

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2023

The Honorable Camille Touton  
Commissioner  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Commissioner Touton,

Thank you for your visit to Southeastern Colorado last month for the Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) groundbreaking. We were glad to mark that historic day with you, along with leaders from the State of Colorado and the Southeastern Water Conservancy District, in an active demonstration of the partnership and shared commitment that is fundamental to the AVC. After a six-decade effort to provide reliable drinking water supplies for Southeastern Colorado, we were pleased to host you at the beginning of construction for a project that will deliver clean water to 50,000 Coloradans.

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) also demonstrated its commitment to completing the AVC with \$60 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds last year. As you consider the next round of BIL disbursements, we urge you to provide a robust increase in Reclamation's investments in the AVC to help expedite this project. Many communities that the AVC will serve rely entirely on groundwater, and several have faced drinking water contamination from naturally-occurring radionuclides. The clean, safe drinking water that these communities need is long overdue. The generational investments provided through the BIL should help accelerate delivery of this project for those who have already waited generations for safe, reliable water.

We appreciate the continued funding for the AVC included in Reclamation's Fiscal Year 2024 budget request, consistent with last year's enacted levels. In future budget proposals, we request you increase the funding level for this project, to accelerate the timeline for the AVC's completion and start delivering water to the nearly 40 communities that it will support.

State and local partners have provided substantial contributions to ensure the AVC's completion, including \$100 million in past state financing and grants, and \$20 million in additional funding that was recently approved by the Colorado state legislature in SB23-177. We strongly urge Reclamation to continue this spirit of accelerated and robust investment, relying on BIL, appropriations, and other appropriate funding sources.

We look forward to continuing our partnership on the AVC and completing this project.

Sincerely,



John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator