

**Statement of Robert Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior
Before the
House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power**

**HR 716
May 17, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to provide the Department of the Interior's views on HR 716, a bill to authorize Reclamation to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the Santa Rosa Urban Water Reuse Plan. The Department does not support HR 716.

HR 716 would amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, Title XVI), to include the City of Santa Rosa, California, Urban Water Reuse Plan. Under the proposed legislation costs incurred by the City of Santa Rosa prior to the date of enactment would be credited by the Secretary toward the total cost of the Santa Rosa Urban Water Reuse Plan.

There is not sufficient information, such as the engineering and economic feasibility, financial capability of the project sponsor, and environmental effects, regarding this proposed project. The Department supports efforts to increase local water supplies and increase recycled water use in the West. However, because technical studies are not complete, the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this project cannot be determined. Title XVI provisions require that these technical studies be completed and reviewed to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness. Moreover, of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

While Reclamation does not support new authorizations for Federal cost sharing of water recycling projects, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

The Administration appreciates local efforts to address future water issues. However, in light of the concerns expressed above, we cannot support HR 716.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions.