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# Hickenlooper, Bennet, Boebert Re-introduce Bipartisan Bill to Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit

4–5 minutes

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**WASHINGTON** – Today, U.S. Senators John Hickenlooper and Michael Bennet reintroduced the [Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit \(AVC\) Act](#) to lower costs and complete the AVC, a water project that will deliver clean, reliable water to Southeast Colorado communities. Representative Lauren Boebert introduced bipartisan companion legislation in the House of Representatives.

**“50,000 Coloradans are depending on us to deliver safe, clean drinking water for the Arkansas River Valley,”** said Hickenlooper. **“With construction well underway, we can’t slow down now.”**

**“This bill will ensure the federal government makes good on its promise to Southeastern Coloradans to deliver a safe and reliable water supply,”** said Bennet. **“We have invested over \$550 million to build the Arkansas Valley Conduit over the past decade and now we must ensure increased costs don’t stop this project in its tracks.”**

**“Southeastern Coloradans need access to a clean, sustainable water supply that every family can depend on,**

**which is what the Finish The AVC Act will deliver,” said Boebert. “I’m proud to introduce this legislation with our Senators to help our rural communities in Colorado see this critical project through to completion.”**

The *Finish the AVC Act* would remove interest payments on all non-federal cost share funds and extend the repayment period from 50 to 100 years. This bill helps make sure that underserved communities of Southeastern Colorado can access clean drinking water and repay the federal government. The estimated cost of the project more than doubled from the 2019 estimate of \$640 million to \$1.3 billion due to increased inflation and labor costs.

The Arkansas Valley Conduit is the final component of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, a water diversion and storage project in the lower Arkansas Valley, which Congress approved in 1962. Once constructed, the Conduit will deliver clean drinking water from the Pueblo Reservoir to more than 50,000 families, producers and municipalities throughout 39 communities in the Arkansas River Valley. Currently, these Southeast communities rely entirely on groundwater, with several facing water contamination from naturally-occurring radioactive elements.

**“In Colorado, we are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to clean, reliable drinking water,”** said Governor Polis.

**“I applaud the hard work of members of Colorado’s congressional delegation to deliver on the promise of the Arkansas Valley Conduit and secure this much-needed water supply for southeastern Colorado.”**

**“Building the Arkansas Valley Conduit and making it financially feasible for the water providers and people of**

**southeastern Colorado has been a top priority of our delegation for many years,”** said Bill Long, President, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District.

**“Reintroduction of legislation to make the cost-sharing requirements achievable in this economically stressed part of Colorado is just another example of that. It is our hope that the Senate and the House will begin moving this legislation promptly as we work with our state and federal partners to build the conduit as expeditiously as possible, with the robust infrastructure funding provided to us thus far because of the delegation’s support.”**

Hickenlooper and Bennet have long advocated for increased federal funding for the AVC. Both senators helped deliver \$500 million in funding for the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) from the *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law* for the AVC, including [\\$250 million](#) earlier this month, [\\$90 million](#) earlier this year, [\\$100 million](#) in 2023 and [\\$60 million](#) in 2022. Following Hickenlooper and Bennet’s [call](#) to the Senate Appropriations Committee Leadership this April to increase funds for the project, the Committee included \$13 million for the AVC in their fiscal year 2025 Energy and Water bill.

The full text of the bill is available [HERE](#).

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