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119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3725

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water to expand the capacity and reach of the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System, Inc. (doing business as ''Lewis & Clark Regional Water System''), in the States of Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 29, 2026

Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

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A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water to expand the capacity and reach of the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System, Inc. (doing business as ''Lewis & Clark Regional Water System''), in the States of Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Lewis & Clark Regional Water System Expansion Feasibility Study Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) NON-FEDERAL PROJECT ENTITY.—The term ''non-Federal project entity'' means—

(A) the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System, Inc. (doing business as ''Lewis & Clark Regional Water System''); and

(B) any nonprofit successor entity to the corporation described in subparagraph (A).

(2) PROPOSED RURAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECT.—The term ''proposed rural water supply project'' means the proposed project to supply municipal, rural, and industrial water to expand the capacity and reach of the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System in the States of Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. LEWIS & CLARK REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordination with the non-Federal project entity, shall carry

out a study to determine the feasibility of the proposed rural water supply project.

(2) FEASIBILITY REPORT.—After completion of the feasibility study for the proposed rural water supply project under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) develop a feasibility report that includes a recommendation of the Secretary on—

(i) whether the proposed rural water supply project should be authorized for construction; and

(ii) the appropriate non-Federal share of construction costs, which shall be—

(I) at least 25 percent of the total construction costs; and

(II) determined based on an analysis of the financial capability-to-pay the allocated construction and operations, maintenance, and replacement costs of the recommended plan;

(B) submit the report under subparagraph (A) to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(C) make the report under subparagraph (A) publicly available, along with associated feasibility study documents.

(3) CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION.—In addition to the non-Federal project entity, the Secretary shall consult and cooperate with appropriate Federal, State, Tribal, regional, and local authorities during the conduct of the feasibility study and development of the feasibility report under this subsection.

(b) COST-SHARING AGREEMENT FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY COSTS.—The Secretary shall enter into a cost-sharing agreement (or an appropriate financial assistance agreement, as determined by the Secretary) with the non-Federal project entity to conduct a study under subsection (a) that complies with the reclamation feasibility standards.

(c) FEDERAL SHARE OF FEASIBILITY STUDY COSTS.—The Federal share of the total costs of carrying out the feasibility study under subsection (a) shall not exceed 50 percent.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $10,000,000.

(e) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority provided by this section expires on the date that is 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

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