

Denham's water storage bill passes out of committee, moves to House floor

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Jeff Denham’s legislation, H.R. 2578, passed out of the House Committee on Natural Resources today. Denham’s bill is a simple, common-sense bill that will provide for much needed water storage during wet years in the San Joaquin Valley of California., his office said in a news release. Moving the bill to the House Floor is the next step for the legislation.

“Currently unemployment in my district is hovering around 17 percent, which is almost double the national average. We are dependent on water for jobs and to sustain our local economy. My bill, H.R. 2578, is a much needed piece of legislation that will create desperately needed jobs, increase water storage and help stimulate the depressed local economy,” Denham said in the release.

The legislation has bipartisan support in Congress and the backing of the Central Valley delegation. Co-sponsors include Rep. Kevin McCarthy, Rep. Jim Costa, Rep. Devin Nunes and Rep. Dennis Cardoza.

H.R. 2578 will allow the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to consider a proposal by the Merced Irrigation District (MID) to raise the spillway at the Exchequer Dam by 10 feet without using any state or federal dollars.

The bill will allow for much needed storage of up to 70,000 acre-feet of water, which has the potential for the generation of an additional 10,000 mega-watt hours of clean renewable electricity, increased recreation activity in the area and agricultural benefits, as well as the creation of about 840 jobs, according to the news release It will also increase desperately needed water supply to the San Joaquin Valley.

Denham’s bill has the support of California water organizations and job creators in the Valley, including organizations such as Merced Irrigation District; California Citrus Mutual; Paramount Farms; Westlands Water District.

WATCH: Rep. Denham discussed the legislation in committee today: <http://bit.ly/oK9fhX>
<http://www.mercedsunstar.com/2011/10/05/2070189/denhams-water-storage-bill-passes.html>