

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Support the Highway Stormwater Discharge Mitigation Program – \$958 Million for Federal-Aid Highway Stormwater Projects

February 2, 2004

Dear Colleague:

Our nation's federal highways are the source of a variety of pollutants to surrounding surface and subsurface waters. Regular transportation activities and operations on federal highways cause an accumulation of roadway pollutants ranging from dirt, oil, sediments, heavy metals, and other materials that may be washed into receiving waterways by rain and snow events. Highway construction and operations also contribute significantly to increased impervious surface areas, impacting groundwater resources and natural hydrological cycles. Depending on the project, highway surfaces may increase stormwater runoff volume from 2 to 16 times predevelopment rates. These volume and pollutant loadings result in significant impacts on our nation's rivers, lakes, and streams, estuary and coastal areas.

The Highway Stormwater Discharge Mitigation Program, a critical new provision included in S. 1072, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Act of 2003 (SAFETEA), provides funding through the Surface Transportation Program for stormwater concerns associated with our nation's highway systems. The mandatory two-percent (2%) set-aside through the Surface Transportation Program will allocate \$958 million over six years for stormwater mitigation projects associated with the nation's federal-aid highways. The Program includes a list of eligible projects aimed at reducing stormwater discharge; mitigating water quality impacts; reducing flooding associated with stormwater runoff; and emphasizing groundwater recharge needs.

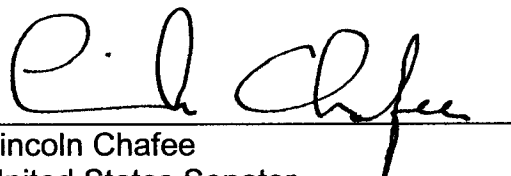
This new, dedicated source of funding for highway runoff is vital as states and municipalities continue to struggle to come into compliance with the water quality and stormwater requirements of the Clean Water Act.

We ask for your help in ensuring that the Highway Stormwater Discharge Mitigation Program remains a critical component of SAFETEA.

Sincerely,



John W. Warner
United States Senator



Lincoln Chafee
United States Senator