

September 4, 2025

Dear Congresswoman Sherrill and Former Assemblyman Ciattarelli,

Our aging water infrastructure and the increasing need for treatment are quietly reaching a tipping point. Many of our water systems are over a century old and are struggling to meet today's demands. This situation poses a threat to public health, economic growth, and community safety.

From lead in drinking water to combined sewer overflows, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) contamination, and worsening flooding from severe storms, the challenges are urgent and growing. The data reveal a concerning reality: New Jersey requires an estimated **\$8.6 billion** to ensure safe drinking water, while the EPA estimates that nationwide needs will exceed \$625 billion over the next two decades.

This isn't just a public health issue—it's an economic development crisis. Every day we delay action, costs escalate, and our state becomes less competitive in the global marketplace.

Jersey Water Works urges you to champion a comprehensive **"one water" approach** that addresses drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater as an integrated system. Specifically, we recommend:

Immediate Priorities:

- Ensure ongoing and enhanced funding for water infrastructure and maximize State Revolving Fund utilization
- Address urgent issues: aging infrastructure, PFAS contamination, lead service lines, and Combined Sewer Overflows
- Establish a permanent household water affordability assistance program

Building Resilience:

- Invest in green stormwater infrastructure to combat flooding and improve water quality
- Strengthen disaster preparedness as New Jersey faces more frequent droughts, floods, and extreme weather
- Support efforts that expand economies of scale, such as regionalization and shared services

Ensure One Water Approach for All:

- Provide technical assistance to under-resourced communities
- Invest in workforce development programs for water-related careers
- Promote transparent public engagement and data-driven decision making

Jersey Water Works stands ready to partner with your administration. Our collaborative includes over 600 participants—utilities, local governments, environmental organizations, academia, and community groups—all working toward sustainable water solutions.

The Jersey Water Works Collaborative has successfully advocated for critical legislation and funding over the past decade. Our members understand both the technical challenges and the political realities of infrastructure investment. Most importantly, we know that collaboration across sectors and communities is essential for lasting solutions.

The next Governor of New Jersey has an opportunity to lead on an issue that affects every resident and business in our state. We're here to help make that leadership successful. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with your team to share more about these recommendations and explore ways to partner on solutions.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working together to secure New Jersey's water future.

In collaboration,

Nicole Miller and Andy Kricun

Co-Chairs, Jersey Water Works Steering Committee

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Jersey Water Works' power lies in its partnerships. Members work together across boundaries to support, endorse and implement strategies identified by the collaborative.

