

TO: Members of the Pennsylvania Senate

FROM: Jennie Shade, Director of Government Relations



DATE: April 11, 2022

SUBJECT: SB 597 P.N. 801 with Amendments

I am writing on behalf of the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA) which represents over 700 municipal authorities across the Commonwealth, the vast majority of which provide drinking water and wastewater treatment services to more than six million of its citizens.

PMAA appreciates the willingness of the Senate and other stakeholders, including private entities, to continue negotiations on SB 597. The legislation with amendments A03946 and A03975 shows a good faith effort by all parties to reach a consensus on many provisions in the bill and therefore, PMAA is **neutral** on both amendments.

Removing Title 66 (PUC) and placing enforcement under Title 27 (DEP) is the right move. That being said, we believe more work needs to be done and we look forward to continuing negotiations as the bill moves through the legislative process. Some of the outstanding technical concerns our members have include:

- Workable solutions for smaller systems that represent rural communities of 10,000 or less whether that be an increase, from 501 to 3,001 connections, via an achievable compliance schedule, which includes technical support, or a mix of both
- Appropriate measures under the “critical valve inspections and fire hydrant inspections by a water system operator” as well as the “water meters” provisions
- Submission of protected critical asset data in compliance with Homeland Security provisions and America’s Water Infrastructure Act

The overarching concern our members continue to have with the bill as a whole is the significant increase in rates to the consumer, especially as municipal systems work to assist ratepayers who are struggling financially. Essentially, this could force low-income communities to sell their rights to clean and reasonably priced water to private industry. Our members believe this financial burden is contrary to the best interests of the public, your constituents, the citizens of our communities.

In closing, we appreciate the progress that has been made up to this point in the Senate and we look forward to continuing negotiations on this bill in the House. Thank you for your consideration.