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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Water & Wastes Digest is published exclusively for the 85,000+ decision makers in the municipal and industrial water, wastewater and water pollution industries. These individuals actively design, specify, buy, operate and maintain the equipment, chemicals and services used for water treatment. Editorial content in this audited publication highlights new products and technologies concerning the supply, collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water; the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater; and hazardous waste pollution control. A product directory is included in the annual June Buyer's Guide.

Scranton Gillette Communications'
Infrastructure Team

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DIGEST**

Conscientious Management

In 2008, we felt the effects of the collapse of the housing market, credit freeze and the downturn of the national and global economy. It is safe to say that no one can exactly predict the challenges that 2009 will present.

It is likely, however, that many states and municipalities will continue to experience a budget deficit and will have to manage their financial resources more effectively than ever before. This means they also may have to make some difficult choices and prioritize their infrastructure projects.

Therefore, it is no surprise that many states are following the developments of President-elect Barack Obama's recent proposal to increase infrastructure spending. While Congress is considering the economic stimulus package—of which a large portion is focused on infrastructure spending—and how to best jumpstart the nation's economy, many in our industry hope that the package results in much-needed federal assistance to water and wastewater projects.

Water & Wastes Digest recently invited its readers to share their opinion on how this initiative would affect the water and wastewater industry, and the feedback was very informative.

Here is what some of you had to say about this issue:

"The only downside that I perceive to the stimulus package is that if the money has an exact earmark like pipe, treatment plant, etc., it may have money spent in the wrong places. Not everyone has the same needs. If the money is set aside for 'infrastructure' and each utility is allowed to select from a list of projects that meet the area of most importance, we will see the money spent wisely." —*WWD* reader from Georgia.

"The time has come for Congress to recognize the critical and timely infrastructure needs in the U.S. I would expect that the new administration's stimulus package would address the needs of much-needed, aging water and wastewater systems. In addition to creating jobs and stimulating the economy, repairing our water and wastewater systems ensures that our citizens will be able to count on these crucial resources. After all, treating and providing freshwater is an important safety issue." —*WWD* reader from Pennsylvania.

"I was an early proponent of infrastructure spending as a way to stimulate the economy, so obviously I believe that it will benefit our nation as a whole. My concern for whether it benefits the industry is secondary, but unless we are poor business people indeed, additional spending in our area of specialization can only help us as businesses." —*WWD* reader from Florida.

"I think that two years is a little optimistic [The new administration hopes that if approved, the economic stimulus package will help create or save 3 million jobs over the next two years]. Dealing with the 'government' on a daily basis, I find that getting anything done in a timely manner is not typical—maybe five to 10 years to see real results." —*WWD* reader from Texas.

While many of the respondents agree that the stimulus package would help our aging infrastructure, many shared an overall concern if the funds would be used as intended.

And that's the key to the success of any program. In order for this initiative to work, there must be accountability to make sure taxpayers' dollars are used appropriately.

Hopefully in the long run, these difficult economic times do not only lead us to rely heavily on federal funding, but also result in more efficient and conscientious water and wastewater management.



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