



DIRECTORS
JOHN D. S. ALLEN, PRESIDENT
VERA ROBLES DEWITT, VICE PRESIDENT
WILLARD H. MURRAY, JR., SECRETARY
ROB KATHERMAN, TREASURER
SERGIO CALDERON, DIRECTOR

ROBB WHITAKER, P.E., GENERAL MANAGER

Testimony of the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening today's hearing. My name is John Allen, I am the President of the Board of Directors of the Water Replenishment District of Southern California or "WRD". WRD appreciates the opportunity to provide our views in support of H.R. 1162 and the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Congresswoman Napolitano for her leadership on these issues and for her partnership in our work to secure our region's water future. We are especially grateful for this Committee's efforts to combat severe drought and water needs of the American West.

As you may know, the Water Replenishment District of Southern California manages groundwater for over four million residents in 43 cities located in southern Los Angeles County. This dense region contains 11% of California's population. The 420-square mile service area uses approximately 220,000 acre-feet of groundwater per year. Half (50%) of the water used within WRD's service area derives from groundwater sources. The remaining amount comes from water imported from the Bay Delta and Colorado River.

Through state-of-the-art infrastructure projects and partnerships with government at local, state, and federal levels, WRD has managed groundwater infrastructure responsibly and effectively for nearly six decades. More than a decade ago, WRD set out on a monumental mission. The goal was to replenish the region's groundwater basins without using a single drop of water imported from Northern California or the Colorado River.

The "Water Independence Now" program or "WIN" is WRD's suite of projects and programs designed to protect the security of our groundwater supplies and eliminate the district's need for costly and unreliable imported water. And, I'm proud to report that WRD has fulfilled that vision and is now completely independent of imported water.

The Albert Robles Center (ARC), formerly known as the Groundwater Reliability Improvement Project, is the cornerstone of the WIN program and has been the beneficiary of Title XVI funds in two separate grant awards from the United States Bureau of Reclamation. ARC will introduce a new, local, drought-proof, high quality advanced treated water source into one of the most highly urbanized groundwater basins in Southern California.

This plant will purify enough recycled wastewater – acquired from the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County – to eliminate the need to acquire billions of gallons annually of costly imported water to replenish WRD's groundwater basins.

The completion of this facility will position WRD to become the largest water agency in California to secure 100% of our water supply directly from local sources - recycled water, advanced treated water and stormwater.

We applaud the introduction of H.R. 1162, legislation to reauthorize Title XVI water recycling and reuse projects and increase the overall funding level for the program. Our agency is grateful for the funding opportunities created by the Title XVI program, and, feel strongly that this program represents a sound investment in the future of the American West by the federal government.

Additional funding would allow jurisdictions, like ours, to prepare for eventual drought cycles and ensure faster delivery of much needed water.

It's a fact, Title XVI projects create jobs, boost local economies, businesses, and provide long term savings. These programs represent sound and critical investments in solutions to our water challenges and water sustainability while addressing our drought concerns. Numerous environmental and economic benefits are realized when new water supplies are brought on-line.

For example, in our service area, the Albert Robles Center will help combat drought and maximize the use of recycled water. It will benefit taxpayers - using locally available water as opposed to more costly imported water will stabilize water rates. It will benefit the environment – it is more energy efficient to generate clean water from locally available recycled wastewater than to import water, a process that requires massive amounts of energy to transport the water over hundreds of miles from northern California and the Colorado River.

With the completion of the Albert Robles Center, WRD has fulfilled the mission we set out to accomplish with the Water Independence Now program. Now, we've set our sights on expanding our efforts to create a fully locally sustainable water future for our entire region. The Water Independence Now for All (WIN 4 All) plan is WRD's new regional vision for Southern Los Angeles County's water future. WIN 4 All will allow WRD and our partners to maximize local water resources and the abundant storage space in our groundwater basin to fully eliminate the need to import any water from Northern California and the Colorado River. Title XVI grants will be vital for the completion of these projects and we hope that WRD can continue to be a partner and resource in this Committee's efforts to secure America's water future.

Please feel free to call on us, at any time, with questions or plan a visit to tour the ARC and learn more about how we are using the federal resources awarded through the Title XVI program.

Thank you again for your steadfast leadership on these important issues.
