

DigDeep Expresses Support for the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024

The bill would, for the first time, create a dedicated system for collecting data on water and sanitation access in each U.S. state and territory

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, May 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [DigDeep](#), a human rights

“

The WASH Access Data Collection Act is a critical step towards addressing the urgent need for accurate and comprehensive data on water and sanitation access across the United States.”

Kabir Thatte, Vice President of Policy & External Relations at DigDeep

nonprofit working to ensure universal access to clean water and proper sanitation in the United States, expresses its public support for the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024, introduced today to the United States Senate by Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Jeff Merkeley, and Senator Ben Ray Luján. The legislation takes much-needed and critical action to improve data on both water and sanitation access in the United States, while expanding interagency coordination to address national access challenges.

According to research by DigDeep and the US Water Alliance, there are [over 2 million people](#) in the United

States living without running water or a flush toilet at home. This hidden water access gap is predominantly made up of entire communities that have been historically overlooked for the basic water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure the rest of us take for granted. Under-resourced communities — including people of color, lower-income households, people in rural areas, and Tribal Nations — are disproportionately impacted by WASH insecurity. Follow-up research by DigDeep revealed that, for every year that the water access gap remains open, the national economy loses nearly \$8.6 billion due to increased healthcare burdens, labor loss, and water purchasing costs.

Currently, no single entity in the U.S. collects comprehensive data on the scope of the nation’s water and sanitation access challenges. Federal data doesn’t accurately measure the water access gap through existing surveying mechanisms like the American Community Survey; it undercounts communities, it underestimates wastewater services, and the loss of WASH-related questions have made it unreliable over time - adding an extra challenge in ensuring consistent and standardized data collection throughout the decades.

The Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024, also known as the WASH Access Data Collection Act, would, for the first time, create a dedicated system for specifically collecting data on water and sanitation access issues in each U.S. state and territory through a federal survey. This data is crucial to know if the country is making headway, or backsliding, in closing the water access gap in each region of the country.

The legislation would also establish an interagency Water and Sanitation Needs Working Group, responsible for routinely surveying households at least every five years, and ensuring interagency collaboration to better address closing the water access gap. Based on survey data, the Working Group will also be tasked with developing a report on the cost estimate for capital improvements needed, broken down by Congressional district. These financial statistics will allow government and community-based partners alike to plan for the future more effectively. These activities are supported within the Act through dedicated appropriation funding.

As one of the leading WASH nonprofits in the United States, a core pillar of DigDeep's work is to research where lack of water access is particularly acute, what are the resulting economic costs and costs of well-being, and to drive innovation and coalition-building efforts to create solutions tailored to the unique challenges in each impacted community. DigDeep has been a vocal champion of the pivotal role that the federal government, alongside a unified and formalized domestic WASH sector starting to take shape through the [Vessel Collective](#), can play in closing the U.S. water access gap once and for all.

"The WASH Access Data Collection Act is a critical step towards addressing the urgent need for accurate and comprehensive data on water and sanitation access across the United States," said Kabir Thatte, Vice President of Policy & External Relations at DigDeep. "Everyone has the right to clean water and adequate sanitation. Not only will this legislation reveal the extent of WASH disparities, it will enable communities and policymakers to prioritize and create solutions that reach the most underserved populations. This bill represents a significant milestone in our nation's commitment to ensuring every person nationwide has access to basic WASH services."

To read the full text of the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access Data Collection Act of 2024, please visit https://www.wyden.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/wash_access_data_collection_act_legislative_text.pdf. For more information on DigDeep and the nonprofit's commitments to research domestic WASH access, advise on well-informed WASH policymaking, and on-the-ground field work to install water and sanitation in American homes across the Navajo Nation, Appalachia and Texas colonias, please visit www.digdeep.org.

About DigDeep:

Digdeep is a human rights nonprofit working to ensure every person in the United States has

access to clean running water and sanitation at home. The organization has served thousands of families across the country through its award-winning and community-led field projects: the Navajo Water Project (Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah), Appalachia Water Project (West Virginia), and Colonias Water Project (Texas). DigDeep is a leading force in U.S. water access research, workforce development, and policy advocacy, underscoring its commitment to addressing the sector's lack of comprehensive data. Notable national reports, including "Closing the Water Access Gap in the United States: A National Action Plan" and "Draining: The Economic Impact of America's Hidden Water Crisis," unveiled the harsh reality that over 2 million people in the U.S. live without a toilet or tap at home, which costs the American economy a staggering \$8.6 billion annually. For more information, please visit digdeep.org.

Press Office

DigDeep Right to Water Project

press@digdeep.org

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/708062751>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.