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**IAPMO Supports Bill that Would Address Water Access Gap
Affecting Underserved and Tribal Communities**

Washington, D.C. (May. 2, 2024) — The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO®) is proud to voice its enthusiastic support for the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024 (WASH Access Data Collection Act), introduced in the U.S. Senate Wednesday to study and devise solutions to the lack of running water and basic indoor plumbing that affects more than 2 million Americans.

Co-sponsored by U.S. Senators Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon), and Ben Ray Lujan (D-New Mexico), the bill would establish an interagency Water and Sanitation Needs Working Group to conduct surveys and develop reports no less frequently than every five years and mandate development of a cost estimate for capital improvements necessary to ensure that all U.S. households have access to reliable drinking water and adequate sanitation.

Because no singular federal entity collects data on the scope of the water access gap, underserved communities such as people of color and lower-income residents of rural area and tribal lands often do not benefit from federal investments in water and sanitation infrastructure, with some even losing the limited access they do have.

"IAPMO is proud to once again support the WASH Access Data Collection Act," said Dain Hansen, IAPMO executive vice president of Government Relations. "This vital legislation is designed to bridge significant gaps in our national water access data. It also establishes a federal interagency working group to enhance coordination and cooperation across the federal government, tackling water and sanitation needs more effectively. We look forward to working with Congress, federal agencies, and industry partners to better understand and to help close the water and sanitation access gaps so many communities across our country get the water and sanitation services they need."

"IAPMO is profoundly committed to ensuring that every American has access to safe and reliable water and sanitation" said Dave Viola, IAPMO CEO. "The Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024 is a critical step forward in identifying the challenges and solutions needed to address the pervasive issues of water accessibility in our nation."

Joining IAPMO in endorsing passage of the bill are the American Business Water Coalition, DigDeep, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Universal Access to Clean Water for Tribal Communities, the U.S. Water Alliance, and members of the Center for Water Security and Cooperation, Community Engineering Corps, GreenLatinos, Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health, Pacific Institute, Moonshot Missions, and Water for People.

Sen. Wyden: "Access to clean drinking water is a human right. Yet, communities in Oregon and nationwide have repeatedly been left with contaminated water or none at all. Making sure there is accurate data that reflects the needs of all communities — and keeping agencies in lock step — is a crucial first step in closing the water access gap forever."

Sen. Merkley: "Reliable access to clean drinking water is vital to the health and safety of all communities in Oregon and the United States. So many underserved communities lack access to safe basic necessities — this is wrong. The WASH Access Data Collection Act prioritizes data collection on water access needs across our country, which will help us address and eliminate the water access gap once and for all."



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Sen Lujan: "Every community in New Mexico and across the country, especially those on rural and Tribal lands, deserves reliable access to water. In order to make this a reality, the federal government needs the most accurate information to understand gaps in water access. That's why I'm introducing this legislation that will improve federal capabilities to collect data on water access needs across the country."

To read the bill in its entirety, direct your web browser to:

https://www.wyden.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/wash_access_data_collection_act_legislative_text.pdf

For more information on the legislation, contact Hansen at (202) 445-7514 or dain.hansen@iapmo.org.

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