



washington dc update

ALERT!

Oberstar to Introduce Clean Water Act Legislation

10/10/2010

Chairman James Oberstar of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has scheduled a news conference at 11:00 AM Eastern Time tomorrow to announce the introduction of the “America’s Commitment to Clean Water Act.” WESTCAS members can watch the news conference live by going to the Committee’s web site at:

<http://transportation.house.gov>

Mr. Oberstar will reportedly be accompanied by representatives from the environmental community, conservation groups, and local government. Hicks-Ray will forward a copy of the legislation to the WESTCAS membership once it has been introduced tomorrow along with a full report on the news conference.

It is understood that this new legislation is the long-awaited House companion legislation for S-787, including a provision to remove the term “navigable waters” from the Clean Water Act. The path ahead for such legislation in the House would be via Committee consideration in the House T&I Committee and then getting floor time in the House for a debate and vote. Should the House Leadership really get behind this legislation, the bill’s chances for passage would be good.

The picture in the Senate is considerably more complex. Several Republican Senators have placed a hold on S-787 and this has prevented the bill from moving to the floor for debate and possible passage. These holds will probably require that 60 votes be secured for S-787 before the Senate Leadership will seriously consider giving it floor time. Sixty votes for a bill titled “America’s Commitment to Clean Water Act” would certainly be possible. The question will be whether the Senate Leaders will want to commit a big effort to this legislation when they have other priorities such as financial reform, jobs, immigration, etc.

The answer is unknowable at this moment. All that stakeholders can do is to study the provisions of this new bill very carefully and be prepared to engage with Members of your Congressional delegation.

Contact Fred or Tom

Fred Hicks – 703.626.5384

P.O. Box 2115

Springfield, VA 22152-0115

fbhicks@aol.com

Tom Ray – 254.855.0880

P.O. Box 955

Waco, TX 76703-0955

tom@hicks-ray.com

