

INLAND EMPIRE PERCHLORATE GROUND WATER PLUME
ASSESSMENT ACT OF 2011

JANUARY 18, 2012.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, from the Committee on Natural
Resources, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 200]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 200) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of water resources in the Rialto-Colton Basin in the State of California, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 200 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of water resources in the Rialto-Colton Basin in the State of California.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Perchlorate is a synthetic and naturally occurring salt compound. In some areas, perchlorate groundwater contamination has occurred as a result of firework, rocket propellant, and road flare manufacturing. The National Academy of Sciences concluded in 2005 that perchlorate at levels generally encountered in the United States do not constitute a public health concern. However, in high doses, perchlorate can disrupt uptake of iodide to the thyroid, decreasing thyroid production. Insufficient thyroid hormone can impede brain development in fetuses and infants.

Perchlorate contamination has occurred in the Rialto-Colton Basin in southern California. Specifically, a 2003 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Groundwater Assessment and Monitoring Program study identified perchlorate contamination in approximately 67 percent of the Basin's water wells. Although the perchlorate concentration in some of the wells exceeded California standards, no well had concentrations in excess of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health reference level. The two major sources of synthetic perchlorate in the area are San Bernardino County's Mid-Valley Sanitary Landfill (Landfill) and the 160-acre B.F. Goodrich Site near the Landfill. These two sites were used for storage and destruction of perchlorate-containing compounds such as explosives, propellants, and pyrotechnic devices. The County of San Bernardino, California, has spent \$13 million treating perchlorate emanating from the County Landfill near Rialto, California.

H.R. 200 requires the USGS to study the aquifers in the Rialto-Colton Basin and analyze the following: the quantity of water in the aquifers; the availability of groundwater resources for human use; the salinity level of the ground water; the identification of a recent surge in perchlorate concentrations; the identification of the sources of the perchlorate; potential for groundwater recharge; interaction between groundwater and surface water; and the susceptibility of the aquifers to contamination. The bill also requires that the study be carried out no later than two years after funds are made available. At a Subcommittee on Water and Power legislative hearing in 2011, USGS testified that it already has the administrative authorities necessary to perform a study addressing the issues presented in H.R. 200.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 200 was introduced on January 6, 2011, by Congressman Joe Baca (D-CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water and Power. On September 14, 2011, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On November 17, 2011, the Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water and Power was discharged by unanimous consent. No amendments were offered, and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(2)(B) of that Rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under sec-

tion 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

H.R. 200—Inland Empire Perchlorate Ground Water Plume Assessment Act of 2011

H.R. 200 would direct the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct a study of water resources in the Rialto-Colton Basin located east of Los Angeles, California. The study would identify the location of aquifers, evaluate the impact of perchlorate contamination, and include an analysis of other related water issues in the basin.

Based on information from the USGS and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 200 would cost \$4 million over the next two years. Those funds would be used to drill wells, collect data, and perform modeling activities necessary to complete the study. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 200 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

2. Section 308(a) of Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures. Based on information from the USGS and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 200 would cost \$4 million over the next two years. Those funds would be used to drill wells, collect data, and perform modeling activities necessary to complete the study. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of water resources in the Rialto-Colton Basin in the State of California.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local, or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.

