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## **Aqua America Chairman: Private Investment Can Play Key Role in Repair of Nation's Infrastructure**

BRYN MAWR, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Aqua America, Inc. (NYSE: WTR) Chairman and CEO Nicholas DeBenedictis said today that "Private companies have the capital and other resources necessary to be key players in the construction, repair and rehabilitation of our nation's infrastructure."

His remarks were made today at the Pennsylvania Economy League's conference to introduce its Global Positioning Strategy for World Class Infrastructure in Greater Philadelphia.

"The Philadelphia region needs a strong public transportation system to get city residents to jobs in the suburbs and vice versa; and a strong and viable airport, because we're both an international and historical city. As chairman of the Pennsylvania Convention and Visitors Bureau I feel strongly about the need for our recently expanded, world class convention center and its ability to bring more money into the city and region," DeBenedictis said.

He added that none of this infrastructure, or the region's economy as a whole, could be sustained without viable water and wastewater systems. "Water and wastewater service are basic needs required by everyone and that is why it is so important that our water distribution and wastewater collection systems and treatment plants be sustained."

"There is an opportunity for private industry to play a key role in funding these infrastructure improvements," said DeBenedictis. As an example, he cited the recent 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act, which he said led to major investments and the ultimate success of the regulatory process to clean up our streams from which we all benefit today. "When you consider private industry has made much of the investment that has led to improvements in improving our source waters, it begs the question of whether tax-supported grant programs are still needed. The recent success of the Clean Water Act could be an example that we can afford the true cost of service for our goods and services and do not require taxes to support government entities to do for us what the private sector can economically accomplish."

DeBenedictis said Aqua America's utility companies are a prime example of his assertion. "For the past several years, our utility companies have collectively invested more than \$300 million annually to upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure in the nine states in which they operate," said DeBenedictis. "Our customers pay for those improvements with their rates, which are still less than other utility services despite the fact that water and wastewater remain the most capital-intensive of all utilities, investing more capital for every dollar of revenue earned than any other utility."

Aqua America is one of the largest U.S.-based, publicly-traded water utilities and serves almost 3 million residents in Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and Virginia. Aqua America is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol WTR. Visit [www.aquaamerica.com](http://www.aquaamerica.com) for more information.

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