

The issue here today is not whether or not we are going to be honoring our former colleague, Congressman Bono. I think all of us who had an opportunity to serve with him are committed to having an appropriate memorial of that nature. Nor is there a lack of interest on the part of Members of this Congress dealing with the environmental problems associated with the Salton Sea.

The issue that I am concerned about, and I hope the House will take a step back and look very carefully at this, is that we are moving ahead with a significant sum of money to try and deal with what in and of itself was a failed project in the past. This water resources project years ago was well-intended, but has moved in the wrong direction.

It is an issue that I am personally concerned with. As we speak today, this Congress has not exercised appropriate oversight for other water resources projects where we have not laid an appropriate foundation environmentally in engineering terms to make sure that we are not spending good money after bad.

My colleagues will hear in the course of the debate, both on the rule and on the measure itself, that there is not at this point a clear understanding of the exact nature of the problem, and despite years of study and engineering research, there is not a good plan in hand right now.

To go ahead with a preauthorization of a third of a billion dollars for something that this House does not really understand fully and will not have control over is a step clearly in the wrong direction. Not only would we be wasting it, there is a probability that it could even be made worse.

I am pleased that our friends on the Republican majority have rediscovered the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Annually only about \$260 million of this fund is spent on this purpose intended for the purchasing of conservation funds. It is a dramatic stretch, I think, for this House to dedicate resources of this order of magnitude in one little portion of the United States when we have hundreds of projects that go begging around the country. I hope that we will have a more thoughtful discussion about the utilization of this resource.

I really do hope that we will approve the Miller amendment, have an opportunity to look at this in a more thoughtful fashion, and provide really a truly appropriate memorial in the long run.

Sonny Bono Memorial Salton Sea Reclamation Act

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