



**National Conference of State Legislatures  
Office of State-Federal Relations**

**Senate Passes Water Resources Development Act of 2016**

September 16, 2016

On September 15, the United States Senate passed, 95-3, the [Water Resources Development Act of 2016](#) (WRDA). The bill authorizes \$10.6 billion for a number of inland water and harbor maintenance projects, safe drinking water and clean water infrastructure and funding for communities affected by water contamination from lead pipes.

Specifically, WRDA authorizes 30 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects in 17 states designed to improve ocean and river ports, barge traffic, flood control and ecosystem restoration. Projects include dredging, maintenance and modernization in Florida and South Carolina; levees reconstruction in Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina and Texas, as well as restoration of the Florida Everglades. For a fully comprehensive list of all authorized USACE projects, click [here](#).

Additionally, the bill builds upon reforms made to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) in the [Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014](#) (WRRDA 2014) by ensuring a growing use of revenues deposited into the HMTF. The bill provides a three percent increase in the coming year and continues that increase until 100 percent of revenues generated by the Harbor Maintenance Tax are fully invested, which further aligns with [NCSL's Waterways and Ports Policy Directive](#).

WRDA also updates a number of federal programs related to both safe drinking water and clean water infrastructure including the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). Further, it includes \$220 million to fund water infrastructure replacement and repair in Flint, Mich. and other communities similarly affected by drinking water and wastewater contamination.

However, it remains unclear how the House of Representatives will act on its version of WRDA. The Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee [approved its version](#) in late May, although due to jurisdictional issues, the committee's bill only address's waterway and port projects. No House committee has adopted provisions dealing with safe drinking water and clean water infrastructure. If the House adopts language as approved by the T&I Committee, it could

vote to move to conference with the Senate in the hopes of adopting a final version before the end of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.

For any further questions or concerns regarding the WRDA, please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Kristen Hildreth](#) (202.624.3597).