

Thank you Mayor Johnson, the Mayors Commission in Water Equity, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, the U.S. Water Alliance, and the Environmental Policy Innovation Center

City of Elyria is a city of 53,000 residents about 25 miles west of Cleveland and we are blessed with an amazing Black River that flows through our city and boasts of two amazing waterfalls we call Cascade that you can see on our website.

That same water unfortunately was the same water that was used to dump tons of chemicals into it as we built out our industry over our 200 year history and now we are asking this generation to fix it.

And We are up for the challenge

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law gives us the opportunity to make it a reality without putting a large burden on the backs of families like the ones in Elyria, in the form of large rate increases

Families who are already feeling the weight of today's economic challenges. Not to mention 24% of them living under to the federal poverty limit

However, Elyria is carrying our weight as much as we can and as of today

We have completing 2 phases of lead service line replacements which has included removing 600 lead service lines from our system. We plan this next year to complete the remaining 500 lead lines we are aware of this year while we are simultaneously investigating homes to discover homes built prior to the 70s and assess their lines as well.

We've done over Millions of dollars in infrastructure work in the past few years working towards the compliance with EPA Clean Water Act but the burden is heavy and the challenges have been indiscriminate and consistent.

One of those challenges has been Urban Flooding

Last month our city received between 5-6 inches of rain in less than an hour causing basements to fill with water and huge flooding in one of our poorest communities in the city.

If we continue to see increased rain events like this it will continue to threaten the wellbeing of our residents and weaken the already vulnerable.

But we aren't sitting on our hands

We are applying for grants, utilizing funds we have, and using our voice like we are today to try to attract federal resources to our city.

As I opened, we have two beautiful waterfalls in our city and as a city of the great lakes, we have a great opportunity to leverage this amazing asset not only for the quality of life and access to clean water but also we see the importance of access to water and its impact on economic development. One of the key assets that led to Intel coming to Ohio was its access to fresh water.

Let us advance and advocate for targeted resources to come to cities like Elyria and the other cities represented here

to help us pioneer the cleaning of our waters throughout our great lake communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to lend our voice to this important work.