



June 11, 2024

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to urge the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to swiftly advance the *Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act* that was recently passed in the House (H.R. 2964) on a bipartisan basis. This bipartisan legislation takes a straightforward and reasonable approach to addressing this pervasive, but ultimately preventable pollution problem stemming from the improper disposal of non-flushable wipes in the nation’s wastewater systems.

The WIPPES Act provides a common sense “Do Not Flush” labeling requirement for non-flushable wipes packaging and establishes a simple source management solution through consistent on-package consumer education. Endorsed by our organizations, we believe the legislation will advance our mutually shared interest to protect public infrastructure and the environment by promoting responsible disposal habits. Due to the lack of consistent and clear disposal packaging instructions, consumers often unwittingly flush these wipes down the toilet. At a national-level, wet wipes are responsible for \$441 million a year in additional operating costs at US clean water utilities.<sup>1</sup> Since these types of wipes are not designed to be flushed, they can clog and damage pipes, pumps, and treatment equipment, resulting in increased operation

<sup>1</sup> NACWA. 2020. The Cost of Wipes On America’s Clean Water Utilities: An Estimate of Increased Utility Operating Costs. [https://www.nacwa.org/docs/default-source/resources---public/govaff-3-cost\\_of\\_wipes-1.pdf?sfvrsn=b535fe61\\_2#](https://www.nacwa.org/docs/default-source/resources---public/govaff-3-cost_of_wipes-1.pdf?sfvrsn=b535fe61_2#)

and maintenance costs for clean water utilities. Additionally, the flushing of these wipes can cause potential environmental harms, such as sewer overflow events.

H.R. 2964 secured and maintained bipartisan endorsement throughout the legislative process that culminated in its recent bipartisan House passage. It has also maintained support from a diverse group of stakeholders representing a cross section of the various sectors that deal with the issue of the flushing of nonflushable wipes. This maintained congressional and stakeholder support for the WIPPES Act underscores its viability as commonsense solution to a key pollution problem.

Again, we urge the committee to advance H.R. 2964. Thank you for your leadership to develop commonsense and bipartisan policy solutions.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
Association of Nonwoven Fabrics Industry  
Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group  
California Association of Sanitation Agencies  
Consumer Healthcare Products Association  
Kimberly-Clark  
National Association of Clean Water Agencies  
National Rural Water Association  
National Stewardship Action Council  
Procter & Gamble  
Washington Association of Sewer & Water Districts  
Water Environment Federation  
5Gyres