



# Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

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April 20, 2015

The Honorable Michael McCaul  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

*Re: H.R. 1731- National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act of 2015*

Dear Chairman McCaul:

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – more commonly known as WSSC – writes in support of increasing the sharing of cyber threat information with operators of critical infrastructure, like WSSC. WSSC is one of the largest drinking water and sewer service providers in the United States. WSSC provides water and sewer services to 1.8 million residents in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties in Maryland, right outside the Nation’s Capital. For size and scale comparison, the population served by WSSC is nearly the same as the cities of Dallas and Austin, combined.

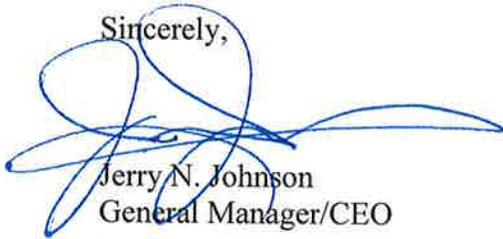
The vital services provided by WSSC are often assumed to always be there when the customer needs them. However, like other critical infrastructure sectors, the water and wastewater sector is highly dependent on integrated and computerized functions. WSSC operates a nearly 11,000 mile network of underground drinking water and sewer pipelines, which is heavily dependent on integrated computerized functions. Some of these functions include the use of supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA systems) and others to constantly monitor and test the water system to ensure it is safe. Other functions include meter reading, billing, customer account maintenance, financial management, and more. Thus, because these systems are computerized, the issue of cyber security is an always present one.

As your Committee and President Obama have stated, the issue of cyber-attacks and malicious hacking are extremely present and real threats for each and every critical infrastructure sector, including the often assumed and lower profile water and wastewater sector. As such, this bill and its efforts to advance the issue of cybersecurity and information sharing are a positive step. Moreover, to better assist with two-way information sharing, providing liability exemptions in Section 3 of the bill is a positive development. But, WSSC encourages and supports extending these exemptions to local and municipal government water wastewater systems too.

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WSSC will continue to work with your staff and others, to advance this issue and others as they relate to the water sector. Additionally, if WSSC can be a source of industry knowledge, I would gladly host you and your staff at our facilities so you can learn more. Please do not hesitate to call on WSSC if you need anything further.

Sincerely,



Jerry N. Johnson  
General Manager/CEO