

SAINT FRANCIS DAM DISASTER NATIONAL MEMORIAL
ACT

JULY 11, 2017.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 2156]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 2156) to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 2156 is to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The Saint Francis Dam was one of several large infrastructure projects constructed in the early 20th century to help control the flow of water to southern California. On March 12th, 1928, the dam breached, resulting in significant flooding that took more than 400 lives in Los Angeles County, California.¹ This failure is considered one of the worst civil engineering failures in the 20th century and resulted in the resignation of William Mulholland as head of

¹Harrison, Scott. "California Retrospective St. Francis Dam Collapse Left a Trail of Death and Destruction." *The L.A. Times* 19 March 2016, <http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-stfrancis-dam-retrospective-20160319-story.html>.

the Los Angeles Bureau of Water Works and Water Supply.² Beyond the loss of life, thousands of residents lost their homes and experienced significant property damage due to the flood. Today, the site of the dam collapse and the affected areas are often subject to theft and vandalism.

H.R. 2156 recognizes the devastation of the flood and its impact on the residents of northern Los Angeles County by establishing a national memorial as well as a national monument to preserve the affected area for future generations. The bill authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the memorial via donation in consultation with the Santa Clarita City Council and the public. No taxpayer funds are authorized for the construction of the memorial.

The bill also authorizes the creation of a 440-acre monument that will encompass the St. Francis Dam memorial. The boundaries of the monument were designated in consultation with interest groups in the community. Motorized access will be allowed within the monument and grazing will continue to be allowed on any land where it is already permitted. An identical bill (H.R. 5244) passed the House of Representatives under suspension of the rules by voice vote on July 5, 2016.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 2156 was introduced on April 26, 2017, by Congressman Stephen Knight (R-CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands. On June 22, 2017, the Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee was discharged by unanimous consent. No amendments were offered, and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent on June 27, 2017.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act. With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) and (3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and sections 308(a) and 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

²Blitz, Matt. "On Occasions Like This, I Envy the Dead: The St. Francis Dam Disaster." *Smithsonian.com* 12 March 2015. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/occasions-i-envy-dead-st-francis-dam-disaster-180954543/?no-ist>.

JULY 6, 2017.

Hon. ROB BISHOP,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2156, the Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Jeff LaFave.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 2156—Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act

H.R. 2156 would establish a national monument on 440 acres of land administered by the Forest Service. The bill also would require the agency to submit recommendations to the Congress for a memorial to the victims of the Saint Francis Dam failure and to complete a management plan for the monument. CBO expects that the construction of the memorial or any other structures or improvements within the monument would be funded by donations.

Based on information provided by the Forest Service regarding the amount of staff time required to carry out the activities required under the bill, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost less than \$130,000 (the estimated cost of one year's salary and benefits for a mid- to senior-level employee of the Forest Service in Los Angeles County) over the 2018–2022 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. If in accordance with the recommendations provided to the Congress from the Forest Service any improvements were made within the monument, including constructing a visitor center, the cost of managing the monument could exceed \$130,000. However, CBO expects that any costs associated with those improvements would be incurred after 2022.

Enacting H.R. 2156 could affect direct spending by increasing donations, which are treated as reductions in direct spending, and the associated direct spending of those funds to construct a memorial; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. However, CBO estimates that any net effect on direct spending would be negligible. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2156 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 2156 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

2. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

COMPLIANCE WITH H. RES. 5

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111-139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95-220, as amended by Public Law 98-169) as relating to other programs.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.