



washington dc update

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Budget Control Act of 2011

You will have recently received an HRA update regarding [the Budget Control Act of 2011](#) and its impact on Federal water infrastructure funding. The water community cannot ignore a piece of legislation which forces Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation water funding to compete with nuclear non-proliferation programs within the Department of Energy.

Summary & Take-Away .

It is easy to think, “There isn’t enough Federal money left in the process to concern us. This legislation is just another reason why WESTCAS needs to focus on creating new ideas to mobilize the Federal sector in support of more water infrastructure investment.” And you would be right. But we can’t forget the fact that Corps/Bureau funding, despite being inadequate to the task, still represent about \$5 billion a year in Federal dollars.

White we look to a future of infrastructure banks and other ideas; we should not simply walk away from the \$5 billion that is already in play.

As you recall from our report of yesterday, the Budget Control Act of 2011 prohibits money being moved from security to non-security accounts, and vice versa. In general, that would appear to help protect water resources infrastructure funding. But the Energy and Water Appropriations bill funds three agencies: the Department of Energy; the Corps of Engineers; and the Bureau of Reclamation.

In the past, some of the money in support of water resources investment was transferred by Congressional Appropriators from the DOE account. But the Budget Control Act puts a big portion of DOE funding off-limits to this kind of transfer. As Senator Feinstein noted this week, this “security portion of the bill is growing every year as indeed it should. Nuclear proliferation is a terrible danger to humanity.

The question is whether water infrastructure should be made to compete head to head for these scarce resources. When you as a WESTCAS member roll up your sleeves and work to help create a better approach, this is the kind of issue you will have to grapple with.

NOW, the need for WESTCAS to step forward with a new approach for federal support of water infrastructure is greater than ever.

The Budget Control Act of 2011 has added more restrictions on water resources by prohibiting moving funds from security to non-security accounts.

The question is whether water infrastructure should be made to compete head-to-head with security accounts for scarce resources.

Time to roll-up-your-sleeves and help WESTCAS develop a better approach!

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