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## House passes bill to stop EPA water rule

Legislation<sup>[3]</sup>, Industry News<sup>[4]</sup>

The bill would require EPA to withdraw its proposed rule redefining which bodies of water are subject to regulation.

| May 14, 2015

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The House voted Tuesday to overturn the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's rule aimed at redefining which streams, ponds, wetlands and other waterways are under its jurisdiction.

Passage of the legislation fell largely along party lines by a vote of 261-155. However, 24 Democrats voted for the legislation, H.R. 1732, also known as the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act. Passage of H.R. 1732 would require the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw the proposed Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule within 30 days and craft a new one in consultation with state and local governments and other affected stakeholders. Similar legislation could be introduced in the Senate soon.

The latest version of the WOTUS rule, or Clean Water Act (CWA) rule as EPA is now calling it, is being reviewed by the White House Office of Management and Budget, the last step in the federal review process before a final rule can be published.

As written, the proposed rule would extend the Clean Water Act's regulatory and permitting authority to man-made lakes, golf course water hazards, ditches or areas that have flowing water during heavy storms. The definition in the proposed rule change is so wide that it includes almost any body of water. Read more about the proposal here<sup>[5]</sup>.

More than 900,000 comments were submitted into the Federal Register last year on the WOTUS/Clean Water Act. EPA is moving forward with the rule and submitted it April 6 to the White House Office of Management and Budget for final review. A final rule is expected to be published in June.

Congressman Tim Walberg (R-Michigan) was one of the 261 who voted to pass the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act.

"Federalizing all waters, including waters that are privately owned or under a state's jurisdiction, is an unprecedented power grab by the EPA," Walberg said in a statement. "This bipartisan legislation recognizes the rights of Michigan farmers, property owners, and local governments and takes a stand against federal overreach. We can have responsible policies to protect our nation's waters without a vast expansion of the federal government's power."

1. <http://www.nurserymag.com/>
2. <http://www.nurserymag.com/News>
3. <http://www.nurserymag.com/News/Category.aspx?id=77>
4. <http://www.nurserymag.com/News/Category.aspx?id=923>
5. <http://www.nurserymag.com/epa-proposes-changes-to-clean-water-act.aspx>