

**Grace F. Napolitano, Opening Statement**  
Water and Power Subcommittee Oversight Hearing  
Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Requests for the Bureau of Reclamation, the Power  
Marketing Administrations, and the Water Resources Division of the U.S.  
Geological Survey

My public service career has always allowed me to pursue one of my professional passions: western water. My experience on the Norwalk City Council, as a Mayor of Norwalk, and later in the State Assembly helped me understand the importance of water supply and water quality to a community. After 9 plus years on the subcommittee, to Ranking Member, and now as Chairwoman of this subcommittee, I have, and will continue to focus on groundwater quality issues, groundwater storage potential, and the incredible potential of water reuse, especially recycled water.

In reviewing agency budgets that reflect agency priorities, I am disappointed with the low priority given to recycled water and its importance, and have a number of questions. My first impression of the Bureau's budget is that it does not reflect what local communities need the most, a new and sustainable water supply.

Given the more than \$300 million backlog of funding for critical water recycling projects and 2009's request for Title XVI funding at only \$7 million, it begs the question:

- Why is the Bureau of Reclamation, and this Administration, so against the Title XVI program, especially given its proven value both in cost and effectiveness?

It will take almost 46 years to complete existing projects if the Bureau keeps asking for such an insulting sum. What is more surprising is that this existing backlog doesn't even include other key projects that have been authorized this year and are awaiting the federal cost-share. Communities throughout the West now believe that water reuse is part of the solution to addressing drought and growth pressures. Yet the Bureau's budget reduces funding and creates some new pot of money for grants, even pilot programs that might not deliver water or create jobs.

Moreover, this year's budget raises serious doubts on the priorities of the Bureau of Reclamation. Aside from the lack of funding for Title XVI and alternative water solutions, we are facing the challenges of aging infrastructure and climate change, two issues NOT itemized in their budget.

Commissioner Johnson, we trust you will shed some light on Reclamation's precedence.

We are also intrigued by the federal grid and how drought is impacting our ability to generate hydropower. We also plan to explore today and throughout this year, how our federal transmission infrastructure might help to promote renewable energy. Finally, we appreciate the Army Corps of Engineers presence to answer questions, especially about the state of Corps facilities and its impacts on hydropower operations.

With that, thank you again to our witness and I would like to turn to my colleague and Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rodgers for her opening statement.