

T&I Member Day remarks from Rep. Scott Peters (CA-50)

Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

Thank you for hosting “Member Day” for your colleagues like me who have important priorities in front of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I’d like to highlight two issues that affect my district and the country as a whole:

1. Ocean Pollution Reduction Act II; and
2. issues of public transportation, density, and housing.

**First**, I introduced [H.R. 1720](#), the Ocean Pollution Reduction Act II, with the support of all members of the San Diego delegation, Reps. Levin, Jacobs, Vargas, and Issa. This bill will provide the City of San Diego with regulatory certainty as it continues to make significant progress, as well as major investments, in enhancing its water and wastewater systems.

The Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant (PLWTP) is located in San Diego, CA. It currently treats 175 million gallons of wastewater per day, serving 2.2 million residents and 12 water agencies in a 450-square-mile area. PLWTP’s ocean outfall is 4.5 miles and 300 feet deep and is one of the longest and deepest outfalls in the world. Since 2010, the PLWTP has met alternate discharge for total suspended solids (TSS) and biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) under a modified National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit approved by EPA as authorized by section 301(h) of the Clean Water Act and the Ocean Pollution Reduction Act of 1994 (OPRA). As part of its efforts to meet these alternate

standards, the City is making a long-term investment in the Pure Water Program, a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar program that will use proven water purification technology to provide one-third of San Diego's water supply by 2035. This is crucial to reducing reliance on the heavily drought-stricken, nearly depleted Colorado River.

The Ocean Pollution Reduction Act II replaces the complex and expensive secondary treatment permit application with a simpler process, so long as the City of San Diego meets stringent water recycling milestones. Under the bill, the City must demonstrate that its Pure Water Program can produce 83 million gallons a day of water by 2036, nearly one-half of the City's entire water supply. This legislation does not modify the Clean Water Act and maintains the protections of the Clean Water Act for wastewater treatment facilities across the country, while also adding additional requirements to discharge standards and enhanced environmental monitoring specifically for Point Loma.

This program and legislation are supported by a broad coalition of environmental, labor, business, and community leaders because it provides regulatory certainty while also securing an independent, drought-resilient supply of water.

The bill passed the House last Congress by suspension in June 2021, as well as in November 2020 in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. With your help, I look forward to getting this bill passed the House again and signed into law this Congress.

**Second**, I would like to stress the importance of investing in public transportation that prioritizes decongesting our roads, increases sustainability, and supports regional housing planning.

I urge the Committee to encourage more commuters to take public transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The Committee can promote smart growth by incentivizing local communities to change their zoning policies and tying these investments to federal transit dollars. The federal government can only support a limited number of projects. We must prioritize projects that will generate ridership that will demonstrably offer automobile alternatives and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

To this end, I encourage you to consider my bill, the Build More Housing Near Transit Act, which will help increase housing supply to keep rents affordable for families and grow ridership of transit lines.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to continuing to work with you on these and other issues.