

## ***Proposal Gives Tax Incentives for Conservation***

**(WASHINGTON, D.C.)** – U.S. Rep Mike Coffman (R-Colorado) today announced a new legislative proposal to increase water conservation recently introduced in the Congress. The legislation, House Resolution 1908, *The Water Accountability Tax Efficiency Reinvestment Act (W.A.T.E.R. Act)*, will promote water conservation by providing a tax credit to homeowners and businesses that purchase water efficiency-components that reduce water consumption.

“This legislation will help conserve one of our most precious resources by providing a tax incentive to reward water conservation. Water conservation must be a key component of an overall strategy for meeting the increased demands for water across our country,” said Coffman.

Coffman modeled his legislation after the “*Energy Star*” program currently administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Under the *Energy Star* program, energy-efficient products, that may cost more to purchase than standard models, will pay the consumer back in lower energy bills within a reasonable time frame irrespective of any benefit derived from the tax credit.

The EPA has already devised an equivalent program for promoting water conservation by evaluating water-efficiency components and awarding them the “*WaterSense*” label much like energy efficient appliances and products receive the “*Energy Star*” label to alert consumers. However, the difference between the two programs is the *Energy Star* provides a tax credit while the *WaterSense* one does not.

Coffman’s legislation, like the *Energy Star* program, will provide for a 30% tax credit, with a \$1,500 cap, to individuals who voluntarily purchase water conserving hardware such as efficient faucets and toilets. Any components with the EPA’s *WaterSense*

label will qualify for the tax credit under the proposed legislation. Products with the Water Sense label are generally 20% more efficient than the market average.

“Colorado will require an additional 630,000 acre feet of water by year 2030 to meet projected needs. The Water Conservation Act will help meet this demand by helping individuals and businesses conserve water,” said Coffman.

The EPA estimates that if a family of 4 installs *WaterSense* faucets and toilets they could save 17,000 gallons of water each year.

“In this economy, saving water means lower bills for Colorado families and businesses,” said U.S. Rep. Betsy Markey (D-Colorado). “This bill will incentivize water efficiency and conservation, and I’m proud to cosponsor it.”

U.S Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colorado) said, “I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor of H.R. 1908, the *Water Accountability Tax Efficiency Reinvestment Act or W.A.T.E.R. Act*. I am happy to join my friend, Congressman Coffman, in supporting common sense legislation that achieves two laudable goals: cutting taxes and promoting voluntary water conservation.”

U.S. Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah) said, “Just as conservation and efficiency are key tools in our efforts towards improving our energy situation, conservation and efficiency need to play a greater role in improving our water situation. The *WATER Act* would model the existing, and successful, Energy Star Program, by providing individuals and businesses tax incentives to install water efficient fixtures. Congressman Coffman deserves thanks for his leadership on this issue, and I am proud to join him as a cosponsor of this common sense legislation.”

"Americans today use 300 percent more water each day than they did 50 years ago, putting tremendous strain on our water supply and environment," said U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-Wisconsin). "The 2009 Water Accountability Tax Efficiency Reinvestment Act (WATER) seeks to ease that stress by giving individuals and businesses the incentive to conserve water and lead a greener lifestyle. Supporting this legislation means we are taking the necessary steps to protect our environment for future generations. I am pleased to be part of it."

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