

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4134

To amend the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 with respect to the total amount of Federal assistance for projects in States experiencing severe drought and projects in historically disadvantaged communities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 16, 2024

Mr. PADILLA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To amend the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 with respect to the total amount of Federal assistance for projects in States experiencing severe drought and projects in historically disadvantaged communities, 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 “Drought Relief Ob-
5 tained Using Government Help Today Act of 2024” or
6 the “DROUGHT Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN WATER INFRA-**
 2 **STRUCTURE PROJECTS.**

3 Section 5029(b)(9) of the Water Infrastructure Fi-
 4 nance and Innovation Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 3908(b)(9))
 5 is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 “(D) EXCEPTIONS FOR CERTAIN
 7 PROJECTS.—

8 “(i) PROJECTS IN STATES EXPERI-
 9 ENCING SEVERE DROUGHT.—Notwith-
 10 standing subparagraph (A), the Adminis-
 11 trator may finance up to 90 percent of the
 12 costs of a project described in paragraph
 13 (6) or (7) of section 5026 located in—

14 “(I) a State that has been des-
 15 ignated as D2 (severe drought) or
 16 greater according to the United States
 17 Drought Monitor for a minimum of 4
 18 weeks during any of the 3 years pre-
 19 ceding the date on which assistance is
 20 provided for the project under this
 21 subtitle; or

22 “(II) a county for which a
 23 drought emergency has been declared
 24 by the applicable Governor at any
 25 time during the 3-year period pre-
 26 ceding that date.

1 “(ii) PROJECTS IN HISTORICALLY DIS-
2 ADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES.—Notwith-
3 standing subparagraph (A), the Adminis-
4 trator may finance up to 90 percent of the
5 costs of a project described in paragraph
6 (6) or (7) of section 5026 that serves a
7 community that—

8 “(I) is designated as disadvan-
9 tagged, underserved, or financially dis-
10 tressed by—

11 “(aa) the Climate and Eco-
12 nomic Justice Screening Tool of
13 the Council on Environmental
14 Quality; or

15 “(bb) the Administrator
16 pursuant to a water infrastruc-
17 ture program of the Environ-
18 mental Protection Agency, in-
19 cluding water infrastructure
20 grant programs, clean water and
21 drinking water grant programs,
22 and other grant programs under
23 the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
24 U.S.C. 300f et seq.) and the Fed-

1 eral Water Protection Control
 2 Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.); or
 3 “(II) meets the affordability cri-
 4 teria established by a State pursuant
 5 to section 1452(d)(3) of the Safe
 6 Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-
 7 12(d)(3)) or section 603(i)(2) of the
 8 Federal Water Pollution Control Act
 9 (33 U.S.C. 1383(i)(2)).

10 “(iii) PRIORITY.—In carrying out this
 11 subparagraph, the Administrator shall
 12 prioritize financing for projects that—

13 “(I) are located in a State that is
 14 experiencing severe drought, as de-
 15 scribed in subclause (I) of clause (i),
 16 or a county for which a drought emer-
 17 gency has been declared, as described
 18 in subclause (II) of that clause; and

19 “(II) serve a community that is
 20 designated as disadvantaged, under-
 21 served, or financially distressed, or
 22 meets affordability criteria established
 23 by a State, as described in clause
 24 (ii).”.

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