



September 14, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Maintaining the Integrity of Nation's Freight Transportation System

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy:

The American Water Works Association, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, National Rural Water Association, National Association of Water Companies, National Association of Clean Water Agencies, and the Water Environment Federation respectfully ask that Congress intervene to sustain freight rail service that is essential for day-to-day functions upon which the American people depend. Freight rail plays a crucial role in the supply of key chemicals necessary for maintaining essential lifeline functions provided to communities by drinking water and wastewater treatment systems. As you are aware, the nation's railroads have embargoed shipments of hazardous materials like chlorine in order to meet federal regulations should a railroad worker work stoppage occur this week.

Chlorine is critical in the drinking water treatment process. It is required for disinfecting drinking water so that it is safe and for compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. Many wastewater utilities also use chlorine for disinfection to protect public health and the environment. The disruption of normal freight rail transport of chlorine endangers effective water and wastewater treatment operations. Water systems maintain on-site storage of key treatment chemicals, but reliable chemical supply requires a complete return to normal shipping and delivery of both delayed and anticipated shipments.

Water utilities must consider quality, safety, and system resiliency as they acquire and store treatment chemicals. Embargos are already being imposed on hazardous material shipments which will directly impact water system operations from the resulting shortage in availability of chlorine and other water treatment chemicals. Unless freight rail service for chlorine returns to normal soon, communities will be

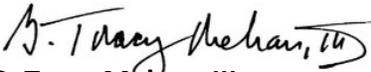
unable to produce safe drinking water, resulting in many boil water advisories and the threat of waterborne disease outbreaks. Inadequate disinfection represents a threat to public health and a significant disruption to daily life, local economies, and critical services like hospitals and schools. Public health and environmental protection will also be placed at risk for communities that use chlorine for wastewater disinfection.

Responding to shortfalls in water treatment chemicals like chlorine also puts additional economic strain on water systems. The cost of system response will ultimately be borne by individual households in the price of water service and the foregone investments in system improvements.

Congress can ill-afford to put the nation's public health at risk. We urge Congress to act promptly to avert any work stoppages and ensure the nation's supply chain is maintained.

Should you have questions or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Kevin Morley (kmorley@awwa.org), Dan Harnett (hartnett@amwa.net), Mike Keegan (keegan@ruralwater.org), Rik Hull (Rik@nawc.com), Cynthia Finley (cfinley@nacwa.org), or Steve Dye (sdye@wef.org).

Sincerely,



**G. Tracy Mehan, III**  
Executive Director of Government Affairs  
American Water Works Association



**Adam Krantz**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Association of Clean Water Agencies



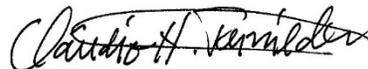
**Tom Dobbins**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies



**Matthew Holmes**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Rural Water Association



**Robert Powelson**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Association of Water Companies



**Claudio H. Ternieden**  
Chief Policy Officer  
Water Environment Federation