

House Passes Bill to Help Maine Communities Pay for Water Infrastructure

Thursday, March 12 2009

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, a Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, praised House-passage of H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act. In addition to authorizing alternative water source projects, overflow control grants, and important monitoring provisions, Title I of the bill authorizes a total of \$13.8 billion for wastewater infrastructure over the next five years –creating about 480,000 jobs over a five-year period if authorized levels are fully funded. For Fiscal Year 2009, Maine’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) received \$5.3 million. Under H.R. 1262, Maine’s CWSRF allocation would be authorized at an average of \$21.3 million per year through Fiscal Year 2014.

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“Many communities throughout Maine are in desperate need of new water infrastructure, and I have heard directly from many of them,” said Michaud. “The additional resources made available in this bill will greatly benefit our state. Estimates indicate that every \$1 billion in funding for wastewater infrastructure projects creates 34,800 jobs. So this bill not only helps our nation live up to our commitments under the Clean Water Act, it will also help improve our economy.”

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund provides low-interest loans to local communities for construction of wastewater treatment facilities and other water pollution abatement projects. Since it was created in 1987, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund has been the primary source of federal funding for wastewater infrastructure projects. The fund is enormously popular with state and local governments across the country.

This bill is designed to begin closing the approximately \$3.2 billion to \$11.1 billion annual gap that exists between wastewater infrastructure needs and current levels of investment. To achieve this goal, the bill seeks to increase investment in wastewater infrastructure, and to reduce the cost of constructing and maintaining that infrastructure.

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