

Duckworth-Durbin Show Support Of Legislation, Say It Will Help In Removing Lead From Drinking Water Supplies

December 3 2021 5:11 PM



WASHINGTON, D.C.] – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today announced that just weeks after the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal was signed into law, Illinois will be able to make significant progress in removing lead from drinking water supplies, better protecting families from

forever chemicals like PFAS and delivering environmental justice to communities in every corner of the state that have been ignored for too long—all while creating good-paying, local jobs.

These provisions were championed by Duckworth, who secured her entire bipartisan *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act* (DWWIA) in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal in order to ensure Illinois's and the nation's crumbling water infrastructure will finally receive the significant improvements they need. This announcement comes after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said it will allot \$288,290,000 to Illinois in 2022 as a result of Duckworth's *DWWIA* to help build healthier, safer and cleaner communities.

“I worked hard to ensure my Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure bill was included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal because communities across Illinois, like Cahokia Heights, desperately need support to fix their faulty, dangerous and aging water infrastructure that's been neglected for decades—all while creating good-paying jobs in our communities,” Duckworth said. “I'm proud that my provisions are already hard at work improving people's lives by helping increase access to safe drinking water for our children, replace lead pipes for millions of families, strengthen wastewater infrastructure, protect working families from toxic forever chemicals like PFAS and finally take big steps to bring environmental justice to communities that have been ignored for too long.”

“Communities across Illinois will be able to use these funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal to upgrade water infrastructure, replace lead pipes, and make other needed improvements to make families safer and healthier. This offers towns like Cahokia Heights a chance to fix their broken pumps, shore up drainage ditches, and begin addressing water issues that have been overlooked for far too long,” Durbin said. “That's why Senator Duckworth and I were proud to support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal and provide a once-in-a-generation reinvestment in our water infrastructure.”

“Infrastructure is more than roads and bridges—it encompasses all the supports working families need to build strong and healthy lives,” said Illinois Governor JB Pritzker. “Senator Tammy Duckworth's Clean Water Provisions deliver on that belief, helping towns across Illinois and beyond access clean drinking water, build 21st century sewage systems, and most importantly, bring justice to communities who have for too long lived with the consequences of environmental racism. I'm thankful for President Biden and leaders in Congress for delivering this much-needed boost of resources to our economic recovery as a state and as a nation.”

With DWWIA and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal, Duckworth and Durbin are helping communities across Illinois by:

- Helping communities more easily use the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to improve sewer and stormwater infrastructure
- Helping communities more easily use the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to make sure families have access to safe drinking water
- Improving the ability for communities to seek loan forgiveness and grants for water infrastructure projects, which would help disadvantaged communities qualify for these programs
- Enabling non-profits to provide technical assistance to small and rural communities to assist them in applications for these types of projects and compliance efforts
- Lowering the cost-sharing requirements for grant programs, helping communities improve their crumbling infrastructure with less financial burden
- Helping rural and disadvantaged communities more easily access grant funding they've historically struggled to access to address sewage and stormwater issues.

Earlier this year, Duckworth introduced the *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021 (DWWIA 2021)* and successfully [shepherded passage of the bill](#) in the Senate by a vote of 89 to 2. Duckworth is the Chair of the EPW Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water & Wildlife and chair and co-founder of the U.S. Senate [Environmental Justice Caucus](#).