

H₂O Coalition
(Help to Optimize Water Coalition)

News Release

For Immediate Release
February 13, 2001

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Concerns with WIN Report Raised By New Water Industry Coalition

Washington, D.C., February 13, 2001 – Concerns with the new *Water Infrastructure Now (WIN Now)*, report have been raised by a new coalition, the H₂O Coalition, representing a number of water industry associations. “WIN would have the American taxpayer pay for a multi-Billion dollar bail-out of the coming infrastructure funding problem without doing anything systemically to address the underlying causes of the looming crisis,” said Peter Cook of National Association of Water Companies, and H₂O Coalition member.

Today, the “Water Infrastructure Network” is releasing its *WIN Now* document which calls on Congress to prop up the nation’s water infrastructure with a massive new \$57 Billion Government bureaucracy. The new program will funnel aid to water utilities mostly in the form of direct grants. “History has shown that these sorts of programs breed inefficiency, encourage dependency, stifle innovation, and do nothing to solve the fundamental problems,” said Cook. “The goal of our industry should be long-term self-sustainability, not perpetual reliance on subsidies to water utilities,” Cook continued.

Dawn Kristof, President of Water and Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association and H₂O Coalition member said the *WIN Now* Report “represents a step backward for an industry that has already evolved away from dependency on Federal grants.” Rich Norment with the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships said that while the WIN report gives lip service to new ideas and thinking, there is “remarkably little in new thinking and creative solutions, such as public-private partnerships, that one can actually point to in the report.”

Members of the H₂O Coalition hail WIN for tackling this important issue and have worked with WIN for more than a year on these issues; however the H₂O Coalition has withheld its support of the final *WIN Now* Report. The H₂O Coalition believes that the funding challenges can be met through enlarged and improved State Revolving Funds and creative use of the private sector.

“It is interesting and telling that none of the organizations representing the States or State Administrators – the very groups who would administer such a new program – have signed on to the *WIN Now* Report,” said Peter Cook. “This is a clear sign that more serious thought should be given to this problem before Congress embraces the WIN recommendations,” Cook concluded.

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The H₂O Coalition members are the National Association of Water Companies, the Water and Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association, and the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships.