



Association of State Dam Safety Officials

ASDSO Supports Introduction of the PRECIP Act

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In a step toward acknowledging the need for updated meteorological data and implementing renewed national leadership in the study of climate science, Representative Mickie Sherrill (D-NJ) has introduced the PRECIP Act. This bill would modernize out-of-date precipitation data in the United States by providing NOAA with clear authorization and consistent funding to collect data and conduct studies. ASDSO supports the PRECIP Act and believes the updated standards will provide more consistency between the state dam regulatory programs across the nation to ensure the highest level of public safety.

“On behalf of the dam safety community, and speaking as a dam regulator, we are excited to support this renewed federal effort as described in the PRECIP Act and look forward to collaborating with NOAA and the NWS in development of 21st century products for a changing climate,” said Association of State Dam Safety Officials President Bill McCormick. “The products of this Act will allow us to collectively ensure a future where all dams are safe.”

National extreme rainfall (Probable Maximum Precipitation [PMP]) standards have long been used for regulation and design of high-hazard potential infrastructure, including dams and nuclear power facilities. Those standards are used to bring consistency between federal agencies, state agencies, and the private sector professional design community. Decades of storm event data (the basis for calculating the standards) have been recorded since the existing standards were published. These reports, however, have never been officially updated to include new methods, technologies, or decades of more recent storm data libraries and these outdated reports continue to be used by many. Numerous high-hazard potential dams across the nation are rated unsatisfactory and need spillway improvements. Consistent and standardized modern methodologies are now needed to ensure the highest level of public safety.