



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the General Manager

June 14, 2021

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester
U.S. House of Representatives
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Katko
U.S. House of Representatives
2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support of H.R. 3293, the Low-Income Water Customer Assistance Programs Act of 2021

Dear Representatives Blunt Rochester and Katko:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) supports H.R. 3293, the Low-Income Water Customer Assistance Programs Act of 2021, and appreciates your work to address drinking water affordability. Once enacted, this legislation will fill a hole in the federal government's social safety net by establishing a new low-income water and wastewater ratepayer assistance program at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Metropolitan is a regional wholesaler that provides water for 26 member public agencies to deliver - either directly or through their sub-agencies - to nearly 19 million people living in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties. Nearly 50 percent of our service area meets the definition of a disadvantaged community and H.R. 3293 will provide significant benefits for low-income households in our service area and nationwide.

Congress began to address the issue of water and wastewater affordability in last December's COVID-19 response legislation when it established a temporary Low-Income Household Drinking Water and Wastewater Emergency Assistance Program. This program is a good start, but the scope of this emergency program is limited as it is focused on responding to the pandemic and expires on December 31, 2023. Uninterrupted access to affordable drinking water will remain a critically important need even after the pandemic ends. By establishing a permanent low-income water rate assistance program at EPA, H.R. 3293 will give families certainty that water rate assistance will be there when they need it.

Again, thank you for sponsoring H.R. 3293, the Low-Income Water Customer Assistance Programs Act of 2021. It is our hope this legislation will be enacted into law this year. Please let us know if Metropolitan can be a resource to you and your staff as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Kightlinger".

Jeffrey Kightlinger
General Manager

cc: Southern California Congressional Delegation