

**Western Coalition of Arid States
WateReuse Association
Family Farm Alliance
National Urban Agriculture Council
National Water Resources Association
Association of California Water Agencies
Oregon Water Resources Congress
Upper Missouri Water Association
Idaho Water Users Association**

September 12, 2001

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young, Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Capitol, Room H-218
Washington, DC 20515-6015



Re: HR 2311 - FY2002 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill Conference

Dear Chairman Young:

As Western water organizations representing rural and urban water interests in the 17 Western states through the Invest in the West Coalition, we are writing to strongly urge you to support the Senate figure of an additional \$84 million in the Energy and Water appropriations bill provided to the Bureau of Reclamation in their Water and Related Resources account when HR 2311 goes to conference with the U.S. Senate.

The Bureau of Reclamation has brought opportunity and security to millions of people in the Western United States, fostering economic prosperity that has reached across the country and beyond. We are concerned about the 36% decline in the Bureau's budget over the past ten years and its \$5 billion backlog of authorized but unfunded projects, ranging from water reuse to irrigation for municipal and agricultural areas. Today, water users believe the Bureau lacks the resources to adequately fulfill its important role. The West is moving dangerously close to outgrowing the infrastructure resources necessary to assure a minimum level of urban and rural water supply, as droughts loom and environmental needs continue to multiply.

Providing the \$84 million increase for the Bureau is a step in the right direction – moving the Bureau's Water and Related Resources budget toward \$1 billion by FY2005, which we believe is necessary to address these needs. Many Reclamation projects are over 40 years old and need improvements and rehabilitation. This, coupled with the 19.7% population growth that has occurred in the West over the past ten years, places a greater demand for reliable and affordable water in these service areas. The Bureau of Reclamation has been the Federal Agency that most of our members have relied upon in meeting those demands.

On behalf of our associations, we appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to having a well funded program to meet our states' needs.

Sincerely,

Douglas Karafa, President
Western Coalition of Arid States

Stephen K. Hall, Executive Director
Association of California Water Agencies

G. Wade Miller, Executive Director
WaterReuse Association

Jan Lee, Executive Director
Oregon Water Resources Congress

Craig Smith, Executive Director
Family Farm Alliance

Michael Dwyer, Executive Director
Upper Missouri Water Association

Roger Waters, President
National Urban Agriculture Council

Norm Semanko, Executive Director and
General Counsel
Idaho Water Users Association

Tom Donnelly, Executive Vice President
National Water Resources Association

cc. The Honorable David R. Obey
Energy and Water Appropriations Conferees