



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER  
**FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

August 29, 2023

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-221 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-230 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
House of Representatives  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Schatz  
Chair, Senate Committee on Indian  
Affairs  
U.S. Senate  
722 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on  
Indian Affairs  
U.S. Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Support for the Tribal Access to Clean Water Act of 2023**

**Honorable Congressional Leaders:**

On behalf of the Clean Water for All Coalition, we are writing to express our strong support for the Tribal Access to Clean Water Act, S. 2385 and H.R. 4746, which will provide badly needed technical assistance, capacity, and resources to address the inequity in access to clean water for Tribes.

Access to clean water is a basic human right. Clean water is foundational for human health, growing economies, and a minimum level of support for communities. However, 48 percent of households on Native American reservations do not have clean water or adequate sanitation. Native American homes are 19 times more likely than white households to lack indoor plumbing.

Funding for safe drinking water systems for Tribal communities received a significant boost from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. While groundbreaking and long overdue, the funding now available for construction and repair of domestic water systems in Indian country is not a complete solution. Technical assistance is needed to allow Tribes to plan and design the systems necessary to access clean drinking water and bring those plans to the “shovel ready” stage where they can take advantage of the newly available construction funding. In addition, Tribes need support to develop the managerial, financial, and regulatory capacity required



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER  
**FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

for a fully functional and self-sustaining utility. Finally, because Tribes cannot rely on the same types and volumes of revenue streams to support operation and maintenance (O&M) of water systems, O&M assistance helps to ensure that the benefits of the historic investment in infrastructure are fully realized.

The Tribal Access to Clean Water Act of 2023 would address these gaps and advance the Federal Government's treaty and trust obligations to provide clean and accessible water for Native communities. We strongly support swift passage of The Tribal Access to Clean Water Act.

Sincerely,

Heather Tanana  
Initiative Lead  
Universal Access to Clean Water

Garrit Voggesser  
National Director, Tribal Partnerships  
National Wildlife Federation

Cindy Lowry  
Executive Director  
Alabama Rivers Alliance

Colton Fagundes  
Policy Director  
American Sustainable Business Network

Harriet Festing  
Executive Director  
Anthropocene Alliance

Beth K. Stewart  
Executive Director  
Cahaba River Society

Tracy Kolian  
Health Policy Consultant  
Children's Environmental Health Network

Sean Jackson  
National Water Campaigns Organizer  
Clean Water Action



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER  
**FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

Julian Gonzalez  
Senior Legislative Counsel  
Earthjustice

Val Schull  
Water Equity and Ocean Program Director  
GreenLatinos

Alicia Vasto  
Water Program Director  
Iowa Environmental Council

Laura Gregory  
Watershed Program Director  
Kentucky Waterways Alliance

Lizzy Duncan  
Government Affairs Representative, Healthy Communities  
League of Conservation Voters

Cynthia Robertson  
Executive Director  
Micah Six Eight Mission

Wendy Weaver  
Executive Director  
Montana Freshwater Partners

Rebecca Hammer  
Deputy Director of Federal Water Policy  
Natural Resources Defense Council

Sylvia Orduño  
Managing Director  
People's Water Board Coalition

April Ingle  
Advocacy Director  
River Network



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER  
**FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

Jessica Dandridge  
Executive Director  
The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans

Alex Funk  
Director of Water Resources and Senior Counsel  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Tahlia Bear  
Indigenous Peoples Engagement Manager  
Western Resource Advocates

Debra Buffkin  
Executive Director  
Winyah Rivers Alliance