

## Reps. Ellen Tauscher and James Oberstar Introduce Legislation to Improve Water Quality

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Today, Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher (D-Calif.) and Congressman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn), Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, introduced legislation increasing federal funding for clean water infrastructure. Over the last four Congresses, Rep. Tauscher has been pushing legislation to reauthorize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

“Our nation’s clean water infrastructure is in jeopardy because of the federal government’s failure to do its part and dedicate all the resources necessary to secure it. After years of pushing legislation to address the problem, I am so happy to join Chairman Oberstar in introducing the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007,” said Rep. Tauscher. “Now, we have an opportunity to do the right thing.”

The Water Quality Financing Act of 2007 will bridge the multi-billion dollar gap between current federal funding and local communities’ needs. EPA’s own estimates show that local communities are facing an over \$400 billion gap in water infrastructure investments over the next twenty years.

The legislation reauthorizes the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, an important financing tool that helps communities and counties meet their growing needs for clean water by providing them funding to build and maintain a wastewater infrastructure. Though the program has continued to receive an annual appropriation from Congress since it expired in 1994, a staggering disparity remains between the federal investment in wastewater infrastructure and communities' and counties' actual needs.

The Water Quality Financing Act of 2007 specifically:

- Authorizes \$20 billion in Federal grants over five years to capitalize Clean Water State Revolving Funds.
- Requires a state to use part of its funding to provide additional subsidization for disadvantaged communities.
- Encourages long-term asset management planning and financing that will ensure sustainable systems and the potential to reduce overall capital and operation and maintenance costs.
- Renews the requirement that contractors and subcontractors on treatment works projects constructed with assistance from the state revolving funds will be paid not less than prevailing wages, as determined under the Davis-Bacon Act.

The legislation will be considered by the House Transportation & Infrastructure's Water Resources Subcommittee tomorrow, Wednesday January 31, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

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