

A national coalition representing thousands of Western farmers, ranchers, water providers, businesses and communities applauded passage of the Energy Infrastructure Act on Wednesday by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) and pressed the full Senate to expeditiously take up the bill on the floor.

“On behalf of Western farmers, ranchers, businesses and residents, we commend Chairman Manchin and the Senate ENR Committee for their commitment to drafting and passing a balanced infrastructure package that includes resources for critical Western water supply needs,” Family Farm Alliance Executive Director Dan Keppen said.

The coalition includes more than 220 organizations from 15 states that collectively represent \$120 billion in agricultural production—nearly one-third of all agricultural production in the country—and many of the local and regional public water agencies that supply water to more than 75 million urban, suburban and rural residents.

Prior to Senate ENR Committee consideration of the Energy Infrastructure Act, the coalition sent a letter to Chairman Joe Manchin and Ranking Member John Barrasso expressing support for the Western water elements included in Title VIII and IX of the bill.

In the letter, the coalition notes that changing Western hydrological conditions and expanding populations require immediate federal investments in repairing aging water infrastructure and developing new sources of water supply.

“We support the all-of-above approach taken in the Energy Infrastructure Act, which includes more than \$8 billion for Western water projects that expand conservation and recycling efforts, improve ecosystems, fix crumbling dams and canals, and build new storage and conveyance facilities,” Association of California Water Agencies Executive Director Dave Eggerton said.

In addition to stabilizing the West’s water outlook, the coalition letter states that the infrastructure package represents a historic opportunity to aid in the nation’s economic recovery. Both workers and the economy will benefit from the increased demand for equipment and materials these water projects will require from American companies.

But the time to act is now, according to the coalition.

“As drought conditions move from bad to worse across the West, action is needed,” National Water Resources Association President Christine Arbogast said. “To minimize the fallout from this historic drought and to ensure future generations have access

to a safe, reliable and affordable water supply, we call on the Senate to bring the Energy Infrastructure Act to the floor as quickly as possible.”

Below is a summary of the Western water provisions in Title IX:

- **Aging Infrastructure:** \$3.2 billion, includes \$100 million for certain Reclamation projects suffering a critical failure and \$100 million for repairs to certain Carey Act dams
- **Water Storage, Groundwater Storage and Conveyance:** \$1.15 billion, includes \$100 million for new 25% grants for small surface/groundwater storage projects
- **Water Recycling:** \$1 billion, includes \$450 million for new authorized large water recycling project grant program
- **Desalination:** \$250 million
- **Rural Water:** \$1 billion
- **Dam Safety:** \$500 million
- **Drought Contingency Plan:** \$300 million, includes \$50 million for Upper Basin States
- **WaterSMART:** \$400 million, includes \$100 million for natural infrastructure projects
- **Cooperative Watershed Management:** \$100 million
- **Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program:** \$250 million
- **Watershed Enhancement Projects:** \$100 million
- **Colorado River Endangered Species Recovery and Conservation Programs:** \$50 million