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CITY ENGINEER

February 10, 2016

Craig W. Butler, Director
Ohio EPA - Director's Office
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049

Re: Proposed Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Improvements

Dear Director Butler:

The City of Akron fully supports the legislative changes Ohio EPA is proposing to the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund ("WPCLF") in Ohio Revised Code 6111.036 which will align the state law with the federal Water Resources Reform and Development Act ("WRRDA"). The City of Akron has utilized the Loan Fund in the past for planning, design and construction activities and its \$1.4 billion Akron Waterways Renewed is financially dependent upon the low interest loans from the Fund. The City of Akron wastewater system serves the City and many neighboring communities with a total service area population of 350,000.

The City of Akron understands that the specific changes being proposed by Ohio EPA will enable communities that meet certain qualifying criteria to receive up to 30-year loans for such improvements. The WRRDA-related changes will also expand loan funding eligibility to more projects, including improving storm water management, water conservation and efficiency, watershed projects, energy reduction at wastewater plants and measures to increase water infrastructure security.

We also understand that the Agency is proposing changes that will allow communities the option of working with Ohio EPA to extend and tailor their WPCLF repayments to better match with the useful life of the wastewater facilities they construct and financial capabilities of each community.

These proposed legislative changes to the WPCLF will provide more flexible financing options that will benefit the City of Akron and other Ohio communities. Moreover, these changes come at an important time, as we all balance the need for significant infrastructure improvements with commonsense repayment options that work for our ratepayers and lead to significant, and possibly accelerated, environmental improvements.

The City has and will continue to work with the WPCLF program to secure funding for wastewater infrastructure projects. As such, Akron supports Ohio EPA's efforts to streamline the WPCLF program and align it with the federal WRRDA. Accordingly, please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything Akron can do to assist Ohio EPA with these efforts.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. Gsellman, PE
Program Manager
Akron Waterways Renewed

cc: J. Moore, C. Curry, C. Ludle, B. Gresser, J. Hewitt, M. DiFiore, H. Ullinger

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