AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT FOR
H.R. 2898
OFFERED BY MS. LORETTA SANCHEZ OF
CALIFORNIA

Page 92, after line 19, insert the following:

SEC. ___. WESTERN DROUGHT RELIEF STRATEGIC TASK FORCE.

(a) Establishment.—

(1) In general.—There is established an independent task force, which shall be known as the Western Drought Relief Strategic Task Force (Task Force).

(2) Duties.—The Task Force shall—

(A) review the impact of the California and southwest drought on the United States economy, agriculture, food prices, employment, energy, and other related factors;

(B) review climate predictions of authoritative sources regarding the likely length and severity of the drought, including but not limited to research at institutions of higher learning and other related sources;
(C) evaluate how current policies, strategies, state of emergency and other related programs by State and Federal agencies are mitigating the impact of the drought;

(D) investigate current innovative water use efficiency projects throughout the State that are effectively improving water supply and access, such as groundwater systems, desalination plants, rainwater capture systems, reclamation and reuse programs;

(E) evaluate the costs and investments required to implement and expand the projects investigated in subparagraph (D);

(F) evaluate the impact of the drought on vulnerable populations including the impact of public health on agricultural based communities, vulnerable populations, including children and seniors; and

(G) evaluate and make recommendations on how to alleviate said impacts reviewed in subparagraph (A) and construct a national, coordinated policy to prepare for and respond to the urgency needed in dealing with the drought; including short-term immediate solutions and
long-term solutions to State water infrastructure, and for other purposes.

(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce (Secretaries) shall appoint members to the Task Force and shall be comprised of individuals from Federal, State, and local agencies as well as community stakeholders and institutions of higher learning with expertise in water regulation, conservation, agriculture, and environmental infrastructure.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after its first meeting, the Task Force shall submit to the Secretaries and the appropriate congressional committees a final report containing—

(A) findings with respect to the duties of the Task Force; and

(B) recommendations for best practices on water regulation, conservation, environmental infrastructure, agriculture, and other related strategies and policies, including a recommendation as to whether the Task Force should continue to operate.