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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Committee approves Wolk water bond to address state's urgent water needs**

*Bond funds broadly supported projects for safe & reliable water supply, Delta restoration*

SACRAMENTO—The Senate's Natural Resources and Water Committee voted 6-0 today to approve a \$6.895 billion water bond by Senator Lois Wolk (D-Davis) to begin immediately meeting urgent water needs throughout California.

Senate Bill 848, also known as "The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality & Water Supply Act," would replace the \$11.14 billion water bond currently slated for the November 2014 state ballot. SB 848 is the first proposal to replace the existing bond to receive a committee vote.

"The existing water bond is too expensive, too controversial, and too weighed down with earmarks to garner voter support. SB 848 is a more sensible bond that focuses on effective, broadly supported solutions to our most critical water needs, while avoiding controversy and earmarks," Wolk said. "SB 848 also focuses on shovel-ready projects that will start producing results immediately. As the Legislature works to address our current drought and prepare the state for our changing climate we must invest in projects that can make a difference in the next 5 to 10 years."

SB 848 provides funding for broadly supported projects that will address statewide water needs, including water supply reliability throughout the state, water treatment for communities without safe drinking water, and the crisis in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The bill also includes incentives to help permanently reduce reliance on the state's most stressed watersheds, and directs funding to development of regional water supplies throughout the state that are resilient to climate change.

Among those speaking in support of the bill was Grant Davis, speaking as general manager of the Sonoma County Water Agency and on behalf of the Water Bond Coalition, which includes more than 40 counties, cities, water districts, special districts and nonprofit organizations from Ventura County to the Oregon Border.

"So often the debate about California's water policies and public funding gets focused on controversial projects that may or may not get funded at some point way down the road. These debates about tremendous new infrastructure projects are important, but we cannot let them interfere with what we can all agree is needed today," Davis said. "What is needed today, and what SB 848 provides, is significant new state investment in local water solutions investments that will help provide sustainable water management now and for many years to come in communities across the state."

SB 848's other supporters include the American Planning Association, California Association of Local Conservation Corps, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, Environmental Defense Fund, the Nature Conservancy, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, Sierra Club California, Solano County Board of Supervisors, Sonoma County Water Agency, and Yolo County Board of Supervisors.

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