

CHAIRWOMAN NAPOLITANO

OENING STATEMENT: WP 3.18.10

Today's legislative hearing is extra special for me, as I have the great honor of being the sponsor of one of the pieces of legislation, H.R. 4349, the Hoover Power Allocation Act of 2009. I would like to thank all of our witnesses for making the journey to be with us today, especially since many of you have had to put in extra effort to be here after Washington's massive snow storm "Snowmagedon" caused us to cancel our hearing on these bills in February.

H.R. 4349 is legislation that would allocate power, for 50-years, from one of our nation's greatest achievements, the Hoover Dam, to power customers in the Lower Colorado River Basin states of Arizona, Nevada, and my home state of California. So important is this power that the legislation has 43 bipartisan cosponsors from the Lower Basin states. Additionally, I've received more than **90** letters of support from a wide variety of groups in those states that I am entering into the Record.

Power from Hoover Dam was first allocated in 1928 as part of the Boulder Canyon Project Act. It is the only hydropower in WAPA's service territory that always has been allocated by Congress. Hoover power also is unique in that, back in 1928, Congress gave preference for that power to the states of California, Arizona, and Nevada. In time, Arizona and Nevada created governmental entities to distribute that power, while California allowed municipalities, irrigation districts, and other private entities to receive the power.

H.R. 4349 carries on these time-honored precedents. The bill would allocate most of the power from Hoover Dam to current customers beginning in 2017. However, in a bid to help spread the wealth, the legislation would create a new pool of over 100 megawatts of this precious resource for new recipients, which is a set-aside of more power than in any other power reallocation carried out by WAPA.

This Subcommittee is very happy to work in coordination with water and power customers from the Lower Basin States to allocate power from the Hoover Dam.

The second bill today is H.R. 4579, the South San Diego County Water Reclamation Project of 2010, introduced by my colleague, Congressman

Filner. As I have stated many times, Title XVI is a critical program to help address the water crisis in the West. At a time when my home state of California is experiencing severe economic and hydrological conditions, we simply cannot ignore the important role that Title XVI plays in helping solve our water problems.

H.R. 4579 would help reduce Southern California's dependence on imported water from two heavily constrained resources, the Bay-Delta and the Colorado River. Earlier this week, the Bureau of Reclamation released new Draft Funding Criteria for Title XVI programs. While the Bureau has made progress on Title XVI by introducing these criteria, and making it part of their WaterSMART program, I look forward to working with the Bureau to give Title XVI a higher priority.