



NATURAL RESOURCES

COMMITTEE • DEMOCRATS

RANKING MEMBER, EDWARD J. MARKEY

H.R. 6670 (MARKEY, D-MA) TO AMEND THE RECLAMATION STATES EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF ACT OF 1991 FOR THE PURPOSES OF EXTENDING THE RECLAMATION STATES EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF ACT OF 1991 THROUGH 2017, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

COSPONSORS: RANKING MEMBERS NAPOLITANO, GRIJALVA, LUJAN, SABLAN, AND HOLT

On December 13, 2012, Rep. Edward J. Markey, Democratic Ranking Member for the Natural Resources Committee, introduced legislation that would reauthorize and amend the Bureau of Reclamation's Drought Relief Act of 1991. Subcommittee on Water and Power Ranking Member Grace F. Napolitano; Subcommittee on Parks, Forests, and Public Lands Ranking Member Raul Grijalva; Indian and Alaska Native Affairs Ranking Member Ben R. Lujan; Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs Ranking Member Gregorio Sablan; and Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Ranking Member Rush Holt are original cosponsors. Authorization for this program expired at the end of fiscal year 2012.

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is the largest wholesale water supplier in the nation, operating 348 reservoirs with a total storage capacity of 245 million acre-feet of water. These reservoirs provide irrigation water to 10 million acres of farmland through hundreds of miles of canals.

Drought Relief Act of 1991:

The Drought Relief Act contains two titles:

Title I: Assistance During Droughts

Title I allows Reclamation to undertake activities that would minimize or mitigate drought damages or losses within the 17 Reclamation States, including Tribes within those states, and Hawaii. Any construction activities undertaken shall be limited to temporary facilities, with the exception of well construction.

Title II: Drought Contingency Planning

Title II provides for assistance in drought planning. All 50 states and U.S. territories are eligible for Title II planning assistance.

H.R. XX would:

- Reauthorize the Drought Relief Act for an additional five years until 2017 and increase the authorization level by \$20 million.
- Requires Reclamation to review contingency plans to ensure they reflect the current hydrological conditions and address projected long-term climate variability.

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