

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the wake of yesterday's tragic Minnesota bridge collapse, U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today reminded Arizonans of the importance of infrastructure safety and took action to help ensure that Arizona's high-risk dams are rehabilitated.

"The tragic accident in Minnesota is an important reminder that properly maintaining our own state's infrastructure is incredibly important to public safety," Mitchell said.

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.

Mitchell has served as a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee since joining Congress in January.

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.

In its 2005 Report Card on America's Infrastructure, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation's dams a grade of "D" or "poor." [Source: [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) ]

According to the ASCE, Arizona has 91 "high hazard" dams whose failure would cause loss of life and significant property damage. Rehabilitating the state's most critical dams would cost an estimated \$64 million, the group says. [Source: [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) ]