



# **H.R. 2749; the *Dam Authorization, Maintenance, and Safety (DAMS) Act of 2015***

## **Legislative Summary**

The average age of the 84,000 dams in the United States is 52 years old. In order to avoid dam failures, which would cause substantial economic damage and, more importantly, loss of human life, significant investment and regular maintenance is necessary.

Under current law, the Bureau of Reclamation may only identify dam repairs and modifications which result from “*new hydrologic or seismic data*” or those actions that are “*deemed necessary for safety purposes*.” The Secretary of the Interior is not allowed to authorize additional assessments of the dam unrelated to the qualifying issue, meaning repairs or modifications resulting from normal deterioration or lack of maintenance are prohibited.

If such a repair or modification were identified by the Bureau of Reclamation, the *Dam Authorization, Maintenance, and Safety Act* would allow the Secretary of the Interior to not only address the specific issue but to also evaluate whether additional modifications could be made to the dam facility to increase water storage capacity.

### **Provisions**

Under current law, if the Safety Evaluation of Existing Dams (SEED) process indicates that a modification is necessary to remedy a deficiency at a Bureau of Reclamation facility the Secretary is authorized to only look at corrective actions that will remedy the identified deficiency.

H.R. 2749 modernizes the *Safety of Dams Act* to allow the Secretary to evaluate multiple corrective actions following the SEED process. The Secretary may evaluate multiple project benefits, including, but not limited to, additional conservation storage capacity, if the additional project benefits promote more efficient management of the facility and the costs associated with the activity are agreed to in writing with the projects proponents.

### **Key Facts**

The Dam Safety Budget for FY 2015 \$82,884,000, FY2016 POTUS request \$88,084,000

Dams Currently Under Construction: Folsom Dam; California, Glendo Dam; Wyoming, Guernsey Dam; Wyoming

Dams Pending Corrective Actions: Bull Lake Dam; Wyoming, Nelson Dikes; Montana, Stampede Dam; California, Altus Dam; Oklahoma, Boca Dam; California, Hyatt Dam; Oregon, Hyrum Dam; Utah

Dams Pending Preconstruction Activities: Sisk Dam; California, Mirage Butte Dam; Nebraska, El Vado Dam; New Mexico, Howard Prairie Dam; Oregon, Scoggins Dam; Oregon

### **Original Cosponsors**

Representatives Ken Calvert (CA-42), Jim Costa, Democrat Lead (CA-16), Paul Cook (CA-08), Kevin Cramer (ND-AL), Rodney Davis (IL-13), Jeff Denham (CA-10), Darrell E. Issa (CA-49), Stephen Knight (CA-25), Cynthia Lummis (WY-AL), Kevin McCarthy (CA-23), Tom McClintock (CA-04), Devin Nunes (CA-22), Dana Rohrabacher (CA-48), Edward R. Royce (CA-39), Greg Walden (OR-02), and Mimi Walters (CA-45).

