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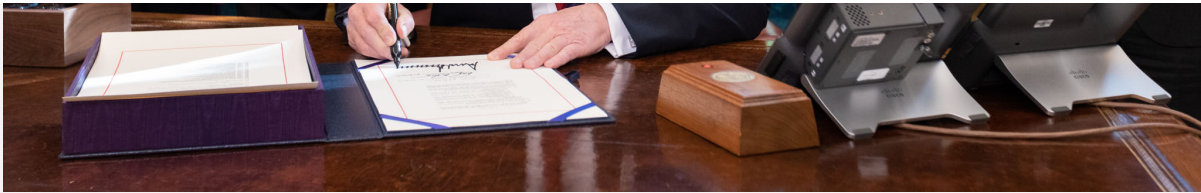
## Boozman Bulletin: New Tool to Fund Water Infrastructure Projects

Yesterday, President Donald Trump signed *America's Water Infrastructure Act* into law. I was honored to attend the signing ceremony at the White House because there are historic reforms included in this bill that change how we fund water infrastructure projects.

I'm particularly pleased that it includes my innovative solution to updating our water and wastewater infrastructure. With this new tool in the toolbox, we will be able to help state and local governments overcome the barriers that have stalled water infrastructure improvements for far too long. Fixing our crumbling infrastructure is a national priority and this [new policy initiative I authored](#) creates another option for any community, including those in rural America, to address overdue water infrastructure upgrades,

The new program will combine the best aspects of two existing funding programs to make the process easier and more affordable for states to meet their underserved or unmet water infrastructure needs. It will increase access to previously unavailable funding sources for small and medium-size communities, while removing high application fees which often prevent rural communities from applying for funding.





*The signing ceremony for America's Water Infrastructure Act. (Official White House photo by Shealah Craighead)*

This policy change is the result of months-long negotiations. It blends the best ideas available to ensure this common sense, bipartisan approach will work effectively and efficiently while providing millions, and potentially billions, in project dollars to communities that have traditionally not had access to these types of funds.

Making this change will allow a multitude of vetted water and wastewater projects to receive funding without the Environmental Protection Agency having to process thousands of additional applications.

With support from a diverse group of senators, this new initiative to address overdue water infrastructure upgrades has the opportunity to yield dividends across the country. The fact that this new policy has support from lawmakers with vastly different political ideologies, underscores an important point.

Infrastructure investment is not a rural issue, or a big city issue. It is not a red state problem or a blue state problem. This is a national emergency, and we must put partisanship aside and work together to provide safe and reliable drinking and wastewater services to every part of our country.

This message is echoed by the diverse voices in the industry and advocacy community, on both a national and state level, who advocated for this idea.

Dennis Sternberg, Executive Director of Arkansas Rural Water Association, applauded the policy update to extend these authorities to states. "We are very pleased a version of Senator Boozman's bill was included in the package. Small and rural communities have more difficulty affording public wastewater service due to lack of population density and lack of economies of scale. Rural America is very appreciative for the help."

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#### **Quick Takes:**

- **Improving Services for Air Travelers:** Earlier this month President Trump signed into law the [FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018](#). I supported this five-year reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration because it provides protections for air travelers from being bumped after boarding and from shrinking seat sizes as well as modernizes airport infrastructure and enhances transportation safety and security.
- **Celebrating Arkansas Black Hall of Fame Inductees:** Six individuals with Arkansas roots will be inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame on Saturday. I recognized the accomplishments and achievements of this distinguished group of men and women on the Senate floor. [Watch the speech here](#).
- **Recognizing Arkansas Veterans:** The 'Salute to Veterans' series honors the service and sacrifice of Arkansas veterans who served our nation in uniform. In the latest edition, I recognized Vietnam veteran Lt Col (retired) James Hudson. [Hear his memories about his military service](#) and his work to advance our air superiority. His entire interview is preserved in the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.

- **Removing Unnecessary Prescription Drugs:** Research has found that the majority of opioid abusers get their drugs from friends and family, often lifting pills from a familiar medicine cabinet. Removing them from homes helps reduce experimentation and overdoses. Saturday is Arkansas Drug Take Back Day. Get rid of old and unused prescription drugs at a [nearby drop-off site](#).
- **Connect on Social Media:** Stay up to date with what I'm doing for Arkansans via social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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