

Gerlach	Lungren, Daniel	Rogers (MI)
Gilchrest	E.	Ros-Lehtinen
Gillmor	Mack	Roskam
Gingrey	Manzullo	Royce
Gohmert	McCarthy (CA)	Ryan (WI)
Goode	McCaul (TX)	Sali
Goodlatte	McCotter	Saxton
Granger	McCrery	Schmidt
Graves	McHenry	Sensenbrenner
Hall (TX)	McHugh	Sessions
Hastert	McKeon	Shadeegg
Hastings (WA)	McMorris	Shays
Hayes	Rodgers	Shimkus
Heller	Melancon	Shuster
Hensarling	Mica	Simpson
Herger	Miller (FL)	Smith (NE)
Hobson	Miller (MI)	Smith (TX)
Hoekstra	Miller, Gary	Smith (TX)
Hulshof	Moran (KS)	Stearns
Inglis (SC)	Musgrave	Sullivan
Issa	Myrick	Tancredo
Jindal	Pence	Terry
Johnson, Sam	Peterson (PA)	Thornberry
Jones (NC)	Petri	Tiaht
Jordan	Pickering	Tiberi
Keller	Pitts	Turner
King (IA)	Poe	Upton
King (NY)	Porter	Walberg
Kingston	Price (GA)	Walden (OR)
Kirk	Pryce (OH)	Walsh (NY)
Knollenberg	Putnam	Wamp
Kuhl (NY)	Radanovich	Weldon (FL)
Lamborn	Ramstad	Weller
Latham	Regula	Westmoreland
LaTourette	Rehberg	Wicker
Lewis (CA)	Reichert	Wilson (NM)
Lewis (KY)	Renzi	Wilson (SC)
Linder	Reynolds	Wolf
LoBiondo	Rogers (AL)	Young (FL)
Lucas	Rogers (KY)	

the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 720.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 720) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes, with Ms. SOLIS in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Chairwoman, I yield myself 4½ minutes and rise in strong support of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007.

It has been a long time coming to this point. We have labored within the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for at least 11 years, maybe just a few months longer than that, to bring forth a bill to replenish the State revolving loan funds so that municipalities can continue the work of aggressively expanding their capacity to handle wastewater, treat that wastewater, return it to the receiving waters in good quality.

We have been delayed over the last 6 Congresses, not by unwillingness within our Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, but because of external factors within the House. Now that those external factors have been removed, we are bringing this bill to the floor with good and sustained bipartisan support. I appreciate very much the support of Speaker PELOSI, Majority Leader HOYER scheduling this legislation early on in the session; and I particularly appreciate the participation and cooperation of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), our ranking member, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Water Resources for the long participation that we have had and the splendid agreement and working relationship we had between our staffs on the Democratic and Republican sides, with one notable exception that will be debated at length here and which we debated extensively in subcommittee and full committee.

I especially want to express my great appreciation to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON). For years now, she has worked as our ranking member on the Water Resources Subcommittee, learned the issues, mastered the subject matter, and is now Chair of the Water Resources Subcommittee and has played a leading role in bringing this legislation to the floor.

The bill started out as \$20 billion to replenish State revolving loan funds; but due to concerns by the Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office, we scaled the legislation back to a \$14 billion bill, paying for it through an additional revenue source, as within the authority of this committee. The CBO has said that municipalities in raising municipal bonds that are tax exempt will cause a loss in revenue to the Treasury, and, therefore, the revenue in this bill has to be offset by another source. We have done that in a bipartisan agreement, and this bill is at \$14 billion, fully paid for. We will not have the debate that we have had on two other bills that were extraneous to the subject matter because we have covered this issue.

Unfortunately, the administration has steadily reduced funding for the State revolving loan fund over the past several years, and in the budget request for 2008 has a \$200 million reduction, down to \$687.5 million. That is totally unacceptable.

There was a time when we were investing \$6 billion a year in Federal funds, matched by State and local dollars, to build sewage treatment facilities, raise them to tertiary treatment, removing nutrients, adding oxygen, returning clean water to the receiving waters. We are not doing that any longer. We are not keeping pace with the pressure on the Nation's water and wastewater systems nor our sewage treatment systems.

The only debate that we really have is, What shall be the wages paid to those who work on building these facilities? And I listened with great interest and concern to the debate on the rule. The manager of the rule said that cities will start looking to Washington for these projects to take care of their water system needs. That is almost the same language that Dwight Eisenhower used in 1960 to veto the Federal Water Pollution Control Act amendments when he said: Pollution is a uniquely local blight. Federal involvement will only impede local efforts at cleanup.

That was wrong then, it is wrong now, it was wrong when Richard Nixon vetoed the Clean Water Act of 1972.

We have had a partnership of State and local government. They have invested billions of dollars at the local level. We need to continue that partnership into the future. This bill will do that.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BAKER. Madam Chair, at this time I would yield such time as he may consume to the ranking member of this Committee on Transportation, Mr. MICA.

Mr. MICA. Madam Chairwoman and Members of the House, normally I would be supportive of this legislation. I have tried to work in a bipartisan manner with Mr. OBERSTAR and other members of the committee on both sides of the aisle.

NOT VOTING—25

Bachus	Eshoo	Neugebauer
Bono	Fattah	Nunes
Boren	Hunter	Ortiz
Boswell	Kline (MN)	Paul
Calvert	Larson (CT)	Pearce
Camp (MI)	Marchant	Souder
Cardoza	Millender	Whitfield
Davis, Jo Ann	McDonald	Young (AK)
Engel	Moore (WI)	

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Mr. GRAVES changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. FRANK of Massachusetts, DELAHUNT, ADERHOLT, and TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 132, I was on a visit to Walter Reed. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill, H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

WATER QUALITY FINANCING ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 229 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on