

March 2, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander M. Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1106 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Levin, Chairman Hatch, and Ranking Member Wyden:

As leaders in state and municipal government, we are writing to stress the importance of maintaining the current tax exemption for municipal bonds. It has been estimated that at the combined state and local levels, we must spend \$3.6 trillion by the year 2020 to meet our infrastructure needs, and the importance of building and maintaining our public infrastructure has never been more apparent.<sup>1</sup> Tax exemption of interest on municipal bonds was implemented more than 100 years ago at the dawn of the U.S. income tax system, and we strenuously oppose any reduction or elimination of this tax exemption. Any such change will inhibit our ability to make critical infrastructure investments. Proposals to change this commitment to tax-free municipal bonds would not only be costly for state and local taxpayers, but also result in fewer projects, fewer jobs and further deterioration of our infrastructure.

Three quarters of all public infrastructure projects in the United States are built by the states and local governmental entities and tax-exempt bonds are the primary financing mechanism for these essential projects. Municipal bonds have a very strong repayment record – much higher than corporate bonds – allowing state and local governments to borrow responsibly for capital projects, and providing a safe and reliable investment option for our citizens.

Tax-exempt municipal bonds finance highways, bridges, transit systems, airports, water and wastewater systems, schools, higher education facilities, and many other basic infrastructure projects. Tax-exempt bonds bring affordable capital to these projects, saving an average of 25 to 30 percent on interest costs compared to taxable bonds. In an age of constrained federal and state budgets, the ability to save billions of dollars on infrastructure financing is critical for state and

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<sup>1</sup> “Failure to Act, The Impact of Current Infrastructure Investment on America’s Economic Future.” Page 7, Report, American Society of Civil Engineers, January 15, 2013.  
[http://www.asce.org/uploadedFiles/Infrastructure/Failure\\_to\\_Act/Failure\\_to\\_Act\\_Report.pdf](http://www.asce.org/uploadedFiles/Infrastructure/Failure_to_Act/Failure_to_Act_Report.pdf)

local governments and their taxpayers. If issuing affordable debt is no longer an option and unfunded projects begin to further mount, state and local governments will have to seek additional infrastructure support at the federal level through federal highway legislation and other sources.

Simply put, any change to the tax treatment of municipal bonds will have a serious impact on the cost to state and local governments of financing critical infrastructure projects. Yet proposals have been offered by both parties to limit the long-lived tax exemption for these bonds.

The cost savings state and local governments realize through tax-exempt municipal bonds occur because investors are willing to accept a lower rate of interest in exchange for that interest being exempt from taxation. If the tax-exemption is capped or eliminated investors will demand a higher interest rate on municipal bonds thereby increasing the cost to municipal issuers. As a result, municipalities will have to either curtail infrastructure projects or raise taxes on sales, property or income. Additionally, if changes to the tax treatment of these bonds are enacted, a tax risk premium will be built into interest rates demanded by future investors. The potential impact of the change is more than theoretical: in December of 2012 the municipal bond market experienced a spike in rates as investors recognized a cap on exemption was under consideration.<sup>2</sup>

We urge you to take into account the consequences that any change in the taxation of municipal bonds will have on the taxpayers in every state and reject any proposed changes to the tax deductibility of municipal bond interest.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

American Public Power Association

Government Finance Officers Association

National Association of Health and Educational Facilities Finance Authorities

National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers

National Association of State Treasurers

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<sup>2</sup> Tax-Status Threat Fuels Worst Losses Since Whitney: Muni Credit. December 21, 2012  
<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-12-21/tax-status-threat-fuels-worst-losses-since-whitney-muni-credit>

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Albany County Legislator,  
District 12

Alison McLean Lane  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 14

Ralph Signoracci  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 17

Joseph O'Brien  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 25

Bryan Clenahan  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 30

Paul Miller  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 32

William Reinhardt  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 33

Joanne Cunningham  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 34

Charles Dawson  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 35

Richard Touchette  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 37

L. Mike Mackey  
Albany County Legislator,  
District 38

Keith King  
General Manager,  
Salamanca Board of Public  
Utilities

Francis X Murray  
Mayor, Village of Rockville  
Centre

Michael Connors  
Comptroller, Albany County

Raymond Joyce  
County Legislator, Albany  
County

Daniel McCoy  
County Legislator, Albany  
County

Timmy Currier  
Mayor, Village of Massena

Sam Teresi  
Mayor, City of Jamestown

Charles Cornell  
Chairman, Jamestown BPU

David Leathers  
General Manager,  
Jamestown BPU

William Vinehall  
Mayor, City of Sherrill

Michael Sayles  
City Manager, City of Sherrill

Michael Holmes  
City Clerk/Comptroller, City of  
Sherrill

Gordon Silsby  
President, Electric Board,  
City of Sherrill

Robert Mumford  
Superintendent, Power and  
Light

**North Carolina**

Janet Cowell  
Treasurer

Anthony C. Cannon  
General Manager/CEO of  
Greenville Utilities  
Commission

John F. Minges III  
Chair of the Board of  
Commissioners of Greenville  
Utilities Commission

J. Dwight Miller  
Chief Financial Officer,  
Fayetteville Public Works  
Commission

Rose Glover  
Council Member, City of  
Greenville

TJ Cawley  
Council Member, Town of  
Morrisville

**North Dakota**

Kelly Schmidt  
Treasurer

Jeffrey Russo  
Mayor, City of Lakota

Amie Vasichek  
Auditor & Utility Director, City  
of Lakota

Chris West  
Mayor, City of Grafton

Chuck Andrus  
President, North Dakota  
League of Cities

**Ohio**

Pam Lucas  
Village Manager, Village of  
Montpelier

Kelly Hephner  
Director of Finance, Village of  
Montpelier

Steven L. Yagelski  
Mayor, Village of Montpelier

Richard P. Homrighausen  
Mayor, City of Dover

Harlita Tomlinson  
Director of Finance & Tax  
Administrator, City of Forest  
Park

Ray Hodges  
City Manager, City of Forest  
Park

Charles Johnson  
Mayor, City of Forest Park

Brian O'Connell  
Utilities Director, City of  
Bowling Green

Doug Johnson  
Mayor, City of Bryan

Kevin Cornish  
Village Manager, Village of  
Clinton

Kenneth Harsanje, Sr.  
Mayor, City of Genoa

Patrick Moeller  
Mayor, City of Hamilton

Carla Fiehrer  
Vice Mayor, City of Hamilton

Joshua Smith  
City Manager, City of  
Hamilton

Ryan Shoffstall  
Mayor, City of Lakeview

Brian Rospert  
Village Administrator, Village  
of Milan

Donald Harrod  
Village Administrator, Village  
of Minster

Travis Sheaffer  
Council Member, City of  
Napoleon

City Council, City of  
Napoleon

N. Keith Nelso  
Mayor, City of New  
Martinsville

Randall Genzman  
Village Administrator, Village  
of Oak Harbor

Steve Dupee  
Electric Director, City of  
Oberlin

David Handwerk  
Mayor, City of Orrville

Jeff Brediger  
Finance Director, City of  
Orrville

Terry Pugh  
Mayor, City of St. Clairsville

Robert Vincenzo  
Former Mayor, City of St.  
Clarsville

Pat Hale  
Mayor, City of Tipp City

Catherine Fix  
Auditor, City of Wadsworth

Robert Patrick  
Director of Public Service,  
City of Wadsworth

Robin Laubaugh  
Mayor, City of Wadsworth

Karen Wintrow  
Council President, City of  
Yellow Springs

David Coffee  
Director of Budget and  
Finance, City of Kent

Brian Huff  
Controller, City of Kent

Roy Johnson  
Village Administrator, Village  
of Carey

Lori DiNallo  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Jim Fodor  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Tom Fitzgerald  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Christine Shoop  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Katie Jenkins  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Mike DeLeone  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Paul W. Hach, II  
City Council Member, City of  
Painesville

Darrin Gordon  
General Manager, Lewes  
Board of Public Works

Eric Norenberg  
City Manager, City of Milford

Brian Cummins  
Council Member, City of  
Cleveland

Mary Dunbar  
Council Member, City of  
Cleveland Heights

Matt Zone  
Council Member, City of  
Cleveland

Andrew Unetic  
Finance Director, City of  
Painesville

### **Oklahoma**

Ken Miller  
Treasurer

Lynne Bajema  
Comptroller

Grant Burget  
Superintendent of Marketing,  
Grand River Dam Authority

David Osburn  
General Manager, Oklahoma  
Municipal Power Authority

Charles Lamb  
Mayor, City of Edmond

Tom Rider  
General Manager, Municipal  
Electric Systems of  
Oklahoma

Gary Olsen  
Mayor, City of Watonga

Rodney Jacks  
Treasurer, City of Watonga

Janet Taylor  
Business Director, City of  
Watonga

Homer Nicholson  
Mayor, City of Ponca City

Craig Stephenson  
City Manager, City of Ponca  
City

Phillip Johnston  
General Manager of Electric  
Utilities, Ponca City Energy

Jason McPherson  
City Manager, City of Marlow

Todd Brady  
Electric Superintendent, City  
of Marlow

Paty Witchey  
Treasurer, Town of Laverne

Ronnie Parent  
Mayor, City of Spiro

Vicki Cox  
City Clerk, City of Spiro

Wayne Carter  
Mayor, Town of Okeene

Mary Dungan  
Vice Mayor, Town of Okeene

Buster Aldrich  
Trustee, Town of Okeene

Robert Jones  
Trustee, Town of Okeene

Ron Pittman  
Trustee, Town of Okeene

Stacy Goode  
Mayor, City of Mangum

Ron Gay  
Finance Commissioner, City  
of Mangum

April Gerald  
Utilities Commissioner, City  
of Mangum

Mark Chapman  
Street and Alley  
Commissioner, City of  
Mangum

Marsha Griswald  
Police Commissioner, City of  
Mangum

Elizabeth Waner  
Mayor Pro Tem, City of  
Edmond

### **Oregon**

Ted Wheeler  
Treasurer

Beth Vargas Duncan  
Executive Director, Oregon  
Municipal Electric Utilities  
Association

Katherine Schacht  
Board President of Emerald  
PUD and Chair Elect Policy  
Makers Council

Gloria Butsch  
Finance Director, City of  
Independence

Lou Ogden  
Mayor, City of Tualatin

Denny Doyle  
Mayor, City of Beaverton

Jim Fairchild  
Council President, City of  
Dallas

Kirk French  
Councilor, City of Gresham

## **Pennsylvania**

Timothy Reese  
Treasurer

Jeff Steffler  
Mayor, City of Wampum  
Borough

Karolee Loughhead  
President of Council, City of  
Wampum Borough

Jim Ferrante  
Vice President, City of  
Wampum Borough

Guy Aromatorio  
Council Member, City of  
Wampum Borough

Charles Kelly Sr.  
Council Member, City of  
Wampum Borough

Charles Kelly Jr.  
Council Member, City of  
Wampum Borough

Jackie Nativio  
Council Member, City of  
Wampum Borough

Brian Allen  
Council Member, City of  
Wampum Borough

Sal Panto  
Mayor, City of Easton

Theresa Lafer  
Council Member, Borough of  
State College

William Peduto  
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

## **Rhode Island**

Seth Magaziner  
Treasurer

## **South Carolina**

Curtis Loftis  
Treasurer

Harry A. Huntley  
Executive Director, South  
Carolina Jobs-Economic  
Development Authority

Harold E. Thompson  
Mayor, City of Union

David B. Vehaun  
City Manager, City of Rock  
Hill

Randal Wallace  
Councilman, City of Myrtle  
Beach

Laurie Parks  
Council Member, City of  
Camden

## **South Dakota**

Richard Sattgast  
Treasurer

Mark R. Bonrud  
Mayor, City of Flandreau

Donald W. Whitman  
City Administrator, City of  
Flandreau

Jack Powell  
Mayor, City of Vermillion

John Prescott  
City Manager, City of  
Vermillion

Laurie R. Gill  
Mayor, City of Pierre

Steve Lehner  
General Manager, Watertown  
Municipal Utilities

Ernie Wight  
Board President, Watertown  
Municipal Utilities

Dustin Padgett  
Board Member, Watertown  
Municipal Utilities

John Holley  
Board Member, Watertown  
Municipal Utilities

Jess Keesis  
Mayor, City of Winner

Rhonda Augspurger  
Finance Officer, City of  
Winner

Jim Feddersen  
Mayor, City of Beresford

Jay Nordquist  
Electric Superintendent,  
Beresford Municipal Electric

Donald Templeton  
Executive Director, South  
Dakota Health and  
Educational Facilities  
Authority

Andrew W. Bremseth  
City Administrator, City of  
Volga

Roy J. Lindsay, Jr.  
Mayor, City of Madison

Todd Sell  
Board President, Town of  
Langford Board of Trustees

Orrie Jesz  
Trustee, Town of Langford  
Board of Trustees

## **Tennessee**

David Lillard  
Treasurer

Susan A. Gennoe  
Finance Director, City of  
Alcoa

Ken Moore  
Mayor, City of Franklin

Margaret Mahery  
Executive Director,  
Tennessee Municipal  
Association

Dale Kelley  
Mayor, Town of Huntingdon

Larry Clark  
Administrative Services  
Director, City of Morristown

Kay Senter  
Vice-Mayor, City of  
Morristown

Jacobia Dowell  
Councilmember, City of  
Nashville

### Texas

Glenn Hegar  
Comptroller

Sylvester Turner  
Mayor, City of Houston

Jack Pratt  
Mayor, City of Kerrville

Douglas Athas  
Mayor, City of Garland

Jason P. Bienski  
Mayor, City of Bryan

Kean Register  
City Manager, City of Bryan

Gary Miller  
General Manager, Bryan  
Texas Utilities

Max S. Duplant  
Assistant City Manager, City  
of Irving

Webb K. Melder  
Mayor, City of Conroe

Glenn Royal  
Mayor, City of Seabrook

Charles White  
Councilman, City of Balcones  
Heights

Michel Bechtel  
Mayor, City of Morgan's Point

Arturo Pecos  
City Commissioner, City of  
Kingsville

Ron Nirenberg  
Councilman, City of San  
Antonio

Maher Maso  
Mayor, City of Frisco

Robert Warters  
Councilman, City of Nassau  
Bay

Cheryl Sanders  
Mayor, City of Anahuac

Mark Dennan  
Mayor, City of Nassau Bay

Judith Leggett  
Mayor, City of Cove

Jon Keeney  
Mayor, City of Taylor Lake  
Village

Sandra Mossman  
Mayor Pro Tem, City of  
Nassau Bay

### Utah

David Damschen  
Treasurer

Mark R. Jones  
Mayor, City of Nephi

Jonathan T. Pike  
Mayor, City of St. George

Keith Johnson  
Assistant City Manager, City  
of Farmington

Robert K. Biles  
Vice President - Finance,  
Utah Transit Authority

### Vermont

Beth Pearce  
Treasurer

Robert Giroux  
Executive Director, Vermont  
Educational and Health  
Buildings Financing Agency

Doug Hoffer  
State Auditor

### Virginia

Manju Ganeriwala  
Treasurer

Jasmine Gore  
Councilor, City of Hopewell

Sherri Neil  
Intergovernmental Affairs  
Director, City of Portsmouth

### Washington

James McIntire  
Treasurer

Thomas G. Seigel  
Bethel School District  
Superintendent

Donna Murr  
Executive Director,  
Washington Health Care  
Facilities Authority

Kim Herman  
Executive Director,  
Washington Higher  
Education Facilities Authority

Tony Webb  
General Manager, Public  
Utility District No. 2 of Grant  
County Washington (Grant  
PUD)

Nancy Barnes  
President, Clark Public  
Utilities

Jane Van Dyke  
Vice President, Clark Public  
Utilities

Jim Malinowski  
Secretary, Clark Public  
Utilities

Scott D. Goodrich  
Director of Finance &  
Accounting, Port of  
Vancouver USA

Kelly Boyd  
Chief Financial/Risk Officer,  
Chelan County Public Utility  
District

Marc Boldt  
Council Chairman, Clark  
County

Larry Weis  
General Manager/CEO,  
Seattle City Light

Jessica Matlock  
Director of Government  
Relations, Snohomish County  
PUD

William A. Gaines  
Director & CEO, Tacoma  
Public Utilities

Ed Murray  
Mayor, City of Seattle

Pat McCarthy  
Executive, Pierce County

Dow Constantine  
Executive, King County

Peter King  
CEO, Association of  
Washington Cities

Stephanie Wright  
President, Washington State  
Association of Counties

Dennis Bolz  
President, Washington Public  
Utility Districts Association

Troy McClelland  
President, Washington Public  
Ports Association

Cynthia Pratt  
Deputy Mayor, City of Lacey

### Washington, DC

Jeffrey Barnette  
Treasurer

### West Virginia

John Perdue  
Treasurer

### Wisconsin

Chris Meyer  
Mayor, City of Marshfield

Steve Barg  
City Administrator, City of  
Marshfield

Keith Strey  
Finance Director, City of  
Marshfield

Dennis Reilly  
Executive Director,  
Wisconsin Health and  
Educational Facilities  
Authority

Paul Soglin  
Mayor, City of Madison

Dan Abendroth  
Mayor, City of Mequon

William H. Jones, Jr.  
City Administrator, City of  
Mequon

Thomas W. Watson  
Finance Director, City of  
Mequon

Bob Trussoni  
General Manager, Marshfield  
Utilities

Robert Scott  
Director of Finance, City of  
Brookfield

Paul Fisk  
Mayor, City of Lodi

Brian Yerges  
City Administrator/Utility  
Manager, Plymouth Utilities

Donald Pohlman  
Mayor, City of Plymouth

Melanie Krause  
General Manager, Menasha  
Utilities

Donald Merkes  
Mayor, City of Menasha

Chris VanderHayden  
Superintendent, Menasha  
Joint School District

Sandy Decker  
Mayor, City of Evansville

Kip Kinzel  
Mayor, City of Cedarburg

James Coutts  
Secretary, Cedarburg Light  
and Water Commission

Dale Lythjohan  
General Manager, Cedarburg  
Light and Water

Gene Rosin  
Mayor, City of Kaukauna

Jeff Feldt  
General Manager, Kaukauna  
Utilities

Eric Anthon  
Superintendent, Columbus  
Water and Light

Kelly Crombie  
Mayor, City of Columbus

Jim Brooks  
City Council President

Jeff Peterson  
Superintendent, Brodhead  
Water and Light

Diane Reese  
Mayor, City of New Holstein



Patrick Weber  
Manager, Eagle River Light  
and Water

Douglas A. Pinnow  
Mayor, City of Broadhead

Steve Volkert  
City Administrator, City of  
Hartford

Joe Dautermann  
Mayor, City of Hartford

Tim Michalak  
City Council President, City  
of Hartford

Chris Zellner  
Village President, Waunakee

Tim Herlitzka  
Utility Manager, Waunakee  
Utilities

Todd Schmidt  
Village Administrator, Village  
of Waunakee

David Nold  
Mayor, City of Oconomowoc

Diane Gard  
City Administrator, City of  
Oconomowoc

Joe Pickert  
Utility Manager,  
Oconomowoc Utilities

Sarah Kitsembel  
Director of Finance, City of  
Oconomowoc

Lee Meyerhofer  
President, Kaukauna Utilities  
Commission

Ron Danielson  
Mayor, City of Black River  
Falls

Jerry Ewert  
General Manager, Black  
River Falls Municipal Utilities

Brad Chown  
City Administrator, Black  
River Falls

Dale Oppermann  
Mayor, City of Jefferson

Robert Kardasz  
Utilities Director, Stoughton  
Utilities

Donna Olson  
Mayor, City of Stoughton

Randy Jaeckels  
General Manager, New  
Holstein Utilities

Cheryl Sherman  
Village President, Prairie Du  
Sac

Thad Birmingham  
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Bay

Stewart Fett  
Utility Commission President,  
Sturgeon Bay Utilities

James Stawicki  
General Manager, Sturgeon  
Bay Utilities

Greg Buckley  
City Manager, City of Two  
Rivers

Tom Bushman  
Electric Utility Director, Two  
Rivers Water & Light

Ken Kozak  
Associate Director, Two  
Rivers Water & Light

Jill Weiss  
Utility Manager, Jefferson  
Utilities

Paul Esser  
Mayor, City of Sun Prairie

Nancy Everson  
Commissioner, Sun Prairie  
Utilities

Dan Presser  
Commissioner, Sun Prairie  
Utilities

Ted Chase  
Commissioner, Sun Prairie  
Utilities

Rick Wicklund  
Utility Manager, Sun Prairie  
Utilities

### Wyoming

Mark Gordon  
Treasurer