

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4144

To require the Director of the United States Geological Survey to map future groundwater rise and conduct a study on its potential impacts to infrastructure and public health, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2025

Mr. MULLIN (for himself and Mr. GARBARINO) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To require the Director of the United States Geological Survey to map future groundwater rise and conduct a study on its potential impacts to infrastructure and public health, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as “the Groundwater Rise and
5 Infrastructure Preparedness Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Sea level has risen 5 to 6 inches over the
2 last 30 years along the United States Coastline and
3 is expected to rise by an additional 8 to 15 inches
4 by 2050.

5 (2) The response of shallow, coastal ground-
6 water levels to sea level rise will vary across different
7 areas, complicating efforts by State, local, and Trib-
8 al policymakers to plan for the future.

9 (3) Groundwater rise presents multiple threats
10 to infrastructure and human health, such as in-
11 creased flooding and soil liquefaction risk, desta-
12 bilization of underground infrastructure and building
13 foundations, contamination of drinking water, dam-
14 age to sewage systems, and mobilization of under-
15 ground contamination, but there has not been a na-
16 tional assessment of these potential impacts.

17 **SEC. 3. GROUNDWATER RISE.**

18 (a) NATIONAL GROUNDWATER RISE FORECAST.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
20 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Di-
21 rector shall establish a program to carry out the fol-
22 lowing:

23 (A) Develop maps of groundwater rise for
24 all coastal areas in the continental United
25 States, building upon existing and prior coastal

1 groundwater mapping efforts, that depict future
2 groundwater rise with decadal projections
3 through 2100, and associated changes in flood-
4 ing risk and saltwater intrusion.

5 (B) Identify priority areas that are at in-
6 creased risk of flooding due to groundwater
7 rise.

8 (C) Make recommendations to Congress
9 regarding the resources and improved research
10 infrastructure that may be needed to develop
11 the following:

12 (i) More accurate projections of aver-
13 age future groundwater rise and saltwater
14 intrusion due to sea level change.

15 (ii) Extreme event projections that ac-
16 count for tides, seasonal rainfall, and
17 storms.

18 (2) WEBSITE.—The Director shall establish a
19 public website that displays the maps developed pur-
20 suant to paragraph (1), as well as other relevant in-
21 formation critical for use by community planners
22 and emergency managers.

23 (3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
24 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Direc-

1 tor \$5,000,000 for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 to
2 carry out this subsection.

3 (b) GROUNDWATER RISE IMPACT STUDY.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than six months
5 after the completion of the activities under sub-
6 section (a), the Director, in consultation with the
7 Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmos-
8 pheric Administration, the Administrator of the En-
9 vironmental Protection Agency, the Director of the
10 National Institute of Standards and Technology, and
11 heads of other Federal agencies with relevant exper-
12 tise, shall seek to enter into an agreement with the
13 National Academies to conduct a two-phase study on
14 the potential impacts of groundwater rise on infra-
15 structure and public health.

16 (2) ELEMENTS.—The study under subsection
17 (a) should, at a minimum—

18 (A) consider the results of the groundwater
19 rise forecast developed in accordance with sub-
20 section (a); and

21 (B) provide recommendations for actions
22 by the executive branch and Congress to miti-
23 gate the potential impacts of groundwater rise.

1 (3) PHASE I STUDY ON IMPACTS TO INFRA-
2 STRUCTURE.—The phase I study under paragraph
3 (1) should, at a minimum, consider the following:

4 (A) The potential exposure of infrastruc-
5 ture in shallow coastal areas to groundwater
6 rise, including roads, buildings, underground
7 utility lines, parking structures, sewers, water
8 distribution pipes, and storm drains, and the
9 costs associated with such.

10 (B) Changes in soil liquefaction risk dur-
11 ing earthquakes due to projected groundwater
12 rise.

13 (4) PHASE II STUDY ON IMPACTS TO PUBLIC
14 HEALTH.—The phase II study under paragraph (1)
15 should, at a minimum, consider the following:

16 (A) The potential of groundwater rise to
17 mobilize below-ground contamination and the
18 associated risks to human health.

19 (B) An evaluation of drinking water sup-
20 plies and agricultural areas that will be threat-
21 ened by groundwater rise and associated salt-
22 water intrusion.

23 (5) REPORT.—Not later than three years after
24 initiating the study under paragraph (1), the Direc-

1 tor shall submit to Congress a report summarizing
2 the findings of such study.

3 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
5 the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

6 (2) GROUNDWATER RISE.—The term “ground-
7 water rise” means the upward movement of the shal-
8 low, coastal water table due to short or long-term
9 fluctuations in sea level.

10 (3) NATIONAL ACADEMIES.—The term “Na-
11 tional Academies” means the National Academies of
12 Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

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