

June 6, 2024

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment  
and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment  
and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Carper and Graves and Ranking Members Capito and Larsen:

The undersigned organizations support S. 4134/H.R. 8030, the Drought Relief Obtained Using Government Help Today Act of 2024.

This legislation, introduced by Senator Alex Padilla and Rep. Scott Peters, would increase the federal share of Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loans from 80 percent to 90 percent for qualified disadvantaged communities experiencing severe drought.

Building smart, modern, resilient infrastructure is among our top priorities, and predisaster mitigation projects and planning for the next crisis—including drought—is good public policy and good for the economy.

Moreover, we believe this legislation could be improved as the legislative process continues by increasing flexibility for identifying eligible communities. In particular, aligning this bill with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Disaster Resilience Zones, to the extent practicable, would improve outcomes for the most vulnerable communities.

Additionally, this bill can make the nation more resilient to the massive economic shocks and shifts caused by droughts. For instance, the Mississippi River drought of 2022-2024 cost the nation over \$26 billion in economic losses. Allowing states and cities to declare disasters due to drought, expanding the USDA Farm Credit Program so farmers may voluntarily rotate acreage out of irrigation to alleviate drought, and incentivizing water recycling and reuse technology for manufacturers can all help the nation sustain prolonged and severe drought impacts.

We encourage your committees to consider and report this legislation.

Sincerely,

American Society of Landscape Architects

BuildStrong America

Geos Institute

International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials

Interstate Council on Water Policy

Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative

U.S. Chamber of Commerce