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Trump budget fails to protect Great Lakes, address water infrastructure needs

Funding cuts to Great Lakes programs out of touch with needs in Wisconsin

MADISON & MILWAUKEE, WI — Clean Wisconsin and Milwaukee Water Commons sharply criticized President Donald Trump's budget proposal on Monday. The proposed budget would cut over a billion dollars in federal Great Lakes and clean water funding.

"Once again this year, President Trump's proposal to slash funding for federal Great Lakes programs is out of touch with the needs of Wisconsinites," said Ezra Meyer, water resources specialist for Clean Wisconsin. "We and our Coalition partners across the Great Lakes are asking our elected leaders in Washington to restore this funding to protect Wisconsin's clean drinking water, economy, and public health. Thankfully, these priorities have had broad bipartisan support in Congress in recent years. We and our coalition partners will continue to work with Congress to see these priorities addressed in the final budget."

Brenda Coley, Co-Executive Director of Milwaukee Water Commons said "The proposed budget would be detrimental to the health of our waterways and our communities. While we have made significant progress toward restoration of the Great Lakes, more work needs to be done. Without federal funding to do that, we will regress. "

President Trump's budget calls for cuts across multiple federal water programs, including a \$270 million cut for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and a combined \$900 million cut to the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, which assist communities with infrastructure improvements for sewage treatment and clean drinking water.

Last week, ten delegates from across the state Wisconsin met with their federal representatives in Washington, D.C., during the Healing Our Waters Coalition's Great Lakes Days to share their experiences and stories about the importance of clean water and healthy drinking water in Great Lakes communities. Clean Wisconsin and Milwaukee Water Commons led the Wisconsin delegation of citizen advocates as the Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition's co-state leads for Wisconsin.

"It was clear from our discussions during Great Lakes Days that many of Wisconsin's federal lawmakers understand how important Great Lakes funding is to boosting our state economy,

safeguarding drinking water and protecting public health," said Meyer. "While the President does not see the Great Lakes as a priority, we urge Wisconsin's U.S. Senators and Representatives to recognize the critical benefits of this funding, and pass a budget that serves the needs of our Great Lakes and Wisconsin."

Coley added, "At a time when aging infrastructure and advocacy for clean, safe drinking water are bringing together rural and urban communities across Wisconsin, we should be thinking of ways to do more to assist vulnerable communities to have safe and clean drinking water rather than taking away opportunities to produce meaningful solutions."

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*On behalf of its more than 30,000 members, supporters and its coalition partners,
Clean Wisconsin protects and preserves Wisconsin's clean air, water and natural heritage.*

*Milwaukee Water Commons is a cross-city network
that fosters connection, collaboration and broad community leadership on behalf of our waters.
We promote stewardship of, equitable access to and shared decision-making for our common waters.*