

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 716

To amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make grants to nonprofit organizations to finance the construction, refurbishing, and servicing of individually-owned household water well systems in rural areas for individuals with low or moderate incomes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 5, 2001

Mr. SANTORUM introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make grants to nonprofit organizations to finance the construction, refurbishing, and servicing of individually-owned household water well systems in rural areas for individuals with low or moderate incomes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Affordable Drinking
5 Water Act of 2001”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) affordable access to safe, reliable drinking
4 water is in the public interest;

5 (2) approximately 10,000,000 households in the
6 United States receive drinking water from household
7 water well systems;

8 (3) according to a national survey, more than
9 80 percent of those well owners express a preference
10 for water from their household water well system
11 over water from a community drinking water system
12 or bottled water;

13 (4) many consumers and farms in the United
14 States receive drinking water from older household
15 water well systems that are not constructed to cur-
16 rent standards;

17 (5) those systems should be upgraded to ensure
18 consumer and farm access to the safest and most re-
19 liable sources of drinking water;

20 (6) the Department of Agriculture, including
21 the Rural Utilities Service, has no program focused
22 on funding the construction, refurbishment, or serv-
23 icing of individually-owned household water well sys-
24 tems; and

1 (7) centralized water systems are not always
 2 the most cost-efficient way to deliver safe, reliable
 3 drinking water to rural customers.

4 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO FI-**
 5 **NANCE THE CONSTRUCTION, REFURBISHING,**
 6 **AND SERVICING OF INDIVIDUALLY-OWNED**
 7 **HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEMS IN**
 8 **RURAL AREAS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW**
 9 **OR MODERATE INCOMES.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of the Consolidated
 11 Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq.)
 12 is amended by inserting after section 306D (7 U.S.C.
 13 1926d) the following:

14 **“SEC. 306E. GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO FI-**
 15 **NANCE THE CONSTRUCTION, REFURBISHING,**
 16 **AND SERVICING OF INDIVIDUALLY-OWNED**
 17 **HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEMS IN**
 18 **RURAL AREAS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW**
 19 **OR MODERATE INCOMES.**

20 “(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—In this
 21 section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means an individual
 22 who is a member of a household, the combined income of
 23 whose members for the most recent 12-month period for
 24 which the information is available, is not more than 100
 25 percent of the median nonmetropolitan household income

1 for the State or territory in which the individual resides,
 2 according to the most recent decennial census of the
 3 United States.

4 “(b) GRANTS.—The Secretary may make grants to
 5 private nonprofit organizations for the purpose of assist-
 6 ing eligible individuals in obtaining financing for the con-
 7 struction, refurbishing, and servicing of individual house-
 8 hold water well systems in rural areas that are owned (or
 9 to be owned) by the eligible individuals.

10 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant made under this sec-
 11 tion may be—

12 “(1) used, or invested to provide income to be
 13 used, to carry out subsection (b); and

14 “(2) used to pay administrative expenses associ-
 15 ated with providing the assistance described in sub-
 16 section (b).

17 “(d) PRIORITY IN AWARDING GRANTS.—In awarding
 18 grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority
 19 to an applicant that has substantial expertise and experi-
 20 ence in promoting the safe and productive use of individ-
 21 ually-owned household water well systems and ground
 22 water.”.

23 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
 24 this section takes effect on October 1, 2001.

○