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## **Tribal Access to Clean Water Act of 2021**

Access to clean water is a human right. Clean water is foundational for healthy communities and growing economies. Yet 48 percent of households on Native American reservations do not have clean water or adequate sanitation. Native American homes are 19 times more likely than white households to lack indoor plumbing. On some reservations, the situation is even more dire – Navajo residents are 67 times more likely than any other Americans to lack access to running water. In some areas of the Ute Mountain Ute reservation, it is custom to bring bottled water as a greeting gift because clean water is not otherwise available.

The Tribal Access to Clean Water Act of 2021 would address these severe shortcomings and fulfill the Federal Government's trust obligation to provide clean and accessible water for Native communities.

### **Specifically, the bill would:**

- Ensure Indian Health Service (IHS) can meet demand, by providing \$3.4 billion to address needs for tribal sanitation facilities and services, and allow IHS to appropriately deploy these additional resources. The bill also includes \$150 million for training, and technical and financial assistance to plan and design projects, and \$500 million for ongoing sanitation facility operation and maintenance.
- Increase funding for Native communities at USDA Rural Development, by providing \$500 million for Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program for Native communities, and ensuring that Native communities are eligible and treated equitably when considered for grants and loans.
- Improves Bureau of Reclamation's funding for Tribal water projects, by providing \$2 billion for the Bureau of Reclamation's (BOR) Rural Water Supply Program, half of which will fund a competitive grant program for Tribal clean water access projects and half would support legacy rural water supply projects identified in a BOR assessment. The bill would also provide \$90 million for BOR's Native American Affairs Technical Assistance Program.
- Promotes tribal access to drinking and wastewater resources at EPA, by providing a \$100 million each for the Tribal set aside in the EPA's Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act State Revolving Funds (SRF), without affecting the broader SRF funding formula, and support technical assistance for Native communities. Finally, it would direct EPA to increase outreach to Native communities, provide clear information about funding availability, and collaborate with Indian Health Service to streamline support.