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News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE USE
June 19, 2007

Contact: Beth Casteel
6540 Arlington Blvd.
Falls Church, VA 22042-6638
703 536-7080 ext. 11
beth@irrigation.org

Photos available upon request to
beth@irrigation.org

Congressional Water Caucus Established

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (June 19, 2007) — Congress has established a Water Caucus to promote a dialogue about water issues and provide timely, scientific information about water resources and water use.

"The Irrigation Association applauds the leadership and commitment of the Water Caucus co-chairs," said IA Executive Director Deborah Hamlin. "Water supply, distribution and quality issues are complex. The education and information sharing that a caucus can provide are critical to the creation of sound water policy."

Rep. John Linder, R-Ga.; Rep. Jim Costa, D-Calif.; Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich.; Rep. Grace Napolitano, D-Calif., and Rep. George Radanovich, R-Calif. — all longtime advocates of sound water policy — signed on as co-chairs for the caucus and at least 18 other lawmakers expressed an interest in joining.

"Twelve Principles of Water Policy" identified by the co-chairs include securing sufficient water supply for urban and rural areas; considering all available technologies for increasing water supply efficiently while safeguarding the environment, and implementing strategies to improve efficiencies.

"This new caucus has the potential to be a strong voice on water issues in the halls of Congress," Costa said in announcing formation of the caucus. "With droughts currently plaguing much of the country, and with long periods of nationwide drought on the horizon, we need to work together today to come up with solutions for tomorrow."

Congress has more than 200 caucuses on topics from addiction to zero capital gains, but until now there was no central forum for water. Several federal agencies have a role in water policy and Congress frequently enacts legislation related to water.

Linder, who has been a longtime advocate of a comprehensive water strategy, was instrumental in establishing a framework for the caucus.

For the "Twelve Principles of Water Policy," go to
www.irrigation.org/gov/watercaucus.htm.

The Irrigation Association promotes efficient and effective water management and acts as the voice of the irrigation industry.

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