



UCANE backs Crighton/Garballey Legislation to Fund Water/Sewer Infrastructure

H. 920/S. 505 Commonwealth Water Infrastructure Trust Fund would close funding gap, support economic target areas

BOSTON, Oct. 13, 2021—The 250-member Utility Contractors Association of New England today offered its strong support for legislation offered by Massachusetts State Sen. Brendan P. Crighton (D-Lynn) and Rep. Sean Garballey (D-Arlington) creating a new financing mechanism to help close the huge funding gap for critically needed water-sewer infrastructure investments.

The legislation, filed as H. 920 and S. 505, would create a Commonwealth Water Infrastructure Trust Fund, funded by connection fees paid by developers for access to municipal water and sewer lines. Half the funding would go to cities and towns in which work is being performed, and the rest to the statewide Clean Water Trust and Department of Environmental Protection to address water-sewer needs in designated economic target areas.

“This thoughtful and innovative legislation proposed by Senator Crighton and Representative Garballey would create a reliable and consistent funding mechanism that can address the Commonwealth’s myriad water infrastructure needs,” UCANE Executive Director Jeff Mahoney said.

“This bill also recognizes that the Commonwealth’s future growth and equitable access to job opportunities depend on all municipalities being able to depend on strong, safe water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure,” added Mahoney, who testified in favor of the legislation before the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

UCANE is a founding member of the new #InvestInWaterMA coalition, which is seeking to ensure that critical water and sewer infrastructure get the priority they need and deserve as Governor Charlie Baker’s administration and the Legislature are allocating COVID relief funding and federal infrastructure assistance.

Other organizations backing the #InvestInWaterMA coalition include MassBIO, NAIOP Massachusetts, the American Council of Engineering Companies of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Water Works Association, the New England Water Works Association, and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Wastewater Advisory Committee.

Confirming earlier findings by the Massachusetts Water Infrastructure Finance Commission, the Office of the State Auditor's Division of Local Mandates in 2017 determined that cities, towns, and local water-sewer authorities face at least an \$18 billion funding gap to cover critically important infrastructure upgrades.

ABOUT UCANE

The Utility Contractors Association of New England (UCANE) is comprised of more than 250 major contractors and associated businessmen and women who perform underground utility construction projects (including water, sewer, electrical, gas, and fiber-optic telecommunications) primarily in Massachusetts and throughout New England. Members include both union and non-union companies and range from small, family-owned businesses to large corporations and include many minority- and women-owned businesses and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).