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IAPMO Supports U.S. Sen. Baldwin’s Healthy Drinking Water Affordability Act

Washington, D.C. (May 2, 2022) — The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials® (IAPMO) strongly supports The Healthy Drinking Water Affordability Act, or The Healthy H₂O Act, which would provide grants for water testing and treatment technology directly to individuals, nonprofits and local governments in rural communities.

Introduced by U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin), The Healthy H₂O Act would provide grants for water quality testing and the purchase and installation of point-of-use or point-of-entry water quality improvement systems that remove or significantly reduce contaminants from drinking water. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) would provide the grants directly to individuals and nonprofits or local governments to help people go through the process of water testing and then finding and installing a water treatment product to address their situation.

Communities across the United States face threats to their drinking water from a number of contaminants, including lead, arsenic, nitrates, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), PFOA, PFOS, hexavalent chromium-6, and others. While public water systems monitor for these threats and treat water before it is distributed to points of use, nearly 43 million households primarily in rural communities rely exclusively on groundwater delivered through private wells for their drinking water. This water is not subject to the same regular oversight and testing for contamination, which can delay identification of and response to health threats. The Healthy H₂O Act would provide grants for rural communities to increase access to the many technologies for testing and water treatment at the point of use.

“Every Wisconsin community deserves access to clean drinking water and an environment free of toxic chemicals. Across our state, communities are struggling to identify and treat known and emerging chemicals that endanger our health, especially for children,” Baldwin said. “My legislation will cut costs and expand access to water testing and treatment for families in rural communities so that when we turn on the faucet, we can be confident our drinking water is safe.”

Through its Community Plumbing Challenges (CPC), IAPMO’s nonprofit organization, the International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH), collaborates with local governments, nonprofit organizations and volunteer tradespeople to identify and address water and sanitation-related issues in rural areas where access to clean, safe water and sanitation is limited or compromised. Baldwin invited IAPMO Director of Workforce Training and Development/IWSH North America Project Manager Randy Lorge, who has been integral to the success of CPCs in South Africa, Indonesia, and the United States, to be her virtual guest for President Biden’s State of the Union address March 2.

“IAPMO believes that everyone should have access to clean water and sanitation. This is why we support the introduction of The Healthy H₂O Act and applaud Senator Baldwin for her leadership on this issue,” said Dain Hansen, IAPMO’s executive vice president of Government Relations. “IAPMO has long championed solutions around the globe that lead to lasting quality water and sanitation services. Today, many communities across the United States face challenges with their drinking water — an issue that is only compounded in underserved neighborhoods. Water filtration technologies play an important role meeting those challenges immediately. We recognize this as an essential piece of legislation that helps our country take a critical step in closing the clean drinking water access gap in the U.S.”

The Healthy H₂O Act is also supported by The Water Quality Association (WQA), The National Ground Water Association (NGWA), The Water Council, NSF International, American Supply Association (ASA), Water Systems Council, Water Well Trust, and The Groundwater Foundation.