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Telephone: (559) 799-0701

December 5, 2014

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senator
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer:

We, the undersigned California Latino Water Coalition members and elected officials from the Central Valley, are grateful for the highly supportive roles both of you have pursued over the past several months in search of broad, necessary solutions to California's water crisis. Thanks to each of you for your determined work, on behalf of the Senate, on this year's drought legislation as well as your support and vital assistance in the recent successful passage of the California water bond, Proposition 1. These are major steps in helping California improve its ability to manage and optimize a more reliable water supply for today and into the future.

However, there still remains a very serious Delta crisis, one that continues to create devastating hardships to many people in our valley. Most severe of these impacts are being experienced in rural communities where families have experienced escalating unemployment as a result of near total water supply shortages related to the Delta situation.

As a result, those who have lost their sources of income have found themselves unable to pay mortgages, rent and utility bills. Even the purchase of food has become desperately difficult. Many valley communities are all too familiar with the sad sight of hundreds of rural residents having to stand in food lines for hours.

Our children are being hit especially hard. Rural children have difficulty comprehending the deterioration of the economy and social structure that would typically be supporting their families. They are being uprooted from their schools and neighborhoods, and having to leave their friends, because their families are having to pull up stakes to move in search of jobs elsewhere. Truly, not addressing and fixing the Delta and its many water supply woes affects the poorest of the poor.

These are rural Californians whose livelihoods depend upon water supplies that are no longer being delivered. They are hurting, both economically and socially, in ways that many of those in urban California cannot understand. Their needs are real, and they are happening now. Waiting another year to take any kind of action to ease the water supply crisis that we are facing is not an acceptable solution. We just cannot afford to lose any precious water that may develop over these next few months. Something needs to happen quickly. We can afford to lose any precious rain

That “something” is currently the California Emergency Drought Relief Act, bipartisan legislation that was introduced a few days ago in the House by Congressman David Valadao and other valley Congressional delegation members. As you know, this bill, HR 5781, is an emergency measure aimed at taking short-term steps that ensure that at least some water deliveries can be made to project contractors in the valley over the coming months.

All of us encourage you to make this issue a priority in the final few days of the current session. Please work with your House colleagues to do everything possible to move a drought relief bill through Congress before adjournment.

We stand ready to help. Our Coalition feels a responsibility to not only offer encouragement but to assist you as a resource, one which is all too familiar with the hardships this water supply crisis has created. As a first step, we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with each of you as soon as possible. Please contact the Coalition’s Executive Director, Mario Santoyo, at (559) 799-0701. He will be glad to help make arrangements.

We’re counting on you and so are the thousands of valley people we represent who are directly feeling the pain created by this crisis.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

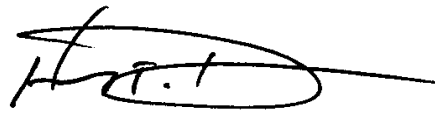
Sincerely,



Paul Rodriguez
Chair



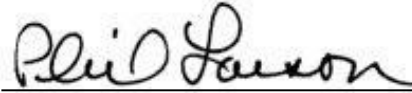
Rudy Salas
Assembly Member, State of California



Henry T Perea
Assembly Member, State of California



Richard Valle
Supervisor, County of Kings



Phil Larson
Supervisor, County of Fresno



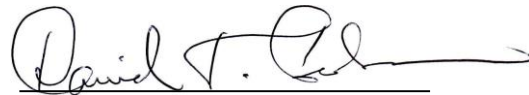
Henry Perea Sr
Supervisor, County of Fresno



Leticia Perez
Supervisor, County of Kern



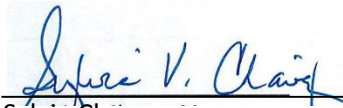
Amarpreet Dhaliwal
Mayor, City of San Joaquin



David Cardenas
Mayor, City of Fowler



Robert Silva
Mayor, City of Mendota



Sylvia Chavez
Mayor, City of Huron



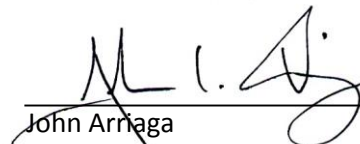
Armando Lopez
Mayor, City of Parlier



Victor Lopez
Mayor, City of Orange Cove



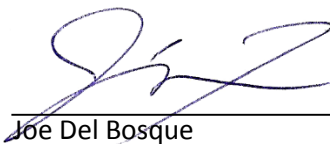
Jose Flores
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John Arriaga
Executive Director, League of Cities Latino Caucus



Margret Mims
Sheriff, County of Fresno



Joe Del Bosque
Member, California Water Commission Caucus