



# PRESS RELEASE

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Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

## **ECOS President Testifies before House on Water Infrastructure Needs**

**Washington, DC** – ECOS President John Stine, Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, will testify today on a panel before the Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. The hearing is entitled, “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The Role of Federal Agencies in Water Infrastructure.”

Water infrastructure is a key priority of ECOS, as documented in its [Priority Issues for a Time of Political Transition](#) paper.

Stine’s testimony will focus on the following:

- ❖ Our nation’s aging drinking water and wastewater treatment systems require federal investment in and collaboration with states, so that innovative and affordable funding approaches, technical support, and leveraged funding solutions can be advanced to respond to the diverse needs of American communities – small and large, urban and rural – across the United States.
- ❖ Distressed urban areas, small communities, and rural communities face unique challenges in operating and maintaining infrastructure assets.
- ❖ Financial and capacity factors compound challenges of aging infrastructure in these communities and households, and must be addressed strategically. For example, in the 1970s federal dollars constructed 75 percent of wastewater infrastructure. States like Minnesota contributed approximately 15 percent, meaning localities contributed 10 percent. This partnership and sharing of costs modernized our nation’s infrastructure. But as time has passed, populations have risen and systems have become aged and stressed. Federal infrastructure funding is again needed because U.S. communities cannot cover the water needs required for this generation and future generations.
- ❖ Clean water is essential for economic prosperity, health, and environmental quality, and should be a legacy for future generations. Failing to invest in water infrastructure needs leads to adverse economic, public health, and equity consequences. Keeping these connections in the forefront of funding, programming, and policy decisions allows leaders within our federal and state capitols and legislatures, executive agencies, and communities across the U.S. to focus limited resources on the most pressing environmental and health challenges.

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*ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental commissioners. For more information, visit [www.ecos.org](http://www.ecos.org).*