FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION LICENSES AFFECTING COLORADO RIVER

MARCH 1, 1927.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

Mr. Lea of California, from the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. J. Res. 4]

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. J. Res. 4) to suspend until February 1, 1928, the jurisdiction, power, and authority of the Federal Power Commission to issue licenses on the Colorado River and its tributaries under the Federal water power act, approved June 10, 1920, having considered the same, report thereon with amendments and as so amended recommend that it pass.

Amend the bill as follows:

Strike out all before and after the enacting clause.

After the enacting clause insert the following:

That the Federal Power Commission is hereby directed not to issue or approve any permits or licenses under the provisions of the act of Congress approved June 10, 1920, known as the Federal water power act, upon or affecting the Colorado River or any of its tributaries, in the States of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, and California, until and unless the Colorado River compact, signed at Santa Fe, New Mexico, November 24, 1922, pursuant to act of Congress approved August 19, 1921, has been approved by the Congress of the United States, or in the event that said compact is not sooner approved, until March 5, 1929.

Amend the title so as to read: "Joint resolution restricting the Federal Power Commission from issuing or approving any permits or licenses affecting the Colorado River or any of its tributaries."

This bill with the amendments proposed, represents the agreed desire of all the representatives of the seven States in the Colorado River Basin.

The Colorado River is the one great stream in the arid section of America. Its basin covers a great area where vital interests of the people of seven States are affected. There is a public interest in the interstate and international allocation and use of its waters and
power developments. A vast population seeks its waters for domestic uses. Large areas are ultimately dependent upon its waters for their development. Its storm waters present a flood menace such as is known in no other place on earth.

The primary legislation concerning these problems seeks to adjust the conflicting rights of the many interests concerned from a public standpoint. This legislation is so far incomplete. It is our hope and expectation that the fundamental legislation covering the control and utilization of the Colorado River will be accomplished at the next session of Congress.

In the meantime it is of great importance that private rights to the water supply, as well as its allocation and use, shall not be established that might later make more difficult or defeat the purpose to solve these problems from the standpoint of public necessity and welfare.

The object of this proposed legislation is to preserve the existing status of the river until the end of the next Congress, or until the interested States have reached an agreement approved by Congress.