

**Statement of Congressman Scott Tipton
On the Amendment
November 13, 2013
Before the House Committee on Natural Resources
Markup of H.R. 3189**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. The amendment I offer today to my legislation makes technical corrections and clarifies the scope of the bill. I want to thank my friend Paul Gosar for working with me on this amendment to ensure that all state recognized water uses are protected from the heavy handed federal takings prohibited by the Act. By defining water rights to include all water uses granted by state or federal courts, interstate water compacts, as well as all water rights recognized by state law, we can ensure that all water users are treated equally and fully sheltered from forced conditions that would cause them to give up a valuable property interest for which they paid good money and on which they rely for their operations.

The amendment further clarifies that the bill prohibits the federal government's use of the permitting, leasing, and other land management processes to take private property rights, without interfering with any existing authorities that the secretaries may have to condition permits, leases, and other land management mechanisms within individual states and regions. The authority of land managers to condition permits for various purposes is largely a matter of local court decisions, and varies greatly by region. My amendment simply retains the status quo for all different states and regions, while narrowly focusing on stopping the extortion of water rights by the federal government.

With these changes I think the bill achieves that goal, and I urge my colleagues' adoption of this amendment, and of the Water Rights Protection Act.