

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act

December 29, 2025

To the House of Representatives of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 131, the Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act.

The Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) is a water pipeline currently being built to provide municipal and industrial water to communities in southeastern Colorado. It was originally authorized as part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project in a bill signed by President Kennedy in 1962. For decades it was unbuilt, largely because the AVC was economically unviable. Under the original plan, the costs of the project were to be initially funded by the Federal Government, but repaid by local users, with interest, over a 50-year period following completion of construction. But participants were unable to comply with that repayment obligation.

In 2009, President Obama signed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, which not only reduced the repayment obligation from 100 percent to 35 percent but also provided that miscellaneous revenues from the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project at large would count towards the AVC cost share. Even then, however, construction did not begin until 14 years later, after the State of Colorado authorized \$100 million in loans and grants for the project.

The current bill would now have the Federal Government extend the repayment period (on the already-reduced repayment requirement) for an additional 25 years, creating a 75-year repayment period. The bill would also cut the interest rate in half.

More than \$249 million has already been spent on the AVC, and total costs are estimated to be \$1.3 billion. H.R. 131 would continue the failed policies of the past by forcing Federal taxpayers to bear even more of the massive costs of a local water project—a local water project that, as initially conceived, was supposed to be paid for by the localities using it.

Enough is enough. My Administration is committed to preventing American taxpayers from funding expensive and unreliable policies. Ending the massive cost of taxpayer handouts and restoring fiscal sanity is vital to economic growth and the fiscal health of the Nation.

For these reasons, I cannot support the Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act. Therefore, it is my duty to return H.R. 131 to the House of Representatives without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP

The White House,
December 29, 2025.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : Arkansas Valley Conduit Act, veto message.

Names: Obama, Barack.

Subjects: Arkansas Valley Conduit Act; Colorado, Arkansas Valley Conduit water pipeline construction project.

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