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U.S. Representative • (GA-7)

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HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES LINDER WATER BILL

Washington, D.C. –A solution to our nation’s growing water problems is one step closer today following the approval of legislation sponsored by Representative John Linder (R-GA) by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. Linder’s bill, H.R. 135, aims to coordinate water management and enact a comprehensive water policy to effectively deal with one of the most important issues of our time, providing a clean and dependable water supply for all Americans for years to come.

“For much of the 20th century, the average American has been blessed with an abundance of fresh, affordable water, available at the turn of a tap. That scenario is fast being threatened. We have been faced with droughts all over the country in the last several years, leaving lake levels intolerably low and our rivers dry. Furthermore, overzealous groundwater pumping from fresh water aquifers across the nation is leaving aquifers dry or threatened by saltwater intrusion.”

Linder added that the problems are not going to go away. The projected population growth for the United States indicates that water demand will dramatically increase in coming years and it is becoming critical that states across the nation find ways to “create” more fresh water to meet growing needs. Linder’s bill, the “21st Century Water Commission Act,” takes the necessary first step toward helping all Americans to face future water emergencies proactively by laying the groundwork for creating a well-defined and workable roadmap to help them use water more efficiently, capture more water, and reuse water multiple times before it flows out to sea.

“I’m not a water policy expert, and I do not know what the exact solutions should be. But I am learning, and I have helped the House leadership to focus on this issue. This is not a pork-barrel spending project. It is not a partisan issue. It’s a human survival and quality-of-life problem. The stakes are that high, and the choice is ours. Oscar Wilde said that a cynic is someone who knows the cost of everything but the value of nothing. I know the cost AND value of sustaining our water resources. I just hope that my colleagues in Congress do too.”

Linder’s bill has passed the House in two previous Congresses but has not been voted on in the Senate. Linder added that he hopes this year, with the help of his Georgia colleague Senator Johnny Isakson, H.R. 135 will pass the Senate and go before the President for signature.

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