

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2026

U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
Environment and Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Environment and Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Representative Sam Graves
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

U.S. Representative Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

We write to respectfully request that H.R. 131, the Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act, be included in the forthcoming 2026 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). Incorporating this legislation into WRDA would ensure Congress fulfills a long-standing federal commitment to deliver clean, affordable drinking water to tens of thousands of rural Coloradans, while advancing a project with strong bipartisan support without increasing federal spending.

H.R. 131 passed both the House and Senate in 2025 without objection, but has not been signed into law. The bill would adjust the non-federal cost share financing for the Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC), which is the final, unfinished component of the Fryingpan–Arkansas Project authorized by Congress in 1962. More than six decades later, over 50,000 residents across 39 communities in southeastern Colorado continue to rely on groundwater sources contaminated with naturally occurring pollutants, including carcinogens. These predominantly rural and economically vulnerable communities have waited generations for the federal government to meet its commitment.

WRDA has long served as the primary vehicle for advancing critical water infrastructure and honoring federal project authorizations. In fact, the 1992 WRDA included a Section 219 authorization supporting the AVC, recognizing its importance as a regional water supply project. Including H.R. 131 in the 2026 WRDA is consistent with this precedent and with Congress's bipartisan tradition of using WRDA to strengthen, modify, and complete authorized water resource projects.

Although administrations of both parties have supported the AVC, rising material and labor costs now threaten its completion. H.R. 131 provides a practical solution by adjusting financing terms

to reduce interest rates and provide greater repayment flexibility—measures that enable completion of the project without imposing additional costs on taxpayers. These targeted updates are well suited for inclusion in WRDA, which routinely refines existing authorizations to reflect changing economic conditions and ensure project viability.

Given WRDA’s established role as Congress’s bipartisan water infrastructure package, we believe 2026 WRDA is the appropriate legislative vehicle to secure completion of the AVC. We respectfully urge the Committee to include H.R. 131 in the 2026 Water Resources Development Act and help ensure that southeastern Colorado communities finally receive the safe, reliable drinking water they were promised.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

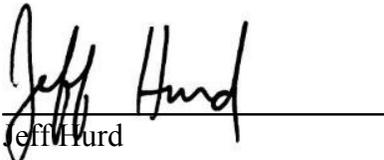
Sincerely,



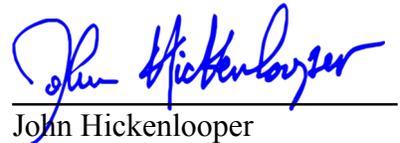
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



Jeff Hurd
Member of Congress



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator