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Contact: ECOS Executive Director Ben Grumbles, (202) 266-4929 or [bgrumbles@ecos.org](mailto:bgrumbles@ecos.org) or Lia Parisien, (202) 266-4931 or [lparisien@ecos.org](mailto:lparisien@ecos.org)  
Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

## **ECOS Calls on Congress to Fully Appropriate Critical Water Infrastructure Funding**

Washington, DC — Today, the leaders of 45 state and territorial environmental agencies called on Congress to restore funding for – and fully appropriate – the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs). In a [letter](#) to congressional leaders, ECOS members urge federal lawmakers to “build state capacity, not diminish it,” and to support the established SRF programs by not diverting federal SRF funding to pay for other priority projects.

ECOS notes that the SRFs are two of the nation’s most successful and sustainable environmental programs. The SRFs provide affordable financial assistance for communities to build clean and safe water infrastructure to protect public health and ecosystems while promoting economic development and job creation. “States have serious concerns about proposed congressional committee actions that would significantly reduce SRF [funding] and set a troubling precedent with significant cascading consequences,” ECOS members assert in the letter. “Reductions through community project funding/congressionally directed spending erode both the short- and long-term buying power of established state infrastructure programs, which leverage federal investments and grow public-private partnerships to meet future needs.”

[Testifying](#) on September 7 before the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, underscored the historic level of need for water and wastewater infrastructure, which new federal infrastructure funding is helping to partially address. However, she encouraged lawmakers on behalf of ECOS to increase the level of funding for categorical grants to carry out delegated federal programs, and also warned of the “long-term threat” to the SRFs posed by the appropriations bill recently passed by the House and under consideration in the Senate. “The proposed cuts would be devastating to the states’ capacity to meet current and growing environmental needs and harm the state-federal partnership that is crucial to [protecting] public health and the environment throughout the country,” Biser said.

The ECOS efforts reinforce similar requests by the nation’s Governors. On September 14, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear and South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster, Co-Chairs of the National Governors Association’s Economic Development & Revitalization Task Force, [urged](#) Congress to mitigate further SRF funding cuts. The Governors noted that while congressionally directed spending (CDS) for water projects historically have been funded through a separate appropriation, since FY 2022 CDS water projects have drawn funding away from the SRF programs, significantly reducing the annual funding states and territories receive to sustain their SRFs. Twenty-two Governors sent a similar letter that day.

*ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders. For more information, visit [www.ecos.org](http://www.ecos.org).*