Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 12, 2019

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army
Office of the Assistant Secretary for
Civil Works
Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Acting Administrator Wheeler and Assistant Secretary James:

We write to request an extension of the proposed comment period associated with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) proposed rule to replace the 2015 Clean Water Rule.

Americans depend on clean water for their health and livelihoods. Today, more than 117 million Americans – in both large cities and small and rural towns – obtain their drinking water from the same streams and waterbodies made more vulnerable to pollution under the Trump administration's proposed rule. Yet, despite this impact, the administration proposes only a 60-day comment period on this proposed rule. We believe this period is far too short to allow the countless Americans directly impacted by this endeavor to understand fully its magnitude and to make their voices heard on the proposal, if they so choose.

We urge you to extend the comment period for your replacement to the existing Clean Water Rule to at least the same duration as offered by the previous administration in establishing that Rule – 207 days (April 21—November 14, 2014). That public comment period, first established for 90 days and extended twice in response to extension requests, yielded more than a million comments from concerned individuals and families. It makes no sense to deny affected Americans the same opportunity to comment on this replacement proposal.

Clean water is a basic need. Our families rely on rivers and streams to supply clean drinking water to our homes and businesses. Our farmers and brewers rely on clean water to produce food and drink. Hunters, anglers, and birders need waters and wetlands to sustain wildlife and the $887 billion outdoor recreation industry depends upon clean water to recreate. These interests want to know which waters remain protected by the Federal Clean Water Act.

Preliminary reports suggest that the proposed rule would roll back Clean Water Act protections on more than 51 percent of the nation's wetlands and 18 percent of streams, while encouraging comment on further restrictions that could cover up to 60 percent of the nation's waterways.

Given the breadth of these potential impacts to everyday Americans, every effort should be made to provide sufficient time to understand its impacts, and to comment on its merits. This will allow everyday Americans to consider the proposal and its implications on their health, lives and

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livelihoods, and provide the feedback you seek. The 60 days you propose is simply not enough time to do so meaningfully.

We would appreciate hearing from you by March 13, 2019 on your intentions regarding this request.

Sincerely,

Peter A. DeFazio

Grace F. Napolitano

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Jerry McNerney

Jerrold Nadler

Nanette Diaz Barragán

Bobby L. Rush

Darren Soto

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Christopher H. Smith

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Jimmy Gomez

Gwen Moore

José E. Serrano

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Tim Ryan

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Kathy Castor

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Rick Larsen

Judy Chu

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Jackie Speier

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Mark Pocan

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