

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 15, 2005

Dear Participants in the Energy-Water Needs-Assessment Workshop:

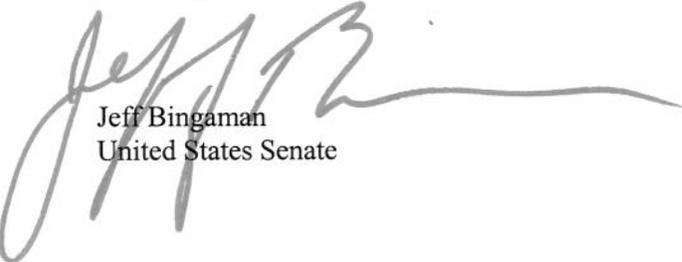
As each of you are undoubtedly aware, Congress has spent a great deal of time over the last year working to address the important energy issues facing the country. Water issues, especially in certain regions, are of equal importance even though they are less visible on a national basis.

There is a substantial overlap between energy and water issues. Energy production activities can significantly impact the overall availability of water as well as its quality. Similarly, the ability to treat and transport water in an affordable manner is greatly impacted by the cost and availability of energy. Simply put, there is a strong national interest in promoting increased efficiency and lower costs in using energy to produce water and water to produce energy. The interdependent relationship between water and energy affects an ever-increasing range of interests including the economy, the environment, and even national security.

Addressing the energy-water nexus in a productive manner starts with an assessment of where we are now, where we need to go, and how and when we will get there. It requires technological advances and the cooperative efforts of all interested parties. Policy-makers, scientists, water managers, and water users must work together to develop new technologies, strategies and implementation plans that will result in meaningful progress and ultimately a more secure future with respect to our energy and water resources. To this end, I have co-sponsored a bill in the Senate (S. 1860) to facilitate research and development related to water supply technologies, particularly those with implications for the nation's energy sector. The bill was introduced by Senator Domenici and has strong bipartisan support. It is my hope that the Senate will act quickly to pass this legislation in early 2006.

Fortunately, the effort to effectively deal with the energy-water nexus has already begun as evidenced by the workshop you are now attending. By participating in these energy and water needs assessment workshops, each of you are helping to develop the best plan possible to guide progress in this area. I applaud your efforts and hope you have a productive workshop.

Sincerely,



Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate