

Alabama Rivers Alliance * Alliance for the Great Lakes * Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments *
American Rivers * BlueGreen Alliance * Cahaba River Society * Center for a Sustainable Coast *
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future * Clean Water Action * Conservation Colorado *
Conservation Voters New Mexico * Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania * Earthjustice *
Endangered Habitats League * Endangered Species Coalition * Environmental Law and Policy Center *
Environmental League of Massachusetts * GreenLatinos * Healing Our Waters- Great Lakes Coalition *
Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited * League of Conservation Voters* Maryland League of Conservation
Voters * Massachusetts River Alliance * Michigan League of Conservation Voters * Montana Audubon *
Montana Conservation Voters * Natural Resources Defense Council * Nevada Conservation League * New
Jersey League of Conservation Voters * New York League of Conservation Voters * North Carolina League of
Conservation Voters* Ohio Environmental Council * Oregon Environmental Council * Oregon League of
Conservation Voters * Pennsylvania Council of Churches * PolicyLink * Prairie Rivers Network * River
Network * Save the River/Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper * Sierra Club * Southern Environmental Law
Center * Virginia League of Conservation Voters * Washington Conservation Voters *
Washington Environmental Council

June 5, 2018

Dear Representative:

Our organizations, along with our millions of members and supporters, urge you to oppose all anti-environmental riders proposed for inclusion in the H.R. 5895, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2019, including Section 108 which would repeal the 2015 Clean Water Rule. In addition, we urge you to support all amendments that would remove provisions that will harm our waterways, including Beyer amendments #6 and #7.

Section 108 is a radical rider that would eliminate the vital safeguards of the Clean Water Rule for the waters that feed the drinking water of 117 million people and protect streams, headwaters, wetlands and other water bodies that serve as habitat for wildlife, reduce flooding risk, and naturally filter pollution. The dangerous provision would subvert the entire rulemaking process by disregarding public input, including the over 1.5 million comments submitted in support of the Rule and opposing attempts to roll it back. Additionally, it would ignore the strong scientific foundation for the Rule and would return Clean Water Act jurisdiction to an inconsistent and uncertain regulatory scheme, which stakeholders across the board have said is unworkable. This rider is nothing but an attempt by some in Congress to use the inappropriate venue of the appropriations process to help the administration with their reckless, unpopular, and failing effort to decimate clean water protections.

It's really this simple: a vote for this rider is a vote against clean water, a vote to expose even more communities to unsafe drinking water, a vote to limit the scope of the Clean Water Act, and a vote to allow polluters to destroy our precious waterways. Enough is enough: it's time for Congress to stand up to protect clean water.

The Clean Water Rule clarified guaranteed pollution safeguards to a variety of our nation's waterways, including the small streams that feed the drinking water of one in three people. The Rule was developed in response to requests from stakeholders ranging from states to regulated dischargers to environmental groups to vulnerable communities facing health threats from water pollution. It was developed after years of scientific research and with an open and transparent rulemaking process, including development of a report that analyzed the findings of more than 1,200 peer-reviewed publications showing the critical functions of headwater, seasonal, and rain-dependent streams and wetlands to drinking water, pollution filtration, groundwater recharging, flood protection, and wildlife habitat.

The rulemaking process ensures that the agencies follow the law and that their actions can be fairly assessed by the courts. This extreme rider would disregard all of that process in favor of the inconsistent and uncertain regulatory scheme that existed before the Rule's adoption. The EPA and the Army Corps already have the tools they need to reevaluate the Rule, but this dangerous rider would completely erase the 2015 Rule from the books, absolving the administration of a need to justify its repeal process against the backdrop of the strong scientific record and public comments that supported the Rule. Rather than starting from ground zero as this rider would direct, the agencies should follow the rulemaking process - objectively review the scientific record and the public input on the rulemaking actions, assess what specific parts of the Clean Water Rule they think could be improved, propose targeted amendments that don't sacrifice important water bodies and that follow the scientific evidence, and seek and incorporate meaningful public input on that proposal.

We all depend upon clean water – for drinking, for the economy, for our health, and for outdoor recreation, including fishing, swimming, paddling and bird watching. But too many of our communities, particularly low-income communities and communities of color, are already disproportionately impacted by contaminated water. It is clear, now more than ever, that we need strong federal safeguards for our water, yet polluters and their allies continue their push to undermine one of our most valuable tools, the Clean Water Rule.

The appropriations process should not be used to roll back fundamental health and environmental safeguards and undermine the rulemaking process. We ask you to stand up for clean water by opposing this radical and dangerous provision to eliminate the Clean Water Rule, support amendments that would strip it out, and further urge you to oppose all anti-environmental riders in H.R. 5895.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alabama Rivers Alliance
Alliance for the Great Lakes
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Rivers
BlueGreen Alliance
Cahaba River Society
California League of Conservation Voters

Center for a Sustainable Coast
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
Clean Water Action
Conservation Colorado
Conservation Voters New Mexico
Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania
Earthjustice
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Law and Policy Center
Environmental League of Massachusetts
GreenLatinos
Healing Our Waters- Great Lakes Coalition
Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited
League of Conservation Voters
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Massachusetts River Alliance
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Montana Audubon
Montana Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nevada Conservation League
New Jersey League of Conservation Voters
New York League of Conservation Voters
North Carolina League of Conservation Voters
Ohio Environmental Council
Oregon Environmental Council
Oregon League of Conservation Voters
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
PolicyLink
Prairie Rivers Network
River Network
Save the River/Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper
Sierra Club
Southern Environmental Law Center
Virginia League of Conservation Voters
Washington Conservation Voters
Washington Environmental Council