill Shuster*

Bill Shuster  
Member of Congress

*Mike Doyle*

Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress

*Jim Gerlach*

Jim Gerlach  
Member of Congress

*Todd R. Platts*

Todd Russell Platts  
Member of Congress

*Alyse Y. Schwartz*

Alyse Y. Schwartz  
Member of Congress

*Tim Murphy*

Tim Murphy  
Member of Congress

*Christopher P. Carney*

Christopher Carney  
Member of Congress

*Patrick J. Murphy*

Patrick Murphy  
Member of Congress

*Jason Altmire*

Jason Altmire  
Member of Congress



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

MAR - 2 2007

The Honorable Jason Altmire  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

OFFICE OF  
WATER

Dear Congressman Altmire:

Thank you for your letter of February 14, 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 (202) 564-5037.

Sincerely,

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

Benjamin H. Grumbles  
Assistant Administrator