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ACEC Hails Passage of \$20 billion Water Infrastructure Bill

WASHINGTON D.C.(January 31, 2007) — The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) applauds the passage of legislation today by a House subcommittee aimed at closing a significant funding gap between the nation's investment in water infrastructure and need estimated at between \$300 billion and \$500 billion over the next 20 years.

The Water Quality Financing Act of 2007, sponsored by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar (D-MN), authorizes \$20 billion over the next five years for the Clean Water Act state revolving fund (SRF) fund program, which is the principal federal funding vehicle for wastewater projects.

ACEC President David A. Raymond stated: "Our nation's water infrastructure is in critical need of replacement and upgrade, and the current level of federal investment is grossly inadequate. The engineering community strongly supports this legislation, and commends Chairman Oberstar for his leadership and vision in addressing this very serious problem."

Funding for the SRF program has declined in recent years, from \$1.26 billion in FY 2004 to \$887 million in FY 2006 (the most recently enacted level). Reports by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Water Infrastructure Network show between a \$300 billion and \$500 billion shortfall between funding and need over the next 20 years.

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) is the business association of America's engineering industry, representing approximately 5,500 independent engineering companies throughout the United States engaged in the development of America's transportation, environmental, industrial, and other infrastructure. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ACEC is a national federation of 51 state and regional organizations.