



National Rural Water Association

Duncan, Oklahoma
www.nrwa.org

To: Representative Young
From: Mike Keegan, Analyst (keegan@ruralwater.org)
Date: June 25, 2011
Re: H.R. 1340, “End Unnecessary Costs Caused by Report Mailing Act of 2011”

The National Rural Water Association (NRWA), the country's largest community-based water organization with over 27,000 rural and small communities, appreciates your assistance and support to rural and small communities committed to providing safe drinking water and complying with federal drinking water regulations.

NRWA supports H.R. 1340, the “End Unnecessary Costs Caused by Report Mailing Act of 2011,” and urges its passage into law. If enacted, the legislation would enhance public access of health information regarding drinking water and reduce compliance costs for local communities and consumers – by allowing communities to utilize technological innovation (i.e. the internet) for compliance with federal rules and communicating with consumers. This new option would be especially important for small and low-income communities who can least afford additional compliance costs that result in increased utility bills.

In discussions this week, it was indicated that all state rural water associations are supportive of your legislation, and will take action to support and encourage co-sponsors to the bill.

Thank you for your support and sponsorship of H.R. 1340, we look forward to working with you to advance the bill in Congress. Please contact us with any questions.

Support H.R. 1340 – The End Unnecessary Costs Caused by Report Mailing Act of 2011

The National Rural Water Association (NRWA) has recently taken a position in support of H.R. 1340, the “**End Unnecessary Costs Caused by Report Mailing Act of 2011**,” and urges its passage into law. If enacted, the legislation would enhance public access of health information regarding drinking water and reduce compliance costs for local communities and consumers – by allowing communities to utilize technological innovation (i.e. the internet) for compliance with federal rules and communicating with consumers. This new option would be especially important for small and low-income communities who can least afford additional compliance cost which result in increased utility bills.

Congressman Young said, *“Every year federal law requires community water systems to spend thousands of dollars mailing a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) few people actually read... Water systems in my district have received numerous complaints since the requirement was implemented, including that mailing these reports is a waste of money and that it would be more effective to have a simple statement on their bill that their water is certified safe. While the costs of printing and mailing these reports vary depending on the number of customers in the system, in 2009, printing and mailing the CCR cost one water system in my district \$30,565 and another \$6,785. My legislation would not stop the production of the CCR, it would simply target the costly mailing requirement. Instead of having to mail the report to every customer, water systems that tested safe for the past year could choose to notify their customers of that fact on their monthly bill, while making the full CCR available on their website or by mail upon request. Water systems where the water tested unsafe would still have to mail the CCR to their customers.”*

The bill amends the Safe Drinking Water Act to give public water systems (for which there were no violations of the maximum contaminant level for any regulated contaminant during the year) the option to: (1) mail the annual report on the level of contaminants in the drinking water purveyed by that system to each customer (required under current law); or (2) make such report available on the system's website and, upon request, by mail.

Gary Williams, Executive Director of the Florida Rural Water Association said, *“We appreciate Florida’s Congressman Young for sponsoring this legislation – and for his assistance and support to rural and small communities committed to providing safe drinking water and complying with federal drinking water regulations. In discussions this week with all the state rural water associations, I was encouraged to hear that they all support Congressman Young’s bill and will take action to support and encourage cosponsors to the bill.”*



Draft Letter Urging for Co-sponsorship of H.R. 1340

Dear Representative _____:

On behalf of the over _____ small and rural community members of the _____ Rural Water Association, we are writing to urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 1340, the "End Unnecessary Costs Caused by Report Mailing Act of 2011," and urges its passage into law.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996 requires every community water system to mail an annual Consumer Confidence Report to every customer detailing a number of federal requirements and water system information. The annual publishing, copying, and mailing the reports can be costly and burdensome for small communities with limited resources. However, we support providing the public with all information concerning their public health (the public through local governments already owns and manages public water supplies and all information).

H.R. 1340 amends the Safe Drinking Water Act to give public water systems (for which there were no violations of the maximum contaminant level for any regulated contaminant during the year) the option to: (1) mail the annual report on the level of contaminants in the drinking water purveyed by that system to each customer (required under current law); or (2) make such report available on the system's website and, upon request, by mail.

Congressman Young said, "Every year federal law requires community water systems to spend thousands of dollars mailing a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) few people actually read... Water systems in my district have received numerous complaints since the requirement was implemented, including that mailing these reports is a waste of money and that it would be more effective to have a simple statement on their bill that their water is certified safe. While the costs of printing and mailing these reports vary depending on the number of customers in the system, in 2009, printing and mailing the CCR cost one water system in my district \$30,565 and another \$6,785. My legislation would not stop the production of the CCR; it would simply target the costly mailing requirement. Instead of having to mail the report to every customer, water systems that tested safe for the past year could choose to notify their customers of that fact on their monthly bill, while making the full CCR available on their website or by mail upon request. Water systems where the water tested unsafe would still have to mail the CCR to their customers."

If enacted, the legislation would enhance public access of health information regarding drinking water and reduce compliance costs for local communities and consumers - by allowing communities to utilize technological innovation (i.e. the internet) for compliance with federal rules and communicating with consumers. This new option would be especially important for small and low-income communities who can least afford additional compliance costs that result in increased utility bills.

Thank you for your consideration of co-sponsorship of H.R. 1340. We look forward to working with you to advance the bill in Congress. Please contact us with any questions.