



July 28, 2014

Letter to the following United States Congressional Delegation Members:

Re: Request for immediate Action and Support for Federal Drought Relief Legislation

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Kevin McCarthy
Congressman Jeff Denham
Congressman David Valadao
Congressman Devin Nunes
Congressman Jim Costa
Congressman Paul Cooke
Congressman John Campbell

Congressman Tom McClintock
Congressman Buck McKeon
Congressman Gary Miller
Congressman Ken Calvert
Congressman Dana Rohrabacher
Congressman Darrel Issa
Congressman Duncan Hunter
Congressman Doug LaMalfa
Congressman Ed Royce

Dear U.S. Senators and Members of the House of Representatives:

The Building Industry Association of Tulare/Kings Counties continues to remain very concerned about water reliability in the San Joaquin Valley and throughout California and supports the efforts of both the House and Senate to craft legislative proposals that can respond to our urgent and dire situation and develop comprehensive long term solutions.

The Valley's economy depends on healthy rural communities and cities that can provide safe and reliable water supplies to their residents. These residents fuel the economy in the Valley by contributing to the agricultural and nonagricultural workforce and beyond. The bills now in conference must address storage and short term relief in the immediate future, and long term solutions for more above ground storage infrastructure and less environmental restriction.

We thank each of you for the effort you have made to address the dire water situation facing the State of California. The Passage of S. 2198, the Emergency Drought Relief Act out of the senate and H>R> 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act out of the House of Representatives, are significant and commendable milestones. The efforts you have taken are greatly appreciated. We are, however, acutely aware of the need for you to promptly resolve the differences between these bills before any legislation will become law. We also know that we are in urgent need of change in law.

Therefore, we are asking each of you to work diligently and in good faith to bridge your differences. Failure will ensure that the current regulatory and policy regimes that were put in place to improve the health of the Delta and the Central Valley, but have actually done the opposite, will continue unchecked. As a result, more acreage will be fallowed further diminishing the ability to provide a safe and sustainable food supply and threatening our national security. In addition, the demands on food banks, existing high unemployment, the inability for families to pay utilities and stay in their homes, and the lack of job opportunity that already exists in disadvantaged communities will be exacerbated.

On July 10th this year a group of south of the Delta stakeholders and South Valley water leaders submitted a comment letter to you outlining five key points to achieving success on this important topic, and we whole heartedly support those five principles and support you in achieving a compromise on the Senate and House bills that will affect positive change in securing a reliable water supply.

A comprehensive solution should include the following provisions:

In the Short Term,

Immediate relief from the Endangered Species Act

Resume pumping at the Tracy pumps and operate the State Water Project and Central Valley Project with maximum discretion and flexibility

Cessation of restoration flows on the San Joaquin River until such time as the necessary improvements have been completed and surplus water exists beyond the need of communities and industry

In the Long Term,

Increase storage capacity within our existing reservoir systems

Construct new reservoirs throughout the entire state

Re-evaluate the current management's plans to allow improved operational flexibility of our water projects

Reform the Endangered Species Act

Revise the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement

Storage must be in the final resolution, **new storage** including the Temperance Flat site; **enhanced storage** including raising dams and expanding reservoirs where possible; and also **building new conveyance and storage infrastructure** statewide to capture rain and snow melts. We ask that as the conference committee takes up this discussion further, that it looks very closely at the provisions in the House bill sponsored by Congressmen Valadao, Nunes and McCarthy and seek to align the two bills as closely as possible.

In Tulare and Kings Counties the agriculture industry is the major employer and economic engine of our cities and communities. A large percentage of the disadvantaged and minority residents are directly impacted when agricultural jobs are lost. The agricultural industry's multiplier effect adds approximately \$3 additional dollars for every \$1 produced by agriculture, and the effect in our cities and communities is immense. The reverse effect will be devastating when the drought and water cut backs cripple the farms and ranches.

The Building Industry supports a bipartisan effort from the House and Senate to craft this comprehensive solution for immediate relief and long term solutions. We must attain a reliable water supply for all of California, and protect the number one industry in the state - agriculture. We respectfully ask for your collective help and influence to save our state from catastrophic losses.

Sincerely,



Robert Keenan
President//CEO

CC: Governor Jerry Brown
CDFA Secretary Karen Ross
Tulare County Board of Supervisors
Kings County Board of supervisors
BIA Tulare/Kings Counties Board of Directors