

Plumbing Manufacturers International Applauds Preservation of WaterSense, Increased Water Infrastructure Funding in Senate FY20 Interior-EPA Budget Bill

Washington, D.C. – Oct. 1, 2019 – Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI) today applauded the Senate Appropriations Committee’s approval of the fiscal year 2020 (FY20) budget bill for the Interior Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that preserves the EPA’s WaterSense program and increases water infrastructure funding.

PMI’s CEO/Executive Director Kerry Stackpole thanked Interior/EPA Subcommittee Chair Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Ranking Member Tom Udall (D-N.M.) for advancing the bill. “PMI is grateful for their efforts to develop a strong FY20 funding bill for EPA that recognizes the success and importance of the WaterSense program and provides funding for critical water infrastructure projects,” he said. He also noted the strong support for the WaterSense report language from Senators Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), and Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.).

WaterSense, a public-private partnership, is a voluntary certification and labeling program that identifies water-efficient and high-performing plumbing products. The program is widely supported and has enjoyed bipartisan support on Capitol Hill throughout its existence. For more than 10 years, WaterSense products have helped consumers save more than 3.4 trillion gallons of water, according to the EPA.

PMI urged the Interior/EPA Appropriations Subcommittee to include report language to preserve and maintain EPA’s long-standing WaterSense program. The language included in the committee’s report reads: “The Committee rejects the proposed elimination of the WaterSense program and provides not less than the fiscal year 2019 enacted level.” Similar report language, advocated by PMI, was also included in the House Interior Appropriations measure approved this summer. Earlier this year, the Trump administration had targeted dozens of EPA programs for elimination, including the WaterSense program, in its FY20 budget proposal.

Other key water investment projects recommended for funding by the EPA spending measure include:

- \$2.765 billion for the EPA Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), which provide low-cost financing for water quality infrastructure projects such as improving drinking water treatment and fixing leaky or old water pipes.
- \$73 million for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), which provides low-interest loans for major water infrastructure projects across the country.
- \$29 million for lead contamination testing at schools and childcare centers and \$20 million for lead reduction projects.
- \$1 million for water sector workforce training.
- \$2 million for EPA’s new Drinking Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program.

PMI and its members have participated in the WaterSense program since its inception in 2006. Plumbing products bearing the WaterSense label are at least 20 percent more water efficient than standard products. To earn the WaterSense label, products must meet high performance standards and meet third-party certification criteria.

As a result of the program, plumbing manufacturers have developed more than 30,000 models of WaterSense-labeled products for bathrooms (toilets, showerheads, faucets, and urinals) and commercial kitchens. Today, more than 2,000 WaterSense partners, including manufacturers, water utilities, retailers, distributors, trade associations, state and local governments and non-profit organizations, collaborate with the EPA on the program.

PMI looks forward to working with Congress to maintain the WaterSense program in the FY20 budget as members work in the coming months to finalize the slate of FY20 appropriations bills.

About Plumbing Manufacturers International

Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI) is the trade association of plumbing product manufacturers that produce more than 90 percent of the United States’ plumbing products, represent more than 150 iconic brands, and develop safe, reliable and innovative water-efficient plumbing technologies. PMI members contribute more than 464,000 jobs and \$85.5 billion in economic impact to America’s economy.

With a vision of safe, responsible plumbing – always, PMI advocates for plumbing product performance contributing to water efficiency and savings, sustainability, public health and safety, and consumer

satisfaction. PMI members manufacture water-efficient toilets, urinals, faucets, showerheads and other products at more than 70 locations across the country and market them online and in more than 24,000 home improvement stores, hardware stores and showrooms in all 50 states. For more information on PMI, contact the organization at 1750 Tysons Blvd., Ste. 1500, McLean, Va., 22102; tel.: [847-481-5500](tel:847-481-5500); fax: [847-481-5501](tel:847-481-5501). www.safep plumbing.org.

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