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WaterSenseSM Provisions Included in Senate Infrastructure Bill

Washington, D.C. (May 17, 2017) — Kicking off the fifth annual Infrastructure Week, U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Jon Boozman (R-AR) on Tuesday introduced The Clean Safe Reliable Water Infrastructure Act, bipartisan omnibus infrastructure legislation seeking to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to add provisions relating to drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, including the formal federal establishment of the U.S. EPA's WaterSenseSM program, which would extend the vastly successful water efficiency product labeling program in perpetuity. IAPMO has been a vocal proponent of WaterSense since its inception more than a decade ago.

A poll commissioned by the Value of Water Campaign revealed that 67 percent of Americans believe rebuilding the nation's infrastructure is an extremely or very important priority — the highest percentage of any other national issue by a double-digit margin. Infrastructure Week (www.infrastructureweek.org, #timetobuild) brings together 280 affiliate organizations for a national week of events, media coverage, education, and advocacy efforts to elevate infrastructure as a critical issue impacting all Americans.

"Infrastructure is a priority of the Trump Administration and this Congress, and we are thrilled that Congress recognizes the importance that demand-side water contributes to our nation's overall foundation," said Dain Hansen, Senior Vice President of IAPMO Government Affairs. "We look forward to working across all parties and both chambers of congress to settle on language that can be signed into law officially recognizing the WaterSense program."

Modeled after the ENERGY STAR program, WaterSense is a labeling and recognition program that seeks to protect the future of the U.S. water supply by offering consumers a simple way to make product-purchasing choices that conserve water with no sacrifice to quality or performance. Services and products earning the WaterSense label have been certified to be at least 20 percent more efficient than average products in the same category without affecting performance. Such products include toilets, urinals, showerheads, bathroom faucets, landscape irrigation controllers, and pre-rinse spray valves.

"Underfunding of our vital drinking water and wastewater infrastructure is an issue we cannot ignore," Cardin said. "Year after year, Sen. Boozman and I work together to combat America's growing need for repairs to its aging drinking water and wastewater systems. We recognize the public health risk and economic jeopardy from a growing population placing greater demands on a water infrastructure system that is nearing the end of its useful life."

"This legislation helps tackle costs that come with making changes to water and sewer systems that have served millions of people for more than a century, but have become outdated and a threat to public health and the environment," Boozman said.

IAPMO Research and Testing, Inc. ("IAPMO R&T") is the leading provider of WaterSense product certification in the nation and has been a U.S. EPA licensed provider, accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), from the beginning, certifying the first high-efficiency toilet (HET) to the standard in April 2007. To date, IAPMO R&T, part of The IAPMO Group, has certified thousands of such water-efficient products to the WaterSense specifications.

S. 1137 would also amend the revolving loan program under the Safe Drinking Water Act to make planning, design, and associated preconstruction activities, replacement or rehabilitation of aging treatment, storage, or distribution facilities, and public water system security measures eligible for assistance, and affirm the use of state revolving loan funds as security for state bonds.

Furthermore, the legislation would place additional focus on shortcomings in wastewater infrastructure by reauthorizing Section 221 of the Clean Water Act, which authorizes grants for addressing combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, and stormwater discharges, totaling \$1.8 billion over five years.

Read the entire bill here: http://www.iapmo.org/governmentrelations/Documents/2017_Senate_Infrastructure_Bill.pdf
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