

Friday, March 9, 2007

House Meets At...	Votes Predicted At...
9: 00 a.m. for Legislative Business	Last Vote: 2:00 p.m.
Five "One-Minutes" per side	

**Any anticipated Member absences for votes this week should be reported to the Office of the Majority Whip at 226-3210.**

### Floor Schedule and Procedure

- **H. Res. 229-Rule to provide for consideration of H.R. 720-Water Quality Financing Act of 2007 (Rep. Castor-Rules)**: The House will consider a [structured rule](#) to provide for consideration of H.R. 720. The rule provides for one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in [Part A of the Rules Committee report](#), shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill as amended shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of further amendment and shall be considered as read. No further amendments shall be in order except those [amendments printed in Part B of the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution](#). The rule provides that the amendments made in order in Part B may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Debate on the rule will be managed by Rep. Castor and will proceed in the following order:
  - One hour of debate on the rule.
  - Possible vote on the Democratic motion to move the previous question. **Democrats are urged to vote YES.**

- Vote on adoption of the rule. **Democrats are urged to vote YES.**
- **H.R. 720 - Water Quality Financing Act of 2007 (Rep. Oberstar – Transportation and Infrastructure):** H.R. 720 will be managed by Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair James Oberstar, or his designee, and consideration will proceed in the following order:
  - One hour of debate on the bill.
  - Debate and votes on amendments to the bill. **Democrats are urged to vote NO on the Baker amendment.**
  - Possible debate and vote on a Republican motion to recommit the bill. **Democrats are urged to vote NO on the Republican motion to recommit.**
  - Vote on final passage of the bill. **Democrats are urged to vote YES on final passage of the bill.**

### **Bill Summary and Key Issues**

#### **[Anticipated Amendments to H.R. 720](#)**

**Stupak (MI)** - The amendment would require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in consultation with the State Department and Canadian government, to study wastewater treatment facilities that discharge into the Great Lakes and provide recommendations to improve monitoring, information sharing, and cooperation between the US and Canada. The amendment would also require the EPA to consult with the International Joint Commission, the bi-national organization created to protect the boundary waters between the U.S. and Canada. – **10 minutes of debate**

**Baker (LA)/King, Steve (IA)** - The amendment would strike the Davis-Bacon section of the bill. – **10 minutes of debate**

***Democrats are urged to stand up for working Americans and VOTE NO on the Baker amendment***

**Hall, John (NY)/Blumenauer (OR)** - The amendment would require that States, in the development of their priority list under section 606(g) of the Clean Water Act, consider whether the project or activity proposed for funding would first address the repair and replacement of existing wastewater infrastructure. – **10 minutes of debate**

**Platts (PA)** - The amendment would extend the application of the full-and-open competition requirements of Title II of the Clean Water Act, found at Title 33, Section 1284(a)(6) of the United States Code, to bid specifications for projects funded in whole or in part with monies provided through the State Revolving Funds. – **10 minutes of debate**

**Hirono (HI)** - The amendment would authorize technical assistance and grants for the development of integrated water resource plans. – **10 minutes of debate**

**Whitfield (KY)** -The amendment establishes a two-year pilot program to test, under normal weather conditions, what an extended summer pool lake level would mean to enhanced boating safety, recreation, navigation, fishing, and tourism activities, while also enabling an assessment of the economic impact of longer and higher water levels. – **10 minutes**

### **H.R. 720-Water Quality Financing Act of 2007**

On Friday, the House will consider H.R. 720, which would reauthorize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and would provide \$14 billion over the next four years for the fund. The authorization for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund expired in 1994, and the Republican-controlled Congress failed to reauthorize it. However, Congress has continued to appropriate funding for the fund each year.

### **Members are urged to VOTE YES on the bill.**

- **The Clean Water State Revolving Fund is a vital program.** The Clean Water State Revolving Fund provides low-interest loans to local communities for construction of wastewater treatment facilities and other water pollution abatement projects. Since it was created in 1987, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund has been the primary source of federal funding for clean water projects. The fund is enormously popular with state and local governments across the country.
- **In previous Congresses, the GOP leadership had bottled up this key Clean Water State Revolving Fund reauthorization bill.** In previous Congresses, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee had considered a similar clean water fund reauthorization bill, but the Republican Leadership blocked the bill from ever coming up on the Floor. Now, in the first several weeks of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Democratic Leadership is bringing this critical legislation to the Floor.
- **To a great extent, improvements in water quality since the passage of the 1972 Clean Water Act have resulted from a significant investment in wastewater infrastructure improvements.** Since 1987, when the Clean Water State Revolving Fund became the major federal source of clean water funding, the Fund has provided states with \$53 billion for more than 18,600 low-interest loans to local communities.
- **Since the enactment of the 1972 Clean Water Act, investments in clean water infrastructure have provided significant environmental, public health and economic benefits to the nation.** Since the Clean Water Act became law, the gains in water quality realized through federal, state, and local investment in wastewater infrastructure have been significant, helping to increase the number of fishable and swimmable waters throughout the nation. As a result of dramatic improvements in wastewater infrastructure, discharges of waste into the environment have

decreased by one-half since the early 1970's. Today, the nation's farmers, fishermen and manufacturing and tourism industries rely on clean water to carry out activities that contribute well over \$300 billion to our economy each year.

- **However, the achievements of the Clean Water Act are now at risk.** The nation now faces a clean water crisis. A report from the EPA itself warns, “Without continued improvements in wastewater treatment infrastructure, future population growth will erode away many of the Clean Water Act achievements.” Indeed, many experts are saying that, unless significant investments are made in clean water infrastructure in the next few years, water quality will decline back to the distressing levels of the early 1970s. As the Council of Great Lake Governors has stated, “America deserves better than to slip back to a time when rivers caught on fire and there were unsanitary conditions [in our rivers and lakes].”
- **Much of the clean water infrastructure in this country is rapidly approaching or has already exceeded its projected life.** A key reason that the nation now faces a clean water crisis is that so many cities and communities throughout the U.S. are dealing with aging water infrastructure. For example, several U.S. cities still rely on sewer pipes that were installed more than 100 years ago to collect and treat domestic sewage.
- **And yet, in recent years, the Republican-controlled Congress cut the funding for the Clean Water Fund by 34 percent.** Despite the enormous need, unfortunately, the Republican-controlled Congress cut the funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund in recent years – cutting it from \$1.34 billion in FY 2004 to \$887 million in FY 2006, a cut of 34 percent in two years. Now, the President is proposing a further cut – requesting only \$688 million for FY 2008.
- **Because the country needs continued improvements in clean water infrastructure, this bill represents a renewed commitment to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.** This bill reauthorizes the Revolving Fund for the first time since 1994 and authorizes a total of \$14 billion over the next four years. The bill recognizes that the Clean Water State Revolving Fund is the primary source of federal funding for clean water and is a critical partner with state and local governments to improve water quality across the country.
- **This bill is strongly supported by a large group of organizations.** The long list of groups that strongly support this bill includes the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, Clean Water Action, National Association of Clean Water Agencies, and the American Public Works Association.

### **Quote of the Day**

“Next to God we are indebted to women, first for life itself, and then for making it

worth living.” —Mary McLeod Bethune

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