



April 28, 2021

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear U.S. Senators:

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors, a national construction industry trade association with 69 chapters representing more than 21,000 members, I write today to express ABC's support for S. 914, the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021. This bipartisan legislation would make significant investments in the development and maintenance of our nation's drinking water and wastewater infrastructure through grant programs and state revolving loan funds.

ABC applauds the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for recognizing the importance of improving our nation's water resources and drinking water infrastructure. By authorizing an investment of more than \$35 billion in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects across the country that focus on upgrading aging infrastructure, DWWIA will play an essential role in rebuilding our economy while giving much needed flexibility to states and localities to solve their infrastructure challenges.

As highlighted in a [letter from eight senators to the EPW committee](#), the most cost-effective way to rebuild infrastructure is to promote a fair and open competitive procurement process free from project labor agreement mandates. ABC urges Congress to follow the example set by S. 914 to ensure that all contracts funded through infrastructure legislation are awarded through a fair and competitive bidding process that allows all qualified contractors to deliver the highest quality projects at the best cost to taxpayers.

While ABC supports increased financing of water infrastructure projects, we are concerned that these funds would apply federal Davis-Bacon Act requirements to federal and non-federally funded projects - decreasing the value to taxpayers while not applying any restriction to size of the project and without requiring the Department of Labor to improve its ongoing wage determination issues. The flawed and inflationary wage determination process [increases the cost of construction](#) and can have chilling impact on competition, particularly for small and minority-owned businesses.

ABC and our members remain committed to building taxpayer-funded projects with the highest standards of safety and quality, and we stand ready for the opportunity to build and maintain America's water infrastructure to the benefit of the communities that it will serve.

We thank you for your leadership to address the critical needs of our nation during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Kristen Swearingen
Vice President, Legislative & Political Affairs