bill makes it the policy of the Congress "to provide for development of practicable means for large-scale production from saline water of low-cost water of a quality suitable for municipal, industrial, agricultural, or any other consumptive use or any other beneficial purpose, and for studies and research related thereto."

The saline water conversion program is the only Federal research and development program for providing practical means of converting saline waters into water suitable for beneficial uses. The proposed bill would continue this program, but in no way change the direction presently followed under existing law.

Our water supplies must be augmented to provide for the needs of a growing population and expanding economy. The means for increasing such supplies are limited. Precipitation management, use of available geothermal and ground water supplies, additional river and stream flow-management and desalination are the principal sources at this time.

The bill under consideration would have a limited immediate effect on the environment. The extension of the existing program will continue present operations of Office of Saline Water Test Facilities at the following five locations: San Diego, California; Roswell, New Mexico; Freeport, Texas; Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina; and Webster, South Dakota. These experimental facilities operate intermittently, have a negligible effect on the environment, and the effluents (hot brine and gas emissions) fully comply with all present State standards and the requirements of Executive Order 11507, Prevention, Control and Abatement of Air and Water Pollution at Federal Facilities.

The bill does not provide for the construction of new facilities, test beds and modules, and would require that the Secretary of the Interior recommend to the President and the Congress, not less than a year after passage, his recommendation as to the best opportunity for early construction of large-scale prototype desalting plants. Any of these activities may have significant environmental effects requiring statements in accordance with Section 102(2)(C) of the Environmental Quality Act of 1969. Such statements will be prepared when new projects are identified as to proposed location and data become available.

Environmental effects of existing Office of Saline Water Facilities are described as follows:

(*a*) *San Diego, Calif., test bed and facility*

Steam is purchased from the existing operating power plant of the San Diego Gas & Electric Company, adding nothing to emissions produced in that company's normal operations. Brine is discharged through San Diego Gas & Electric discharge facilities to the San Diego Bay and to Western Salt Company evaporation ponds. There is no adverse effect on water quality or discernible increase in thermal pollution over that created by San Diego Gas & Electric cooling water discharge.

(*b*) *Roswell, N. Mex., test bed and facility*

Brine is discharged into plastic lined ponds built by the City of Roswell on city owned property donated by the State of New Mexico. There is no adverse environmental effect. Natural gas is used as fuel; no adverse emissions result.

(*c*) *Freeport, Tex., test bed and facility*

Steam is purchased from the existing production facilities of the Dow Chemical Company. Brine is discharged through that company's facilities. There is no discernible increase in the thermal pollution over that from normal Dow Chemical operations.

(*d*) *Webster, S. Dak., test bed and facility*

Negligible gas emission. Brine effluent is discharged at ambient temperature into a local brackish lake. The facility effluent is of higher quality than the lake itself. The environmental effect is insignificant.

(*e*) *Wrightsville Beach, N.C., test facility*

A minimal amount of emissions, fully in compliance with North Carolina and Federal standards, is produced from this facility. Brine effluent is cooled in a pond before discharge into the Intercoastal Waterway with no adverse environmental effect.

4. Alternative to the proposed bill

None, other than termination of or continuation for a different period of the Saline Water Conversion program.