

Hicks-Ray Associates



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TO: WESTCAS Membership
FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray
SUBJECT: DC Updates

HR 5320

An important piece of legislation cleared House Subcommittee earlier this week when HR 5320, the Assistance, Quality, and Affordability Act of 2010 was passed by the House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment. This legislation, which was voted out of Subcommittee by a vote of 18 to 13, with one Republican voting for the bill, will now move to the full Energy and Commerce Committee. Given the resistance of Republicans to the measure, its fate in the 111th Congress is uncertain.

HR 5320 provides \$13 billion over the next five years for the drinking water revolving loan fund. This is a considerable increase over the \$9.7 billion that was in the original version of the bill. Although this might appear to be a great deal of money given the current budgetary restraints, EPA estimates that drinking water utilities will need to invest at least \$335 billion over the next 20 years in their infrastructure.

The legislation also calls for new measures to screen for pharmaceuticals and household chemicals in the drinking water supply and mandate that EPA study the results and report back to Congress on its findings within two years of enactment of the bill. Priority for funding under the program would be given to utilities that can demonstrate their projects will prevent future failures in the system, are in a disadvantage community, and can demonstrate efficiency and minimal environmental impacts from the project.

National Academy of Sciences P&G Hearing

The National Academy of Sciences will hold a hearing next Tuesday to solicit public comment on Principals and Guidelines. We reported yesterday the time-line for issuing a final P&G standard.

Senate EPW Committee Plans WRDA Hearing

The Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee will hold its second hearing on reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act on May 27th. Most observers do not expect a WRDA bill during this session of Congress.

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