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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | September 8, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **ICYMI: Heller Pushes for Lake Tahoe Restoration on Senate Floor while Landing Important Rural Win for Nevada**  Heller-Heinrich Rural Water Amendment also to be Included in WRDA  **(Washington, DC)** – Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller’s (R-NV) amendment, [the Heller-Heinrich Rural Water Amendment](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=C697B072-ECDD-4A89-854C-113893769A51) to *the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA),* passed in the United States Senate. The bipartisan amendment addresses the needs of rural communities in the west trying to develop water infrastructure projects for economic growth.  Earlier today, Heller spoke on the Senate floor in favor of both the amendment and his [*Lake Tahoe Restoration Act*](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=4517CAF9-D021-4E4F-8662-8EA1F7827890). Click [HERE](https://youtu.be/falWhIH8GIw) or below to watch.   |  | | --- | | **Remarks as prepared:**  I rise today in support of the Heller-Heinrich Amendment number 4981. In the west, water is the lifeblood of our economy and culture.  Without water, our communities cannot grow.  Improving rural water security and economic development go hand in hand, which is why I have teamed up with my friend from New Mexico, Senator Heinrich, to offer this western water amendment that will help ensure every drop of western water goes as far as it can go.  Our amendment simply ensures the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers implements its western water infrastructure program as Congress intended. It will help advance projects like storm and sewer systems, water treatment plants, and delivery projects in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.  Since first established in 1999, this program has been helpful to rural communities surrounded by federal lands.  Increasing the west’s water security is essential to the region’s long-term economic competitiveness. I urge my colleagues to support this important bipartisan western initiative.  Mr. President, I also want to talk about an issue in the Water Resources Development Act that as a Nevadan is extremely important to my state, namely Lake Tahoe.    Mark Twain once said, “The Lake had a bewildering richness about it that enchanted the eye and held it with the stronger fascination.”    Over the past year and a half, I have worked with my good friend from Oklahoma, Environment and Public Works Chairman Jim Inhofe.  I want to thank him for helping advance a long-standing priority of mine, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act.  This is a bill I championed in the House before I was appointed to the Senate, and I am proud to be the lead sponsor of it here in the Senate during the 114th Congress.    This bipartisan legislation, which has garnered the unanimous support of the Nevada Congressional Delegation and my California colleagues Senators Feinstein and Boxer, is focused on reducing wildfire threats, improving water quality and clarity, improving public land management, and combating invasive species.  Specifically, it invests $415 million in the Tahoe Basin over the next ten years.  These important resources will address major threats to the Jewel of the Sierra’s ecological health.  That includes:     * Helping prevent and manage the introduction of the quagga mussel and other harmful invasive species.      * Prioritizing important fuel reduction projects that prevent catastrophic wildfire. * Advancing storm water management and innovative transportation solutions that reduce congestion, minimize impacts to the lake, and improve outdoor recreation opportunities.     Collaborative efforts between Nevada and California, like the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, are prime examples of what can be accomplished when we set our minds toward a common goal.  Here in the 114th Congress, the first where I have been the lead sponsor of the bill, we are closer to enactment than ever before.  The bill has advanced through Committee in both the House and Senate for the first time in the same Congress.  When it was passed the Environment and Public Works Committee, it garnered unanimous support among committee members for the first time.  And my hope is when we finish consideration of this bill, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act will have passed the full Senate for the first time in its legislative history.    Before I conclude, I want to thank Chairman Inhofe for his leadership on infrastructure issues and for teaming up with our delegations to preserve the Lake.  I am appreciative that the Environment and Public Works Committee moved our bill through the process, both as a standalone bill and as part of this water resources bill in the past year.  Like you, I know one of the core constitutional functions of the federal government is creating the infrastructure necessary to conduct commerce, trade, and allow general transportation.  Infrastructure development is one of my top priorities here in Congress and has been a top priority of this chamber's Majority. And it is important to note we have successfully enacted important policies in this Congress to improve travel and infrastructure across our country – but in particular at Tahoe.    In July, the FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act was enacted into law.  This important legislation implemented important reforms that make U.S. air travel safer and more efficient, critical to Nevada tourism destinations like Tahoe.    Last year, we enacted the first long-term highway bill in nearly a decade, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act.  This bill is already advancing a variety of important transportation projects across our country.  In fact, I secured a variety of provisions in that bill that will facilitate the development of new and innovative transit, highway, and bridge projects specifically in the Tahoe Basin, as well as a provision aimed at improving pedestrian and cyclist safety.  These transportation solutions improve mobility and outdoor recreation at the Lake, while reducing the impacts transportation has on water quality and clarity.  And again this week, I stand with Chairman Inhofe to advance yet another important infrastructure bill – the Water Resources Development Act.  This bill will strengthen our nation’s infrastructure that mitigate flood risks, improve routes for the movement of goods, and invest in aging infrastructure for drinking water and wastewater.  Initiatives like these are important to maintaining public health, improving water security, and keeping our nation competitive in the global market. I urge my colleagues to help me preserve Lake Tahoe and other cherished places across our nation so future generations can enjoy these natural sceneries for generations to come.  Let’s add another major infrastructure win to the 114th Congress’ resume - support the Heller-Heinrich Amendment, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act and the Water Resources Development Act of 2016. | | **###** |   [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |