

**Opening Statement of Ranking Member Tom McClintock**  
**House Natural Resources Committee**  
**Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife Legislative Hearing**  
**July 25, 2019**

The subcommittee meets today to hear nine bills ranging from amendments to the Coastal Zone Management Act, to harmful algal blooms in Florida, to the Water Resources Research Act and water desalination.

H.R. 729 by Mr. Kilmer creates a new grant program within CZMA to fund tribal coastal zone objectives. The legislation authorizes \$5 million in already appropriated funds to go towards these tribal needs. I do have concerns with the impact this would have by syphoning money otherwise allocated to coastal states. I also would note that the bill makes Alaska Native Corporations eligible entities. With all due respect to my friend from Alaska, I don't know that for-profit corporations should be eligible for this funding.

H.R. 2185 by Ms. Holmes Norton would allow the District of Columbia to participate in CZMA and be eligible for grants. This would make the District the first qualifying entity under the law that is not a coastal or Great Lakes state. Congress should be weary of establishing such precedent that would directly allow non-coastal states to compete with coastal states and territories.

Of the bills directly amending the CZMA, some are especially egregious:

- H.R. 3115 by Mr. Pallone, the “Living Shorelines Act of 2019” directs NOAA to establish a duplicative grant program at \$300 million. When enacted, it was the view of Congress that each state had different coastal needs and priorities and that states were in the best practical and constitutional position to manage these resources. This legislation strays from the intent of CZMA. It inserts federal priorities into a state-inspired program. I think we can all agree that burdening this program with federal bureaucracy runs contrary to its fundamental framework.
- H.R. 3541 by Mr. Carbajal creates *yet another* grant program within CZMA. It directs the Secretary of Commerce to administer climate change adaptation project implementation grants to states that have adaptation plans approved by the Secretary. These grants are to address several conservation concerns already addressed under current law. On top of this it includes an unlimited, open-ended authorization of appropriations to carry out these duplicative grants.
- Finally, H.R. 3596, the Keep America’s Waterfronts Working Act, by Ms. Pingree, establishes a \$12 million taxpayer funded working waterfront preservation loan fund AND a \$12 million working waterfront grant program. This bill asks the American public to front the cost of a community’s loan and carry the liability of default. It would seem to

me, much like my views on western water infrastructure, that a true beneficiary pays model would be more appropriate.

H.R. 335 by Mr. Mast would require the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to prioritize the study of the impacts of algal blooms in south Florida.

H.R. 3237 by Mr. Neguse reauthorizes the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program through 2032. The program is widely supported in the region and this legislation is cosponsored by the entirety of the affected state delegations and comes with a more reasonable authorization.

H.R. 3510 by Mr. Harder reauthorizes water resources research institutes at a total of \$10 million annually over three years. With funded studies such as “implications of climate change and biofuel development for Great Lakes Region water quality,” and “the impact of rural water supply systems on property values” I think our taxpayer dollars could be spent more wisely to ensure water to our constituents.

I have saved the most disappointing bill for last, H.R. 3732 by Mr. Levin, which reauthorizes funding for water desalination.

Funding for desalination was included in the WIIN Act as part of a bi-partisan package of Reclamation provisions. Those provisions, which also included surface storage funding, operational flexibility in California, and water recycling and reuse funding were the result of hard work and compromise. It was truly a bi-partisan effort.

H.R. 3732 falls short.

Instead, we are considering only one of the Reclamation WIIN Act provisions, one which continues to be the most expensive way of producing water.

This year, over 22 million-acre feet of fresh water was allowed to flow out to the Pacific Ocean because we have nowhere to store it for the next drought. Yet, many on the other side of the aisle seem perfectly content to pay four times as much to take that water back from the ocean.

This is a simple calculus; do you believe in policies of water abundance or shortage? H.R. 3732 fails to learn from the past. We should instead reauthorize the entire WIIN Act and ensure water abundance in future droughts sure to come.