

Legislative Bulletin.....April 23, 2009

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H.R. 1145—National Water Research and Development Initiative Act

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(Gordon, D-TN)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Thursday, April 23, under a yet to be determined rule which is expected to make in order a number of amendments.

Summary: H.R. 1145 would authorize \$8 million over 5 years to direct the President to establish a National Water Coordination Office within the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in order to implement a national initiative on water research and development. Additionally, the bill requires the government to conduct a study to examine the feasibility of creating a pilot testing facility for water research.

Additional Background:

- **National Water Research and Development Initiative:** Directs the President to establish an Interagency Committee with representation from all Federal agencies conducting research related to water or having authority over resources that affect water supply to improve federal activities on water, including: research, development, demonstration, data collection and dissemination, education, and technology transfer.
- **National Water Research and Assessment Plan:** Directs the committee to encourage cooperation between federal and local agencies with respect to water-related research, development, and technological innovation. Additionally, the committee will provide guidance on outreach to minority serving institutions to encourage such institutions to apply for funding opportunities specified in the research plan.
- **National Water Initiative Coordination Office:** Established under the plan to disseminate information to the public and serve as a point of contact on federal water activities. The office will also develop a plan to outline and direct agencies to achieve the fourteen specified water research outcomes and assessments. This

includes the implementation of a National Water Census to create a database that includes information about the quantity, availability, and quality of ground water and surface water resources.

- The legislation requires the interagency committee to coordinate the activities of the Initiative with the United States Global Change Research Program, to produce an annual report to Congress describing the activities of the committee during the previous year, and provide a study examining the feasibility of creating a national water pilot testing facility.

Committee Action: On February 24, 2009, the bill was introduced and referred to the Committee on Science and Technology. On March 26, 2009 the Committee held a markup and reported the bill by voice vote.

Possible Conservative Concerns: At a time when our nation is facing record deficits and high unemployment, some conservatives may be concerned we are spending an entire legislative day debating this legislation. Additionally, some conservatives have voiced concern during the markup that sections of H.R. 1145 might be duplicative to provisions in the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 (P.L.111-11).

Administration Position: No Statement of Administration is available.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, H.R. 1145 would authorize approximately \$8 million over the 2010-2014 period. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues or direct spending.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: According to Committee Report [111-76](#), H.R. 1145 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in House Rule XXI, clause 9(d), 9(e), and 9(f).

Constitutional Authority: Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact H.R. 1145.

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