



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 10, 2008

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Rep. John Lewis Leads Hearing and Legislative Response to Drought

Tomorrow, the public may get some answers about the drought in the southeastern United States. Rep. John Lewis led a successful push by the Georgia delegation to hold a public hearing that addresses the conditions that led to the current drought and the factors that must be considered to resolve the problem. Testimony will be heard by the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee at **10 AM in the Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2167 on March 11.**

“We must think of this as an opportunity,” said Rep. Lewis, “to bring together important stakeholders and hear exactly what is going on and what needs to change to better manage such a precious resource.”

Since recent attempts by the Secretary of Interior Dick Kempthorne to reach consensus among the governors of Florida, Georgia, and Alabama have failed, this hearing will help shed light on some of the persistent challenges and conflicts that have made agreement difficult. Reps. John Lewis (D-GA), Allen Boyd. (R-FL) and Hank Johnson (D-GA) will testify, along with experts from the Florida seafood industry, the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey and others.

Often growth in the city of Atlanta is blamed for the cause of the drought, however, it is expected that Robert Hunter, Commissioner of the Atlanta Dept. of Watershed Management, will help clarify Atlanta’s role in the crisis and demonstrate that Atlanta has successfully implemented steps that cut down on water waste and recycle un-used resources. Many experts believe that new water management manuals which reflect contemporary challenges would be a major component of a remedy.

Rep. Lewis believes the people need an objective, scientific analysis, not hampered by politics, in order for experts to develop a modern, effective plan. He is drafting legislation which directs the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a comprehensive study of water management in the southeastern US which will be used to help find a reasonable, scientific solution to this crisis.

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