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# Water Equity Commission and EPA Presentation

On June 8, 2021, the Cities Initiative's Mayors Commission on Water Equity met with EPA Deputy Associate Administrator for Intergovernmental Affairs, Casey Katims, to discuss how the Biden administration is addressing water equity.

In his role at EPA, Katims works closely with state and local officials on issues they are facing in their communities. In this meeting, Katims stressed water equity as a high priority for the Biden administration saying, "it's encouraging we have a commission like yours that is bringing a high-profile voice to water equity…revitalizing water infrastructure in communities across the country and advancing environmental justice and equity are two goals the EPA shares wholeheartedly with the commission."

Katims detailed specific policies of the new administration and EPA to improve water safety and affordability. In the first 100 days of President Biden's term, the EPA has provided $1.3 billion dollars in Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans that will create an estimated 9,000 jobs and improve water quality for four million people.

Katims also discussed the administration's proposed American Jobs Plan. This plan would allocate $111 billion for water infrastructure and address a range of equity issues, including removing lead pipes, increasing funding for water projects, improving rural infrastructure, and allocating $50 million to the EPA for environmental justice projects.

Additionally, the Water Equity Commission mayors provided input to Katims and the Biden Administration on key needs for water equity. They stressed the importance of improving stormwater infrastructure and flood resilience, cooperation with other government agencies, funding options for cities, and how the EPA identifies overburdened communities for targeted investment.

In the future the Mayors Commission hopes to maintain a dialogue with EPA and work closely on water equity issues across the Great Lakes region.