



From manufacturing and water treatment facilities, to boating and fishing, America’s freshwater is intricately tied to businesses and economic opportunities. Businesses heavily rely on clean water to keep their operations running, and poor water quality and degrading infrastructure are posed to harm business success. In fact, [estimates show](#) that infrastructure failure could result in \$147 billion in increased cost of water rates to businesses. As a result, business leaders and federal, state, and local programs that engage with them to protect freshwater resources are vital. Provided below are some examples of state incentives, partnerships, and opportunities that legislators can apply in their own state.

Create a business council



A business council allows business leaders to work together to set goals and establish guidelines for clean water.

- For example, California has established a [Blue Business Council](#), a network of business partners who collaborate on and engage in protecting and maintaining California’s waterways and recognize that clean water is vital to the state’s economy, public health, and recreation. Michigan has also established a [Blue Economy Council](#).

Clean Water Innovation Fund



Create a water innovation fund to spur and encourage innovation in the water sector.

- For example, [Massachusetts’ Clean Energy Center provides funding](#) for public and private clean-tech clean water solutions through its [Water Innovation Trust](#).
- Federally, states can also look to programs like [Conservation Innovation Grants](#), a competitive program that funds projects aimed at improving agricultural conservation and improving water and soil quality.



Water Development Prize

Establish a water development prize, another competitive grant.

- The Federal Bureau of Reclamation created a [Water Prize Competition Center](#) that engages companies in an innovation-based competition within three priority areas: Water Availability, Environmental Compliance, and Infrastructure Sustainability



Recognize Business Successes

Recognize sustainable businesses and their successes. In doing so, legislators can acknowledge small businesses that have sustainability programs either formally by the state or informally through legislative materials and events.



Business Collaboration

Collaborate with business leaders to collectively highlight the importance of clean water through business roundtables, op-eds, and similar opportunities.

- In Iowa, for example, these [small business owners put together an op-ed](#) in support of clean water regulation.