

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today joined his colleagues on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to examine the state of the nation's structurally deficient bridges.

Last month, in anticipation of the hearing, Mitchell [joined officials](#) from the Arizona Department of Transportation to [review the department's bridge inspection process](#)

“When it comes to structurally deficient bridges, Arizona is a relatively lucky state because a good deal of our infrastructure is new,” said Mitchell. “Still, we need to ensure that what we build is well maintained, especially in a growing state.”

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Arizona has a total of 7248 bridges, 161 of which are structurally deficient. There are no structurally deficient bridges in Arizona's fifth congressional district.

In addition to bridge safety, Mitchell has used his seat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to push for dam safety. Last Month, Mitchell and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passed H.R. 3224, the Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2007, which authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Administration to provide grants for the rehabilitation and repair of publicly-owned dams.

According to a 2006 Arizona Department of Water Resources study, Arizona has 16 “unsafe dams with potentially imminent risk of failure.” The state agency estimated that rehabilitating those dams would cost between \$97 million and \$242 million.

A large majority of Arizona's more than 500 dams, such as the Dreamy Draw Dam, are located around heavily populated areas. If these dams stop working or become damaged, Arizonans would be threatened by floods or dangerous disruptions of vital water resources.

H.R. 3224 is awaiting consideration by the full House.