

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1427

To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 7, 2011

Mr. HARPER (for himself, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. JONES, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. FILNER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. PALAZZO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Grassroots Rural and
5 Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act of
6 2011”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drink-
2 ing Water Act authorized technical assistance for
3 small and rural communities to assist them with
4 compliance with rules and regulations promulgated
5 under the Act. Technical assistance and compliance
6 training ensures that Federal regulations do not
7 overwhelm small and rural communities' resources.
8 It also allows small communities lacking technical
9 resources access to assistance necessary to improve
10 and protect their water resources.

11 (2) Across the States, over 90 percent of the
12 community water systems serve a population of less
13 than 10,000. Small communities have the greatest
14 difficulty providing safe, affordable public drinking
15 water and wastewater services due to limited econo-
16 mies of scale and less technical expertise.

17 (3) In addition to being the main source of
18 compliance assistance, rural water technical assist-
19 ance has been the main source of assistance in emer-
20 gency response in small and rural communities.

21 (4) Technical assistance ensures that Federal
22 regulations do not overwhelm small and rural com-
23 munities' resources. It also allows small communities
24 lacking technical resources access to assistance nec-
25 essary to improve and protect their water resources.

1 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) to most effectively assist small communities,
4 the Environmental Protection Agency should
5 prioritize the type of technical assistance that small
6 communities find is the most beneficial;

7 (2) it is essential for the Environmental Protec-
8 tion Agency to consider and prioritize the type and
9 manner of technical assistance that has the most
10 support of each State’s local communities; and

11 (3) local support is the fundamental key to
12 making the Federal funding (the Federal assistance
13 initiatives) work in small and rural communities to
14 the maximum benefit.

15 **SEC. 4. FUNDING PRIORITIES.**

16 Section 1442(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
17 U.S.C. 300j–1(e)) is amended as follows:

18 (1) In the fifth sentence by striking “1997
19 through 2003” and inserting “2011 through 2016”.

20 (2) By inserting “(1)” immediately before the
21 first sentence.

22 (3) By adding at the end the following new
23 paragraph:

24 “(2) The Administrator may provide technical
25 assistance, with funds under this subsection, to non-
26 profit organizations providing onsite technical assist-

1 ance, circuit-rider technical assistance programs, on-
2 site and regional training, assistance with imple-
3 menting source water protection plans, and assist-
4 ance with implementation monitoring plans, rules,
5 regulations, and water security enhancements. To
6 assure technical assistance funding under this sub-
7 section is used in a manner most beneficial to small
8 and rural communities in each State, the Adminis-
9 trator shall give preference to nonprofit organiza-
10 tions that, as determined by the Administrator, are
11 the most qualified, experienced, effective, and most
12 supported by small community water systems in the
13 States.”.

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