

Hicks-Ray Associates



October 21, 2013

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: Water Resources Reform and Development Act Goes To House Floor

After the “spectacle” of last week in Congress, it would be tempting to accept that legislative gridlock is an inescapable reality in Washington. But there are encouraging developments this week that remind us that gridlock can be overcome, in this instance with regard to water resources infrastructure.

Tomorrow at 5:00 PM the House Rules Committee meets to mark up a Rule for floor debate of HR 3080, the “Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 [WRRDA].” The bill will be debated and hopefully passed by the House on Wednesday and Thursday of this week. The next step after that will be the appointment of House and Senate conferees which will develop a final bill that can pass both Houses of Congress and be signed into law by the President.

At a time when the Congress can’t seem to agree on anything, it is encouraging to remember that the Senate WRDA was passed out of the Committee on Environment and Public Works by a unanimous vote and cleared the full Senate by a vote of 81 to 14. The House WRRDA bill was passed unanimously by the 62 members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and should clear the full House by Thursday afternoon.

One of the issues that there seems to be broad bi-partisan agreement in both Houses of Congress and both sides of the aisle is water resources infrastructure.

We will provide an update on the House debate later this week. The WESTCAS fall conference next week in Tucson will give us all the opportunity to launch a strategy in support of Congress passing a WRDA reauthorization, hopefully by the end of the year. WESTCAS provided a full statement outlining its priorities for WRDA to House authorizers late this summer. This document can be updated based on the House and Senate bills that we hope will soon be in conference.

Hope to see everybody in Tucson.

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