

March 27, 2020

Cheryl A. Hawkins  
Office of the Science Advisor  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Re: Request for extension on *Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science* ([EPA-HQ-OA-2018-0259](#))

Dear Dr. Hawkins:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are respectfully requesting a comment period extension of 60 additional days to *Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science* (*EPA-HQ-OA-2018-0259*).

The nation's drinking water, wastewater, storm water, and water reuse utilities are critical infrastructure operators who provide essential services that must continue during COVID-19 national emergency.<sup>1</sup> Because of the sector's engagement on addressing these critical infrastructure and essential services concerns, engagement on important but non-emergency issues may be limited for the duration of the emergency. This rule has important implications for the water sector, in that it will impact EPA's decision-making processes under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, and other environmental statutes. Therefore, we respectfully request that EPA extend the comment period deadline for at least 60 additional days, to allow for sufficient engagement from the sector. We also request that at least one hearing (virtual or in person, depending on public health recommendations) be held on this proposal, to allow for additional public input.

Sincerely,



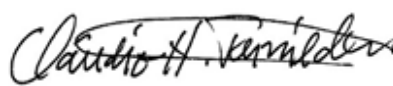
G. Tracy Mehan, III  
Executive Director of Government Affairs  
American Water Works Association



Diana VanDe Hei  
Chief Executive Officer  
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies



Adam Krantz  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Association of Clean Water Agencies



Claudio H. Ternieden  
Sr. Director, Government Affairs & Strategic Partnerships  
Water Environment Federation

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<sup>1</sup> 85 FR 15337. *Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak*. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/03/18/2020-05794/declaring-a-national-emergency-concerning-the-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak>