

# ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR *for* CALIFORNIA

## *The National Dam Safety Program Reauthorization Act*

Sens. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) and Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.)

The “National Dam Safety Program Reauthorization Act” reauthorizes the National Dam Safety Program, which expired on September 30, 2023.

- The United States is home to nearly 92,000 dams, each of which serve critical functions, including flood control, water conservation, recreation, irrigation, and hydroelectricity generation.
- Dam safety has been underfunded at the federal, state, and local levels for many years. In its 2021 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure, the **American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation’s dams a “D” grade.**
- Of the nearly 92,000 dams, nearly 6,000 are considered non-federal high hazard potential dams, which are at high risk of failure with probable loss of human life if they were to fail. The **Association of State Dam Safety Officials has estimated that the total cost of rehabilitating these dams exceeds \$20 billion.**

The National Dam Safety Program was first authorized in 1996 and is the primary source of federal support for dam safety programs at the state level. Led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the program supports state programs with resources for training, staffing needs, emergency planning, and dam inspection and monitoring activities.

Specifically, this legislation would:

- Reauthorize the National Dam Safety Program through FY 2028.
- **Eliminate the 35% cost-sharing requirement for small disadvantaged communities** under the High Hazard Potential Rehabilitation Grant Program.
- Remove the requirement that states must provide an equal match for federal funding, which will assist smaller state programs and allow other federal funds to move into states more freely.