

Dec 22, 2008

Senator Kay Hutchison
Constitution and Delaware Avenues, NE
Washington, DC 20510-4303

Dear Senator Hutchison,

I am writing to respectfully request that you support funding green infrastructure solutions and watershed restoration projects in an economic recovery package. America's water infrastructure system is crumbling and cannot cope with our current drinking water, wastewater or flood protection needs, let alone with the larger floods and longer droughts associated with global warming. According to the EPA, at least \$500 billion is needed in capitol funding for water and wastewater systems. Investments in green solutions to these problems will create jobs, save money, and protect public health and safety.

While you and your colleagues must respond quickly to the country's dire economic situation, I urge you to avoid the temptation to invest stimulus dollars in new highways or sewer lines that contribute to sprawl and only compound existing problems.

Scores of U.S. cities are creating jobs in diverse sectors like plumbing, landscaping, engineering, building and design by using green infrastructure strategies to address their water needs. Many communities are ready to begin construction on green infrastructure, but lack the financial resources.

According to American Rivers, over 200 restoration and green infrastructure water-related projects in 25 states and the District of Columbia are ready-to-go with a total cost of \$1.1 billion. Funding these projects would provide an immediate stimulus to the economy while ensuring that plentiful clean water will be available in the future to drive economic growth. As you and your colleagues draft an economic stimulus package I urge you to prioritize the following three programs:

- Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Green Infrastructure Grants At least 15% of all clean water infrastructure funding should be dedicated to green infrastructure grants to restore wetlands and natural floodplains; plant urban forests; and install green roofs, rain gardens and permeable pavement.
- Water Efficiency Grants At least 20% of all drinking water infrastructure funding should be dedicated to water efficiency capitol projects such as installing low-flow toilets and water efficient fixtures and appliances.
- Restoration Projects The economic stimulus should include at least \$250 million for NOAA's Fisheries Habitat Restoration Program, including the Open Rivers Initiative and \$250 million for Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Funding these programs in an economic recovery package would improve the long-term economic health of our country, put Americans back to work, and protect our nation's precious water resources and the communities that rely on them.

Thank you for considering my request. Please notify me in writing of your decision.

Sincerely,

Ms. Annalisa Peace
PO Box 15618
San Antonio, TX 78212-8818

cc John Cornyn
Charlie Gonzalez