

National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)
Written Testimony Submitted to U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Regarding FY 2026 U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Budget

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The National Association of Clean Water Agencies' (NACWA) FY 2026 appropriations request seeks the inclusion of accompanying report language regarding the funding set-aside for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. NACWA represents over 360 public wastewater and stormwater utilities nationwide, collectively providing essential clean water services to over 150 million Americans daily. Our members play a crucial role in safeguarding public health and environmental protection.

Our nation's water infrastructure is at a critical juncture, with costs rising both for traditional investment needs like maintaining aging infrastructure and meeting compliance obligations, as well as for newer challenges, such as addressing emerging contaminants, managing increasingly complex water quality issues, meeting the needs of disadvantaged communities, and ensuring system resilience in the face of climate change and cybersecurity risks.

Below are NACWA's FY26 Appropriations requests. As always, NACWA appreciates the Subcommittee's strong engagement and collaboration with the Association and our members, and your consideration of these priorities.

Agency: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Account: Disaster Relief Fund

Program: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Request: *Include the following report language - "BRIC Set-Aside.—The Committee encourages the Administration to utilize the full 6 percent set aside as authorized for the BRIC program."*

The BRIC program provides federal funds to states, territories, tribal governments, and local communities for pre-disaster mitigation activities. Since its inception, BRIC has incentivized public infrastructure projects that are designed to mitigate risk to one or more FEMA lifelines and prioritized projects that incorporate nature-based approaches.

Wastewater utilities face complex and expensive infrastructure project needs, which are further complicated by the impact of climate change. BRIC has provided utilities with much-needed support to tackle these challenges, from simple

infrastructure modification projects to more involved systemic infrastructure modernizations. We request that the Subcommittee include report language encouraging the Administration to utilize the full 6 percent BRIC set-aside as authorized for the program.