

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1160

To reduce Federal, State, and local costs of providing high-quality drinking water to millions of people in the United States residing in rural communities by facilitating greater use of cost-effective alternative systems, including well water systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 27, 2015

Mr. STUTZMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To reduce Federal, State, and local costs of providing high-quality drinking water to millions of people in the United States residing in rural communities by facilitating greater use of cost-effective alternative systems, including well 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 “Water Supply Cost
5 Savings Act” or the “Savings Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) the United States is facing a drinking water
4 infrastructure funding crisis;

5 (2) the Environmental Protection Agency
6 projects a shortfall of approximately
7 \$384,000,000,000 in funding for drinking water in-
8 frastructure from 2015 to 2035 and this funding
9 challenge is particularly acute in rural communities
10 in the United States;

11 (3) there are approximately 52,000 community
12 water systems in the United States, of which nearly
13 42,000 are small community water systems;

14 (4) the Drinking Water Needs Survey con-
15 ducted by the Environmental Protection Agency in
16 2011 placed the shortfall in drinking water infra-
17 structure funding for small communities, which con-
18 sist of 3,300 or fewer persons, at \$64,500,000,000;

19 (5) small communities often cannot finance the
20 construction and maintenance of drinking water sys-
21 tems because the cost per resident for the invest-
22 ment would be prohibitively expensive;

23 (6) drought conditions have placed significant
24 strains on existing surface water supplies;

1 (7) many communities across the United States
2 are considering the use of groundwater and commu-
3 nity well systems to provide drinking water; and

4 (8) approximately 42,000,000 people in the
5 United States receive drinking water from individual
6 wells and millions more rely on community well sys-
7 tems for drinking water.

8 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

9 It is the sense of Congress that—

10 (1) the Federal Government lacks the resources
11 to fully finance the drinking water infrastructure
12 needs of millions of residents in rural communities
13 in the United States; and

14 (2) providing rural communities with the knowl-
15 edge and resources necessary to fully use alternative
16 drinking water systems, including wells and commu-
17 nity well systems, can provide safe and affordable
18 drinking water to millions of people in the United
19 States and help to close the funding gap for tax-
20 payers.

21 **SEC. 4. DRINKING WATER TECHNOLOGY CLEARINGHOUSE.**

22 The Administrator of the Environmental Protection
23 Agency and the Secretary of Agriculture shall—

24 (1) update existing programs of the Environ-
25 mental Protection Agency and the Department of

1 Agriculture designed to provide drinking water tech-
2 nical assistance to include information on cost-effec-
3 tive, innovative, and alternative drinking water deliv-
4 ery systems, including systems that are supported by
5 wells; and

6 (2) disseminate information on the cost effec-
7 tiveness of alternative drinking water delivery sys-
8 tems, including wells and well systems, to commu-
9 nities and not-for-profit organizations seeking Fed-
10 eral funding for drinking water systems serving 500
11 or fewer persons.

12 **SEC. 5. WATER SYSTEM ASSESSMENT.**

13 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any
14 application for a grant or loan from the Federal Govern-
15 ment or a State that is using Federal assistance for a
16 drinking water system serving 500 or fewer persons, a unit
17 of local government or not-for-profit organization shall
18 self-certify that the unit of local government or organiza-
19 tion has considered, as an alternative drinking water sup-
20 ply, drinking water delivery systems sourced by publicly
21 owned—

- 22 (1) individual wells;
23 (2) shared wells; and
24 (3) community wells.

1 **SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

2 Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment
3 of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Pro-
4 tection Agency and the Secretary of Agriculture shall pro-
5 vide to Congress a report that describes—

6 (1) the use of innovative and alternative drink-
7 ing water systems described in this Act;

8 (2) the range of cost savings for communities
9 using innovative and alternative drinking water sys-
10 tems described in this Act; and

11 (3) the use of drinking water technical assist-
12 ance programs operated by the Administrator of the
13 Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary
14 of Agriculture.

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