

**TESTIMONY OF
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**BEFORE THE
U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

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Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the bold vision laid out in the American Jobs Plan. This plan is a transformational investment that puts working people first and will help ensure we reduce pollution and help create good quality jobs.

The American Jobs Plan

In March, President Biden released the American Jobs Plan. This plan recognizes that now is the time for a bold, once-in-a-generation investment in America to put millions of people to work and lay the foundation for economic growth for decades to come by investing in infrastructure.

Infrastructure in the 21st century extends far beyond just roads and bridges. It means investing in our electrical grid and building more resilient transmission. It means revitalizing digital infrastructure to expand access to reliable, high-speed broadband internet in every pocket of the country, especially rural areas and underserved communities. And it also means investing in our drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, cleaning up and restoring our land, and investing in programs to reduce air pollution for our kids.

Guaranteeing clean water for all

The American Jobs Plan proposes a \$111 billion investment in water infrastructure, including a \$45 billion investment to replace 100% of lead service lines and pipes through the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act grants. Replacing lead service lines is vital for public health and yet EPA estimates that six to 10 million homes in the United States and up to 400,000 schools and daycare centers have lead service lines. The impact of lead exposure, including through drinking water, is a serious public health issue and its adverse effects on children are all too well known. In children, lead can cause irreversible and life-long health effects, including decreasing IQ, focus, and academic achievement.

The plan also would invest \$56 billion in grants and low-cost flexible loans to states, Tribes, territories, and disadvantaged communities across the country to upgrade and modernize America's drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, tackle new contaminants, and support clean water infrastructure across rural America. The American Jobs Plan also provides \$10 billion in funding to monitor and remediate PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in drinking water and to invest in rural small water systems, and household well and wastewater systems, including drainage fields.

In total, these investments will create millions of good paying jobs, including union jobs.

We know from experience that water infrastructure investments not only improve public health—they also create good-paying jobs. Through our State Revolving Funds, EPA has already provided more than \$189 billion in financial assistance to nearly 43,000 water quality infrastructure projects and 16,500 drinking water projects. This has created over 300,000 jobs in the last two years alone. Through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan program, EPA has provided \$9 billion in credit assistance to help finance more than \$19 billion for water infrastructure while creating nearly 47,000 jobs and saving ratepayers \$4 billion.

Investing in clean buses for kids

When I was a kid growing up in Eastern North Carolina I had to use an inhaler, an experience familiar for far too many kids. That is why the American Jobs Plan proposes to electrify at least 20 percent of our yellow school bus fleet through a new Clean Buses for Kids Program at EPA. We know this type of investment works and that it is important to protect kids on their way to and from school. Since 2008, Congress has provided funding through EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) for more than 28,000 school bus upgrades, including more than 4,000 school bus replacements. The Clean Buses for Kids Program is a new program, which would build on the lessons learned from DERA while leaving the existing program intact.

Reducing emissions from school buses has demonstrated positive health benefits for the children who ride them, the drivers, people around school bus loading areas, and the communities in which they operate. These investments will also boost market demand to create jobs, build out infrastructure and support U.S. manufacturing.

Cleaning up and restoring our land

In the 40 years since the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) was signed into law, we have significant progress on cleaning up and restoring our land, but the work is far from over. Under my leadership, EPA will do everything in its power to hold bad actors accountable for environmental degradation and return land to safe and productive use for communities. Communities located within one mile of Superfund sites are disproportionately communities of color and low-income. Remediation of these sites will strengthen climate resilience, improve public health, and expand job opportunities both in these communities, and the nation at large.

The American Jobs Plan proposes a \$5 billion investment in the remediation and redevelopment of Brownfield and Superfund sites, as well as related economic and workforce development programs. Cleaning up contaminated sites so they can be returned to productive use can be an engine for economic development across the country. Since Congress started the Brownfields program, federal investments have leveraged \$34.6 billion, supported over 176,000 jobs, and thousands of properties have been cleaned up or made ready for reuse.

Conclusion

In closing, I want to reiterate how crucial the American Jobs Plan is to achieve our shared goal of reducing pollution and putting people to work. With these investments we can tackle the climate crisis with the urgency it requires and ensure the benefits of a cleaner environment are enjoyed by all Americans.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to our continued partnership to achieve these ambitious yet necessary goals and welcome any questions you may have.