



# Strengthen America's Infrastructure

**WHEREAS**, Government spending on infrastructure has plummeted over the past decades. Combined with private sector underinvestment, this neglect has created the current infrastructure crisis. Fifty years ago, federal and state governments spent over twice as much as they do today on infrastructure. It will require nearly \$5 trillion to fix our infrastructure over the next decade, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). While actions are being taken by utilities, the pace, scale, and scope of efforts needs to increase dramatically to ensure safe and reliable energy and water delivery; and

**WHEREAS**, The Trump administration released an infrastructure plan that called for tax incentives to spur private investment, but we cannot depend on investors alone to fund improvements to our water and energy systems; and

**WHEREAS**, The U.S. government's *Fourth National Climate Assessment*, published in November 2018, found that the nation's energy system will be increasingly affected by extreme weather events, with more frequent and longer-lasting power outages likely; and

**WHEREAS**, Intensifying weather has further eroded our already inadequate infrastructure, but many utilities face the challenge of simply getting their existing infrastructure back to a state of good repair. With increasing concerns over electric reliability and resiliency, it is imperative that utilities institute grid hardening measures to minimize outages and structural damage costs; and

**WHEREAS**, The frequency and intensity of floods are expected to increase — particularly in the Northeast and Midwest — threatening energy infrastructure such as the foundations of power line and pipeline crossings, coastal and riverbank energy facilities, and fuel transport infrastructure. Elsewhere, more frequent drought is leading to: increasingly deadly wildfires; effects on the water supply for power plant cooling, hydraulic fracturing and fuel refining operations; as well as the supply of biofuel feedstock; and

**WHEREAS**, Water and wastewater systems are in wide-spread disrepair. Cities such as Flint, Michigan have seen water safety levels fall to dangerous levels, with little government support. Nearly all hydroelectric dams, a traditional source of renewable energy, are over a half-century old and are in urgent need of maintenance and updating; and

**WHEREAS**, Investment in essential human infrastructure — the workers who maintain, repair and respond in emergencies — is a critical component of rebuilding our infrastructure. Updating and expanding our infrastructure not only keeps communities and front-line workers safe, but creates jobs, spurs local economies, increases efficiencies, and ensures that our nation's infrastructure is resilient for generations to come; and

**WHEREAS**, updating and improving the water and electricity infrastructure systems in the U.S. is pivotal to ensuring economic growth and environmental safety and the health of our communities, workplaces and nation now and into the future; and

**WHEREAS**, Extreme weather events, and natural and manmade disasters have resulted in heightened public awareness of the vulnerabilities of utility systems, thereby creating important opportunities for UWUA regulatory interventions.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, The UWUA will continue to advocate for major federal investment in infrastructure. This long overdue investment must be a top priority for Congress and the Trump administration. We must continue to work with government officials to ensure our infrastructure gets the funding it so desperately needs and that these projects create safe, good-paying jobs; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, We must come together to ensure that all American communities have the infrastructure they need to survive and thrive. Tax incentives may encourage investors to take on profitable projects, but these vital systems belong to all of us and are too important to sell off to the highest bidder; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Traditional sources of energy will continue to have an important role to play in grid

reliability, and must not be overlooked in infrastructure investments. Older technologies such as hydropower, are in urgent need of significant investments to ensure they remain a key source for improving grid reliability; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** At the state and local levels, the UWUA and our affiliates are pushing for legislation and policies to rebuild infrastructure, and to sustain and create good jobs while protecting safety and the environment. The UWUA has effectively used state regulatory processes to improve infrastructure and improve safety; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** By keeping issues of public safety in the foreground, the UWUA has pressed ahead with efforts to support investment in pipeline repair and replacement. Working in conjunction with our partners, the UWUA is promoting large-scale investment to modernize natural gas pipeline networks and accelerate repair efforts; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED,** Improving our infrastructure requires skilled workers to build, run and maintain our energy and water systems. Through our Power for America Training Trust Fund (P4A) and the Utility Workers Military Assistance Program (UMAP), we provide the training needed for workers to maintain and rebuild our infrastructure. Notably, we created the UMAP “Michigan Gas Boot Camp” to provide military veterans with family sustaining jobs and safer, more efficient, pipelines for Michigan ratepayers.