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Press release

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Congressman listens to water industry concerns Roskam tours facility, discusses water tax, other issues

Lisle, Illinois — On Monday, WQA and local industry leaders sat down with US Representative Peter Roskam (R-IL) to help ensure that members of Congress are informed about the national aspects of water treatment issues.

WQA Executive Director Pete Censky and Government Affairs Director David Loveday joined Aquion CEO Frank Kneller and others for a factory tour and roundtable discussion. They toured the Elk Grove Village, Illinois, facility of RainSoft, an Aquion company.

Censky explained that most political issues facing the industry have typically played out on local and statewide levels, but that increasingly the federal government is likely to become involved. For example, Congress has begun considering a proposed law that would federally tax water softeners at three percent. Other health and water delivery issues could also start being heard in Washington.

Kneller and other Aquion management staff told Roskam of the effects of the recession, especially the difficulties caused by the credit crunch. Roskam, a member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, promised to stay informed and asked that industry leaders keep him apprised of their concerns.

“Our members are looking for a favorable business climate,” Censky said. “That is our foremost need from Washington. We also understand that as infrastructure and health questions are increasingly focused on nationally, our federal representatives have to understand this industry’s role and ability to contribute.”

WQA will monitor the proposed new water tax and respond appropriately, Censky said. HR 3202, sponsored by Congressman Earl Blumenauer, would establish a trust fund for water infrastructure. It would be paid by those considered responsible for harming the nation’s water system. These would include water-based bottles, soap, toilet paper -- and softeners.