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COMMENTS

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Proposed SFY26 Clean Water and Drinking Water Intended Use Plans

By email to: waterbankinfo@dep.nj.gov

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Comments on FY25 Proposed SFY26 Drinking Water Intended Use Plan

Submitted on Behalf Lead-Free New Jersey Advocacy Committee

New Jersey's underlying water infrastructure requires significant investment to protect the public's health. Replacing Lead Service Lines by 2031 will require a significant investment over the next seven years.

The Lead-Free New Jersey Collaborative is made up of many diverse partner organizations and individuals who embrace the common purpose of **equitable policy change, holistic lead remediation, and empowered communities** recognizing that lead poisoning is a complex problem that requires investment in our most Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) where the lead burden is disproportional.

The Lead-Free New Jersey Advocacy Committee submits the following comments on the FY25 proposed Drinking Water (DW) SRF Intended Use Plans (IUPs) for SFY26, along the following priority areas: **Funding for LSLs in Disadvantaged Communities, Support for the replacement of Galvanized lines not downstream of Lead pipes. and support for Water systems serving DACs.**

We applaud the steps taken by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to address Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR) in the IUPs -and are grateful for the opportunity to submit our comments:

As New Jersey leads the charge on LSLR across the nation, we would like to see additional efforts to encourage participation in the SRF program, especially among DACs, which takes advantage of additional funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Question 1: Would the state consider setting aside a portion of state match or repurposing a modest portion of loan repayments to increase principal forgiveness to DACs for galvanized lines not downstream from lead pipes?

Question 2: Will NJDEP continue to prioritize 49% of BIL funding for DACs?

Prevention is the hallmark of public health protection. Exposure Prevention is an important goal of the Lead-Free New Jersey Advocacy Committee and the Members of the collaborative. We thank you for your consideration and are grateful for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

Debbie Mans, Lead-Free NJ Steering Committee Co-Chair

Rashan Prailow, Lead-Free NJ Steering Committee Co-Chair

Yvette Jordan, Lead-Free NJ Advocacy Coordinating Committee Co-Chair

Rachel Dawn Davis, Lead-Free NJ Water Advocacy Committee Chair

Amy Goldsmith, Lead In Drinking Water Advisory Committee Chair

Sheryl Snider, East Trenton Collaborative Community Organizer

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