January 19, 2018

The Honorable Corey Booker  
United States Senate  
359 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senate  
172 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Booker and Capito:

On behalf of the 19,000 cities, villages and towns represented by the National League of Cities (NLC), we thank you for your leadership through the introduction of the Innovative Water Infrastructure Workforce Program legislation. We are pleased to support this legislation that would invest in strategies to address the workforce needs in water utilities across the country.

As city leaders work to address the aging physical infrastructure needs in communities across America, we must simultaneously invest in the human capital infrastructure that make these projects possible. Federal leadership and investment in programs that support the workforce development pipeline is essential to ensure a diverse and skilled water workforce.

Over the next five to ten years, one-third of water and wastewater utility works, and in some place 50-60 percent, are eligible for retirement, far exceeding workforce replacement needs in other sectors. To ensure that we can support our workforce needs and provide clean drinking water and functioning wastewater systems, we must expand and connect programs that bridge the skills gap to long-term, middle-class careers.

As Congress begins to consider infrastructure investments across America, we encourage passage of this important legislation, which contributes to the economic vitality of America’s cities. We look forward to partnering with you and your colleagues in support of its passage.

Sincerely,

Clarence E. Anthony  
CEO and Executive Director