

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1730

To provide adequate funding for water and sewer infrastructure, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 13, 2025

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. MARKEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To provide adequate funding for water and sewer infrastructure, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity, and Reli-
6 ability Act of 2025”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
8 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definition of Administrator.

Sec. 3. Water affordability, transparency, equity, and reliability.

- Sec. 4. Report on affordability, discrimination and civil rights violations, public participation in regionalization, and data collection.
- Sec. 5. Use of State revolving funds under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.
- Sec. 6. Use of State revolving loan funds under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Sec. 7. Drinking water grant programs.
- Sec. 8. Labor provisions.
- Sec. 9. Drinking water assistance to colonias.

1 SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF ADMINISTRATOR.

2 In this Act, the term “Administrator” means the Ad-
3 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

4 SEC. 3. WATER AFFORDABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, EQUITY,
5 AND RELIABILITY.

6 (a) CLEAN WATER PROGRAMS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—At the beginning of each fis-
8 cal year, the Administrator shall obligate, for the fis-
9 cal year—

10 (A) not more than \$175,000,000 for mak-
11 ing grants under section 104(b)(8) of the Fed-
12 eral Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
13 1254(b)(8));

14 (B) not more than \$525,000,000 for mak-
15 ing grants under section 106 of that Act (33
16 U.S.C. 1256);

17 (C) not more than \$875,000,000 for mak-
18 ing grants under section 226 of that Act (33
19 U.S.C. 1302d);

1 (D) not more than \$875,000,000 for mak-
2 ing grants under section 319 of that Act (33
3 U.S.C. 1329); and

4 (E) not more than \$14,787,000,000 for
5 making capitalization grants under section 601
6 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1381).

7 (2) FUNDING.—On October 1 of each fiscal
8 year, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise
9 appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall
10 transfer to the Administrator to carry out this sub-
11 section \$17,237,000,000, to remain available until
12 expended.

13 (3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts trans-
14 ferred to the Administrator under paragraph (2) and
15 obligated by the Administrator under paragraph (1)
16 shall remain available to the Administrator, without
17 further appropriation or fiscal year limitation, for
18 the purposes for which the amounts were obligated.

19 (b) SAFE DRINKING WATER FUNDING.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—At the beginning of each fis-
21 cal year, the Administrator shall obligate, for the fis-
22 cal year—

23 (A) not more than \$175,000,000 for pro-
24 viding technical assistance under section

1 1442(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
2 U.S.C. 300j–1(e));

3 (B) not more than \$14,787,000,000 for
4 making capitalization grants under section
5 1452 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12);

6 (C) not more than \$175,000,000 for mak-
7 ing grants under section 1456 of that Act (42
8 U.S.C. 300j–16) and for making grants under
9 section 307 of the Safe Drinking Water Act
10 Amendments of 1996 (33 U.S.C. 1281 note;
11 Public Law 104–182); and

12 (D) not more than \$1,050,000,000 for
13 making grants under section 1465 of the Safe
14 Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–25).

15 (2) FUNDING.—On October 1 of each fiscal
16 year, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise
17 appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall
18 transfer to the Administrator to carry out this sub-
19 section \$16,187,000,000, to remain available until
20 expended.

21 (3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts trans-
22 ferred to the Administrator under paragraph (2) and
23 obligated by the Administrator under paragraph (1)
24 shall remain available to the Administrator, without

1 further appropriation or fiscal year limitation, for
 2 the purposes for which the amounts were obligated.

3 (c) RURAL WATER SERVICES.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—At the beginning of each fis-
 5 cal year, the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in
 6 this subsection as the “Secretary”) shall obligate,
 7 for the fiscal year—

8 (A) not more than \$175,000,000 for mak-
 9 ing grants under section 306C of the Consoli-
 10 dated Farm and Rural Development Act (7
 11 U.S.C. 1926c) to entities described in sub-
 12 section (c) of that section; and

13 (B) not more than \$350,000,000 for mak-
 14 ing grants under section 306E of that Act (7
 15 U.S.C. 1926e).

16 (2) FUNDING.—On October 1 of each fiscal
 17 year, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise
 18 appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall
 19 transfer to the Secretary to carry out this subsection
 20 \$525,000,000, to remain available until expended.

21 (3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts trans-
 22 ferred to the Secretary under paragraph (2) and ob-
 23 ligated by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall
 24 remain available to the Secretary, without further

1 appropriation or fiscal year limitation, for the pur-
 2 poses for which the amounts were obligated.

3 (d) INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—At the beginning of each fis-
 5 cal year, the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
 6 ices, acting through the Director of the Indian
 7 Health Service (referred to in this subsection as the
 8 “Secretary”), shall obligate, for the fiscal year, not
 9 more than \$1,050,000,000 for making grants for the
 10 planning, design, construction, modernization, im-
 11 provement, and renovation of water, sewer, and solid
 12 waste sanitation facilities that are funded, in whole
 13 or in part, by the Indian Health Service—

14 (A) through, or provided for in, a contract
 15 or compact with the Indian Health Service
 16 under the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
 17 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

18 (B) pursuant to section 7 of the Act of Au-
 19 gust 5, 1954 (68 Stat. 674, chapter 658; 42
 20 U.S.C. 2004a); or

21 (C) pursuant to section 302 of the Indian
 22 Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C.
 23 1632).

24 (2) FUNDING.—On October 1 of each fiscal
 25 year, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise

1 appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall
 2 transfer to the Secretary to carry out this subsection
 3 \$1,050,000,000, to remain available until expended.

4 (3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts trans-
 5 ferred to the Secretary under paragraph (2) and ob-
 6 ligated by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall
 7 remain available to the Secretary, without further
 8 appropriation or fiscal year limitation, for the pur-
 9 poses for which the amounts were obligated.

10 (e) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 306C(e)(1)
 11 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7
 12 U.S.C. 1926c(e)(1)) is amended by inserting “through fis-
 13 cal year 2025” after “each fiscal year” each place it ap-
 14 pears.

15 **SEC. 4. REPORT ON AFFORDABILITY, DISCRIMINATION AND**
 16 **CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, PUBLIC PARTICI-**
 17 **PATION IN REGIONALIZATION, AND DATA**
 18 **COLLECTION.**

19 (a) STUDY.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall con-
 21 duct a study on water and sewer services in accord-
 22 ance with this subsection.

23 (2) AFFORDABILITY.—In conducting the study
 24 under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall study

1 water affordability across the United States, includ-
2 ing—

3 (A) rates for water and sewer services, in-
4 creases in those rates during the 10-year period
5 preceding the study, and water service dis-
6 connections due to unpaid water service
7 charges; and

8 (B) the effectiveness of funding under sec-
9 tion 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
10 U.S.C. 300j–12) and under title VI of the Fed-
11 eral Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
12 1381 et seq.) for promoting affordable, equi-
13 table, transparent, and reliable water and sewer
14 service.

15 (3) DISCRIMINATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS.—In
16 conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Ad-
17 ministrator, in collaboration with the Civil Rights
18 Division of the Department of Justice, shall study—

19 (A) discriminatory practices of water and
20 sewer service providers;

21 (B) discriminatory practices of State pro-
22 gram administrators in allocating funding; and

23 (C) violations by those service providers
24 and program administrators that receive Fed-
25 eral assistance of civil rights under title VI of

1 the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d
2 et seq.) with respect to equal access to water
3 and sewer services.

4 (4) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN REGIONALIZA-
5 TION.—In conducting the study under paragraph
6 (1), the Administrator shall evaluate efforts to re-
7 gionalize public water systems (as defined in section
8 1401 of the Safe Water Drinking Act (42 U.S.C.
9 300f)) and sewer services with respect to public par-
10 ticipation in—

11 (A) the decision to undergo that regional-
12 ization; and

13 (B) decisionmaking by the board of direc-
14 tors (or other governing body) of the entity that
15 provides, or oversees or coordinates the provi-
16 sion of, water by the public water systems sub-
17 ject to such regionalization.

18 (5) DATA COLLECTION.—In conducting the
19 study under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall
20 collect information, assess the availability of infor-
21 mation, and evaluate the methodologies used to col-
22 lect information with respect to—

23 (A) people living without water or sewer
24 services;

1 (B) water service disconnections due to un-
2 paid water service charges, including disconnec-
3 tions experienced by households containing chil-
4 dren, elderly persons, disabled persons, chron-
5 ically ill persons, or other vulnerable popu-
6 lations;

7 (C) tax liens and foreclosures due to un-
8 paid water service charges; and

9 (D) disparate effects, on the basis of race,
10 gender, or socioeconomic status, of water serv-
11 ice disconnections, tax liens and foreclosures
12 due to unpaid water service charges, and the
13 lack of public water service.

14 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
15 of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit
16 to Congress a report that contains—

17 (1) the results of the study conducted under
18 subsection (a)(1); and

19 (2) recommendations for utility companies,
20 Federal agencies, and States relating to those re-
21 sults.

1 **SEC. 5. USE OF STATE REVOLVING FUNDS UNDER THE FED-**
2 **ERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT.**

3 (a) SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.—Section 602(b) of
4 the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
5 1382(b)) is amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (2), by striking “which will be
7 made to the State with funds to be made available”
8 and inserting “that were made to the State with
9 funds made available for fiscal year 2021”;

10 (2) in paragraph (13)(B)(iii), by striking “and”
11 at the end;

12 (3) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at
13 the end and inserting a semicolon; and

14 (4) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(15) the State will not provide financial assist-
16 ance using amounts from the fund for any project
17 that will provide substantial direct benefits to new
18 communities, lots, or subdivisions, other than a
19 project to construct an advanced decentralized
20 wastewater system; and”.

21 (b) PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR AS-
22 SISTANCE.—Section 603(c) of the Federal Water Pollution
23 Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1383(c)) is amended—

24 (1) in paragraph (11)(B), by striking “and” at
25 the end;

1 (2) in paragraph (12)(B), by striking the period
2 at the end and inserting “; and”; and

3 (3) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(13) to any municipality or intermunicipal,
5 interstate, or State agency for—

6 “(A) purchasing from a willing or unwill-
7 ing seller a privately owned treatment works;
8 and

9 “(B) expenses related to canceling a con-
10 tract for the operation or management of a
11 publicly owned treatment works.”.

12 (c) INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL SUB-
13 SIDIZATION BY THE STATE.—Section 603(i)(3) of the
14 Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.
15 1383(i)(3)) is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and
16 inserting the following:

17 “(B) REQUIREMENT.—To the extent that
18 there are sufficient applications, a State shall
19 use not less than 50 percent of the total
20 amount received by the State in capitalization
21 grants under this title for a fiscal year for pro-
22 viding additional subsidization under this sub-
23 section.”.

1 **SEC. 6. USE OF STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS UNDER**
 2 **THE SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT.**

3 Section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
 4 U.S.C. 300j-12) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a)—

6 (A) in paragraph (2)—

7 (i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting
 8 “publicly owned, operated, and managed”
 9 before “community water systems”; and

10 (ii) by striking subparagraph (E) and
 11 inserting the following:

12 “(E) ACQUISITION OF PRIVATELY OWNED
 13 COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS.—The funds
 14 under this section may be used—

15 “(i) to purchase from a willing or un-
 16 willing seller a privately owned community
 17 water system; and

18 “(ii) for expenses related to canceling
 19 a contract for the operation or manage-
 20 ment of a community water system.”; and

21 (B) by adding at the end the following:

22 “(6) EXCEPTION TO PUBLIC OWNERSHIP, OPER-
 23 ATION, AND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENT.—Not-
 24 withstanding paragraph (2)(A), public water systems
 25 that regularly serve fewer than 10,000 persons and
 26 which are not owned, operated, or managed by any

1 person who owns, operates, or manages any other
2 public water system may receive assistance under
3 this section.”;

4 (2) in subsection (d), by striking paragraph (2)
5 and inserting the following:

6 “(2) REQUIREMENT.—To the extent that there
7 are sufficient applications for loans to communities
8 described in paragraph (1), of the amount of the
9 capitalization grant received by a State in a fiscal
10 year, the total amount of loan subsidies made by the
11 State in the fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1)
12 may not be less than 50 percent.”;

13 (3) in subsection (e), by striking “to be made
14 to the State” and inserting “that was made to the
15 State in fiscal year 2021”;

16 (4) in subsection (g)(3)—

17 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)
18 through (C) as clauses (i) through (iii), respec-
19 tively, and indenting appropriately;

20 (B) in the undesignated matter following
21 clause (iii) (as so redesignated), by striking
22 “The guidance and regulations shall also” and
23 inserting the following:

1 “(B) GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING
2 STANDARDS.—The guidance and regulations re-
3 quired under subparagraph (A) shall”;

4 (C) in the matter preceding clause (i) (as
5 so redesignated), by striking “The Adminis-
6 trator” and inserting the following:

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator”;
8 and

9 (D) in subparagraph (A) (as so des-
10 ignated)—

11 (i) in clause (ii) (as so redesignated),
12 by striking “and” at the end;

13 (ii) in clause (iii) (as so redesignated),
14 by striking the period at the end and in-
15 serting “; and”; and

16 (iii) by inserting after clause (iii) the
17 following:

18 “(iv) guidance to ensure affordable,
19 equitable, transparent and reliable water
20 service provision, to provide protections for
21 households facing service disconnection due
22 to unpaid water service charges, and to
23 promote universal equal access to water
24 services.”; and

1 (5) in subsection (k)(1), by adding at the end
2 the following:

3 “(E) Provide assistance in the form of a
4 grant to publicly owned, operated, and managed
5 community water systems for the purpose of re-
6 placing lead service lines (as defined in section
7 1459B(a)) on private or public property with
8 copper service lines that are lead free (as de-
9 fined in section 1417(d)(1)) at no cost to the
10 owner of the property.

11 “(F) Provide assistance to a publicly
12 owned, operated, and managed community
13 water system for the purpose of updating treat-
14 ment plants or switching water sources due to
15 contamination from a perfluoroalkyl or
16 polyfluoroalkyl substance that contains at least
17 1 fully fluorinated carbon atom.

18 “(G) Provide assistance in the form of a
19 grant to owners of a household water well that
20 has been contaminated by a perfluoroalkyl or
21 polyfluoroalkyl substance that contains at least
22 1 fully fluorinated carbon atom for the purpose
23 of purchasing and installing a household filtra-
24 tion system.”.

1 **SEC. 7. DRINKING WATER GRANT PROGRAMS.**

2 (a) SCHOOL DRINKING WATER IMPROVEMENT.—

3 Section 1465 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C.
4 300j–25) is amended—

5 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**FOUN-**
6 **TAIN**” and inserting “**INFRASTRUCTURE**”;

7 (2) in subsection (a), by striking “fountains
8 manufactured prior to 1988” and inserting “infra-
9 structure”; and

10 (3) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the
11 following:

12 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds awarded under the
13 grant program may be used to pay costs associated with—

14 “(1) installing, repairing, or replacing the infra-
15 structure necessary to ensure that drinking water
16 fountains, drinking water coolers, and bottle filling
17 stations at schools are lead free (as defined in sec-
18 tion 1417(d)(1)); and

19 “(2) monitoring and reporting of lead levels in
20 the drinking water of schools, as determined appro-
21 priate by the Administrator.”.

22 (b) TRIBAL DRINKING WATER.—Section 1452(i)(1)
23 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12(i)(1))
24 is amended, in the first sentence—

25 (1) by striking “1 1/2” and inserting “3”; and

26 (2) by striking “may” and inserting “shall”.

1 **SEC. 8. LABOR PROVISIONS.**

2 (a) PREVAILING RATE OF WAGE.—Nothing in this
 3 Act or an amendment made by this Act shall affect the
 4 applicability of the requirements relating to labor stand-
 5 ards of sections 513 and 602(b)(6) of the Federal Water
 6 Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1372, 1382(b)(6)) and
 7 section 1450(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
 8 U.S.C. 300j–9(e)) to projects carried out under those
 9 Acts.

10 (b) PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS.—

11 (1) CLEAN WATER REVOLVING FUNDS.—Sec-
 12 tion 602(b) of the Federal Water Pollution Control
 13 Act (33 U.S.C. 1382(b)) (as amended by section
 14 5(a)), is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 15 lowing:

16 “(16) the State will—

17 “(A) permit recipients of assistance under
 18 this title to enter into agreements authorized
 19 under section 8(f) of the National Labor Rela-
 20 tions Act (29 U.S.C. 158(f)) (commonly known
 21 as ‘project labor agreements’) with respect to
 22 projects for building or construction carried out
 23 with that assistance; and

24 “(B) ensure that, to the maximum extent
 25 practicable, recipients of assistance under this

1 title carry out those projects through the use of
 2 those agreements.”.

3 (2) DRINKING WATER REVOLVING FUNDS.—
 4 Section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
 5 U.S.C. 300j–12) is amended—

6 (A) in subsection (a) (as amended by sec-
 7 tion 6(1)(B)), by adding at the end the fol-
 8 lowing:

9 “(7) PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS.—Each
 10 agreement under this subsection shall require that
 11 the State permit recipients of assistance under this
 12 section to enter into agreements authorized under
 13 section 8(f) of the National Labor Relations Act (29
 14 U.S.C. 158(f)) (commonly known as ‘project labor
 15 agreements’) with respect to projects for building or
 16 construction carried out with that assistance.”; and

17 (B) in subsection (b)(3)(A)—

18 (i) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at
 19 the end;

20 (ii) in clause (iii), by striking the pe-
 21 riod at the end and inserting “; and”; and

22 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
 23 lowing:

24 “(iv) with respect to projects for
 25 building or construction, will be carried out

1 through the use of agreements authorized
 2 under section 8(f) of the National Labor
 3 Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(f)) (com-
 4 monly known as ‘project labor agree-
 5 ments’).”.

6 **SEC. 9. DRINKING WATER ASSISTANCE TO COLONIAS.**

7 Section 1456 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
 8 U.S.C. 300j–16) is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (a)—

10 (A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
 11 paragraph (3); and

12 (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
 13 following:

14 “(2) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ‘covered en-
 15 tity’ means each of the following:

16 “(A) A border State.

17 “(B) A local government with jurisdiction
 18 over an eligible community.”;

19 (2) in subsection (b)—

20 (A) by striking “of the Environmental Pro-
 21 tection Agency”; and

22 (B) by striking “border State” and insert-
 23 ing “covered entity”;

24 (3) by striking subsection (d); and

- 1 (4) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
- 2 section (d).

○