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Congress of the United States
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6/12/2013

Mr. Bob Perciasepe, Acting Administrator and Deputy Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail Code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Acting Administrator Perciasepe:

I am writing in support of the application submitted by the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) funding to construct Phase 3a of the Carnuel Water System Improvement Project. This project will provide clean, reliable drinking water to unserved residents in an economically disadvantaged portion of the Carnuel community.

A recent New Mexico Rural Water Association survey indicates that the median household income is only \$18,000 for this project area. For this reason, I am also supporting the Water Authority's request to allow disadvantaged communities within a project area to receive principal forgiveness. This would allow the Water Authority to receive seventy-five percent in loan forgiveness to construct the Phase 3a project, which is ready to bid. Moreover, this will ensure that the project is financially feasible for both the Water Authority and the Carnuel community.

It has come to my attention that several states determine eligibility of disadvantaged communities by using income data for the specific groups of customers being served by a project rather than income data from a whole census tract or community. Eligible project areas include portions of existing service areas or areas located outside the boundaries of a service area. Similarly, the Water Authority desires to extend new water service to residents in the unserved, disadvantaged portion of the Carnuel community.

The residents of Carnuel, New Mexico have suffered a serious decline in the quality of drinking water from the community's private wells, including contamination from nitrates and traces of lead, radium, and uranium. The Carnuel community is in need of a public water system. With more than 40,000 small water systems in the United States and with recent changes in climate variability, it makes more sense than ever for these small systems to regionalize. Granting the Water Authority's request will help build on the existing, successful regional partnership between Carnuel and the Water Authority that was established in 2008.

I fully support the Water Authority's application and its request to allow specific project areas that include disadvantaged communities to receive seventy-five percent in loan forgiveness upon completion of Phase 3a of the Carnuel Water System Improvement Project. This will help address Carnuel, New Mexico's need for clean, reliable drinking water.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Lujan Grisham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

cc: Marquita Russel, NMFA Chief of Programs
Darlaina Chapman, NMFA Senior Lending Officer
Mark S. Sanchez, Executive Director, Water Authority
Wayne Johnson, Commissioner, Bernalillo County District 5
Becky Gutierrez, President, Carnuel Mutual Domestic