

Booker “Partnerships Amendment”

What Does it Do and Why is it Good for Communities?

Protects Public Health.

- Sen. Cory Booker’s Partnership amendment creates a pathway to compliance through a collaborative partnership by increasing incentives and accountability to manage healthy and effective water systems.
- Modest changes to Section 1420 of the Safe Drinking Water Act designed to help distressed water systems advance the goal of providing communities with a safe, reliable, and accessible supply of drinking water and protect public health.

Enhances capacity building: incentivizing better operations and creating more accountability for failing systems.

- There are currently 56,000 community water systems in the U.S., most are quite small, with 84% serving fewer than 3,300 persons.
- Too many of these systems are failing or are experiencing serious violations posing increased risks to public health.
- Water infrastructure is capital intensive to upgrade, replace or even maintain and it’s only getting worse for most small systems leading to failing infrastructure and non-compliant water systems.

Puts to work “capacity building” provisions of the SRFs.

- Helps public water systems in states be in compliance with the laws and meet the technical, managerial and financial regulatory requirements of the SRF.
- Promotes self-disclosure programs which encourage regulated utilities to fix problems before being criminally enforced. It offers a choice to communities who might otherwise be subject to an enforcement action and costly civil penalties by EPA or a state.
- Flags issues and systems in need.

Saves money for both the government and rate payers.

- Offers alternatives to more grant funding of small systems by encouraging better performance by providing solutions for those systems unable to maintain the technical, managerial and financial capacity requirements of the State Revolving Fund, and those not in compliance and in need of help can seek it before a crisis ensues.
- Encouraging partnerships among public water systems in communities which currently rely on under-performing or failing water systems could result in:
 - better managed water systems via operational expertise of skilled partners
 - reduced operational costs
 - improved reliability
 - spreads capital investment costs among a larger pool of ratepayers.