

MEDIA RELEASE
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U.S. Sen. Capito Awarded Top Industry Honor *Senate Committee Chairman Receives Prestigious “We Dig America” Award*

(Fairfax, Virginia) The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA) today announced that it awarded its highest honor, the “We Dig America” Award, to U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) in recognition of her outstanding leadership in advancing America’s water infrastructure and supporting the utility construction industry.

“Senator Capito’s tireless advocacy for robust water infrastructure investment has strengthened our national network and delivered real results for the men and women who build America’s underground utility systems every day,” said Zack Perconti, NUCA Chief Advocacy Officer. “Her commitment to bipartisan solutions and practical policy ensures that local contractors can continue to give back to their communities through their projects while our industry grows stronger. NUCA is proud to honor her leadership with the ‘We Dig America’ Award.”

The “We Dig America” Award was presented to Chairman Capito on May 19 during the association’s annual Washington Summit. Each year, NUCA’s Chapter members come to Washington, D.C. to advocate to their lawmakers for water, wastewater, broadband, natural gas, and electric utility projects for their communities.

As Chairman of the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator Capito championed the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act. This landmark legislation, passed in 2021 as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), delivered the largest federal investment in water infrastructure in U.S. history—more than \$50 billion for drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater programs. Sen. Capito also fought to add significant resources for surface transportation investments in the IIJA, allowing this industry’s companies to construct their phase of these important projects.

Since 2021, the IIJA funding has supported thousands of projects nationwide, including upgrades to treatment plants, replacement of aging pipes and lead service lines, and improvements for small and rural communities. Sen. Capito’s ongoing work to reauthorize these water and infrastructure programs ensures continued progress on permitting reform, state flexibility, and practical solutions that allow utility contractors to deliver critical underground infrastructure more efficiently.

NUCA’s “We Dig America” award was first presented in 1972 to then-Rep. Jim Blatnik of Minnesota. Since then, recipients have included notables such as President Ronald Reagan (1982), Rep. Dan Quayle

(1987), Rep. Bud Shuster (1996), Indiana Governor Joseph Kernan (2004), and House T&I Committee Chairmen Rep. Peter DeFazio (2021), and Rep. Sam Graves (2023).

This award is presented to a non-NUCA member who has made a significant contribution to NUCA and America's underground utility construction and excavation industry. The achievement must have national impact, and the recipient must have national stature, requirements that perfectly fit Chairman Capito.

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About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents more than 1,900 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is found online at www.nuca.com, and can be followed on various social media platforms including X, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.