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June 8, 2017

Lisa Almeida
Assistant Counsel
Office of the Governor
225 W. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08608

Dear Lisa,

I am writing on behalf of New Jersey Future to encourage Governor Christie to sign into law The Water Quality Accountability Act (S2834/A4569).

New Jersey Future is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes sensible growth, redevelopment and infrastructure investments to foster vibrant cities and towns, protect natural lands and waterways, enhance transportation choices, provide access to safe, affordable and aging-friendly neighborhoods and fuel a strong economy. New Jersey Future is a member of Jersey Water Works, a collaborative committed to upgrading the state's inadequate water infrastructure in ways that make communities stronger.

New Jersey Future prizes economic growth, clean water and healthy communities, each of which depends upon modern, reliable and cost-effective drinking water systems. Many physical assets of these systems are near or past the end of their useful life, as evidenced by a variety of crises: breaks, leaks, water losses and flooded streets, to name a few. For example:

- Some cities **lose more than 20, 30 or even 40 percent of their treated drinking water** before it even reaches customers.
- News media routinely report **water main breaks** that create sinkholes in streets; cause water service to fail in hospitals, schools, homes and businesses; threaten public health; and even cause major street flooding.
- **Emergency repairs** are well known to cost three to five times more than what planned, programmed maintenance would have cost to ensure system integrity. These additional costs do not include financial impacts on businesses, or stress on households without water.

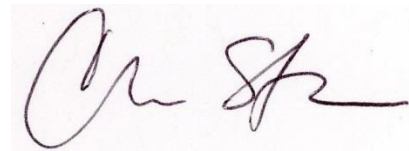
Too many New Jersey communities, businesses, residents, hospitals and schools rely on systems that are at risk of causing major disruptions. For these reasons, New Jersey Future supports the Act's requirement that water purveyors implement and fund an asset management program. Asset management is the systematic approach purveyors use to ensure that there is sufficient investment in, and planned maintenance of, the components of their systems, and in a manner that minimizes life-cycle costs.

Asset management is one of the highest priority issues for [Jersey Water Works](#), the statewide collaborative that promotes sound water infrastructure. The collaborative has a [goal](#) devoted to asset management and seeks [state-level measurement](#) of the extent to which asset management plans are adopted and funded. Jersey Water Works recommends that elected and appointed officials and ratepayers be better educated about the condition of their water systems and whether it is improving or getting worse.

To ensure transparency and long-term cost-effectiveness, New Jersey Future suggests that the DEP use its rule-making process under the Act to define simple, standardized metrics of water system condition to be included in the asset management plans and make publicly available the status of water purveyor asset management plan submissions, the key metrics of system condition, and a summary of infrastructure improvements planned and made including their cost, provided that none of the public reports compromise homeland security.

Our lives, our businesses and our communities depend on clean, reliable drinking water service. Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation. Feel free to contact me at 609-393-0008, x114 or csturm@njfuture.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Sturm", is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Chris Sturm
Managing Director, Water and Policy