

**Statement of Robert Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior
Before the
House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power**

**H.R. 236
May 17, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and members of the subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to provide the Department of Interior's views on HR 236, the North Bay Water Reuse Program Act of 2007. The Department does not support HR 236.

HR 236 would authorize the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects in the North Bay Water Reuse Program. HR 236 would require the project be constructed in two phases, the first phase being the main treatment and main conveyance system, and the second phase being the sub-regional distribution system.

The Administration does not support construction authorizations when a Feasibility Report has not been completed for a given project. From Fiscal Year 2003 through 2006, Congress appropriated a total of \$1.25 million for feasibility investigations to the Sonoma County Water Agency to determine if the project has engineering and economic feasibility. The Agency also studied whether the project proponents have financial capability, and evaluated the environmental effects of the project, in accordance with the Bureau of Reclamation's guidelines for Title XVI.

In December 2006, the Sonoma County Water Agency submitted a draft report that covered a portion of the information required for a feasibility determination. In April 2007, Reclamation provided comments on the report and also reminded the Sonoma County Water Agency that the environmental and economic information still needs to be submitted in order for Reclamation to complete the feasibility determination.

Apart from this consideration, HR 236 contains unclear authorization language. As introduced, the legislation does not cite the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, Title XVI), as the authority for the planning, design, and construction of the project. Therefore, it is unclear if the intent of HR 236 is to authorize the North Bay Water Reuse Program as a Title XVI project. If it is not the intent, then the feasibility study referenced above would need to meet the requirements of the of the *Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies*, also known as the Federal P&Gs for water resource development. Either way, it is premature to authorize the North Bay Water Reuse Program for construction before a feasibility study has been approved. Moreover, of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

While Reclamation does not support new authorizations for Federal cost sharing of water recycling projects, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

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**HR 716
May 17, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to provide the Department of the Interior's views on HR 716, a bill to authorize Reclamation to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the Santa Rosa Urban Water Reuse Plan. The Department does not support HR 716.

HR 716 would amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, Title XVI), to include the City of Santa Rosa, California, Urban Water Reuse Plan. Under the proposed legislation costs incurred by the City of Santa Rosa prior to the date of enactment would be credited by the Secretary toward the total cost of the Santa Rosa Urban Water Reuse Plan.

There is not sufficient information, such as the engineering and economic feasibility, financial capability of the project sponsor, and environmental effects, regarding this proposed project. The Department supports efforts to increase local water supplies and increase recycled water use in the West. However, because technical studies are not complete, the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this project cannot be determined. Title XVI provisions require that these technical studies be completed and reviewed to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness. Moreover, of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

While Reclamation does not support new authorizations for Federal cost sharing of water recycling projects, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

The Administration appreciates local efforts to address future water issues. However, in light of the concerns expressed above, we cannot support HR 716.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

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**HR 1503
May 17, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to be here today to give the Department of the Interior's views on HR 1503, the Avra/Black Wash Reclamation and Riparian Restoration Project Act. The Department does not support HR 1503.

H.R. 1503 would amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (43 U.S.C. 390h *et seq.*), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of water recycling facilities to enhance and restore riparian habitat in the Black Wash Sonoran Desert ecosystem in Avra Valley, west of the metropolitan Pima County area in Arizona. It provides for Federal funding of 25 percent of the total project cost or \$14 million, whichever is less.

Pima County intends to expand the 1.5 million gallon per day wastewater treatment facility to 5 mgd capacity. Currently, treated effluent is not reused. The proposed project would provide tertiary treatment and establish procedures to recharge the reclaimed water in ponds and the Black Wash. The treated effluent that was previously evaporated would instead recharge the aquifer, and state law would allow this recharge to be measured and stored as credits to be pumped at a later date. By recharging the water in the channel of Black Wash, riparian and wildlife habitat will be created, preserved and protected. The project includes plans to provide baseline ecological reconnaissance for monitoring of diversity and ecological health of the site.

The Department supports efforts to increase reclaimed water use in southern Arizona. Reclamation has been working with Pima County to review the technical, regulatory and contractual issues involved in the project but discussions have been preliminary. To date, the steps necessary to prepare a feasibility report that meet the requirements for feasibility of Title XVI projects have not been discussed. Because the technical studies are not complete, the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this project cannot be determined. Title XVI provisions require that these technical studies be completed and reviewed to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness.

Moreover, of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

While Reclamation does not support new authorizations for Federal cost sharing of water

recycling projects, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.R. 1503. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

**Statement of Robert Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
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H.R. 1725
May 17, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to be here today to give the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 1725, the Rancho California Water District Recycled Water Treatment and Reclamation Facility Act. The Department does not support H.R. 1725.

H.R. 1725 would amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (43 U.S.C. 390h *et seq.*), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the Rancho California Water District's facilities for water recycling, demineralization, desalination, and distribution of non-potable water supplies in Riverside County, California.

The Rancho California Water District is located in southwestern Riverside County, which has been experiencing explosive growth. The District is heavily dependent on imported water provided by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. In order to lessen this dependence the District has developed a Regional Integrated Resources Plan that includes three components. Together, the component projects will expand local water resources by increasing conjunctive use by about 13,000 acre-feet per year, expanding the use of recycled water by about 16,000 acre-feet per year, and substituting untreated water for the treated water that is currently being used for agricultural irrigation. Implementation of the Regional Integrated Resources Plan would require the construction of pipelines, pumping plants, an advanced water treatment facility, and brine disposal facilities. The total estimated cost is about \$103 million.

The Department supports efforts to increase local water supplies and increase recycled water use in southern California. Reclamation is currently working with the District to review the technical work completed to date and to identify the additional work necessary to prepare a complete feasibility report meeting the feasibility requirements of Title XVI projects. However, because the technical studies are not complete, the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this project cannot be determined. Title XVI provisions require that these technical studies be completed and reviewed to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness.

Moreover, of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

While Reclamation does not support new authorizations for Federal cost sharing of water recycling projects, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many

water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.R. 1725. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.