

107TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1252

To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to change the drinking water standard for arsenic from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion by fiscal year 2003 and to 3 parts per billion by fiscal year 2006 and to authorize an \$800 million to provide grants to small public drinking water systems to assist them in meeting these standards.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 28, 2001

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BONIOR, Ms. LEE, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HOEFFEL, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to change the drinking water standard for arsenic from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion by fiscal year 2003 and to 3 parts per billion by fiscal year 2006 and to authorize an \$800 million to provide grants to small public drinking water systems to assist them in meeting these standards.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2       This Act may be cited as the “Arsenic Reduction in  
3 Drinking Water Act”.

4 **SEC. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

5       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that:

6           (1) According to a 1999 study by the National  
7 Academy of Sciences, arsenic in drinking water  
8 causes bladder, lung and skin cancer, and may cause  
9 kidney and liver cancer. The study also found that  
10 arsenic harms the central and peripheral nervous  
11 systems, as well as heart and blood vessels, and  
12 causes serious skin problems. It also may cause  
13 birth defects and reproductive problems.

14           (2) According to Environmental Protection  
15 Agency data, more than 34 million Americans drink  
16 tap water supplied by systems containing average  
17 levels of arsenic that pose unacceptable cancer risks.

18           (3) The current national standard of 50 parts  
19 per billion for arsenic in drinking water was estab-  
20 lished in 1942, before health officials knew that ar-  
21 senic causes cancer.

22           (4) According to National Academy of Sciences  
23 estimates, one out of 100 people who drink water  
24 containing 50 parts per billion of arsenic will get  
25 cancer (based on drinking two liters of water per

1 day over the course of a lifetime). That's an unac-  
2 ceptably high cancer risk.

3 (5) The Environmental Protection Agency,  
4 which sets the arsenic standard, normally assigns  
5 standards for toxins and contaminants that rep-  
6 resent no more than a one-in-10,000 risk factor for  
7 cancer.

8 (6) The Environmental Protection Agency has  
9 determined that reducing arsenic in drinking water  
10 to 3 parts per billion is feasible.

11 (7) In 1997, Congress directed the Environ-  
12 mental Protection Agency to set a new arsenic  
13 standard.

14 (8) Small communities are concerned about im-  
15 proving drinking water quality.

16 (9) Small communities often struggle to meet  
17 water quality standards because of difficulty in se-  
18 curing funding.

19 (10) Small public water systems serving fewer  
20 than 10,000 people represent 94 percent of all public  
21 water systems.

22 (11) Small communities would benefit from a  
23 grant program designed to provide funding for water  
24 quality projects without a substantial matching re-  
25 quirement.

1 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to—

2 (1) establish drinking water standards for ar-  
3 senic such that—

4 (A) all drinking water systems in the  
5 United States shall be required to reduce ar-  
6 senic in drinking water to 10 parts per billion  
7 by fiscal year 2003;

8 (B) all drinking water systems in the  
9 United States shall be required to reduce ar-  
10 senic in drinking water to 3 parts per billion by  
11 fiscal year 2006; and

12 (2) to provide grants to small public drinking  
13 water systems to assist them in meeting the revised  
14 standards for arsenic in drinking water.

15 **SEC. 3. LOWERING THE LEVELS OF ARSENIC IN DRINKING**  
16 **WATER.**

17 Section 1412(b)(12)(A) of the Safe Drinking Water  
18 Act is amended by adding the following new clauses at  
19 the end thereof:

20 “(vii) Effective October 1, 2003, the max-  
21 imum contaminant level for arsenic shall be 10  
22 parts per billion.

23 “(viii) Effective October 1, 2006, the max-  
24 imum contaminant level for arsenic shall be 3  
25 parts per billion.”.

1 **SEC. 4. SMALL PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM ASSISTANCE PRO-**  
2 **GRAM FOR ARSENIC.**

3 Part E of the Safe Drinking Water Act is amended  
4 by adding the following new section at the end thereof:

5 **“SEC. 1459. SMALL PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM ASSISTANCE**  
6 **PROGRAM FOR ARSENIC.**

7 “(a) ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The Administrator  
8 shall make grants under this section to public water sys-  
9 tems serving fewer than 10,000 people to assist such sys-  
10 tems in meeting the drinking water standards for arsenic  
11 that take effect October 1, 2003, and October 1, 2006.

12 “(b) MINIMUM STATE ALLOCATION.—The aggregate  
13 of public water systems eligible for grants under this sec-  
14 tion in each State shall not receive less than 1 percent  
15 of the total nationwide appropriation for such grants in  
16 each fiscal year in which such grants are made.

17 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
18 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
19 \$800,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2002 through  
20 2006.”.

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