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Assembly California Legislature



HENRY T. PEREA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRTY-FIRST DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CHAIR: AGRICULTURE
BANKING AND FINANCE
ELECTIONS AND REDISTRICTING
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

February 25, 2015

California Water Commission
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

RE: California Water Commission (Commission) – Water Bond, Chapter 8 Funding

Dear Members:

In 2000, the CALFED Bay-Delta Program Record of Decision (CALFED ROD) identified five potential surface water projects for further site-specific studies, including additional new storage in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin, known as Temperance Flat, and the new off-stream storage north of the Delta, known as Sites Reservoir. Although the “Water Bond” has stringent requirements for its Chapter 8 public funding, both water storage projects identified continue to excel in each condition. Therefore, I must respectfully request the Commission to consider selecting Temperance Flat and Sites Reservoir for public funding under Chapter 8.

A project may only be funded by Chapter 8 if it “provides measurable improvements to the Delta ecosystem or to the Delta tributaries” and provides the public benefits determined in Chapter 8. The public benefits of the Water Bond are specifically identified to support the creation of large water storage projects that will provide “Statewide Water System Operational Improvements.” For example, a project cannot be funded unless it provides “ecosystem improvements, including changing the timing of water diversions, improvements in flow conditions, temperature, or other benefits that contribute to restoration of aquatic ecosystems and native fish and wildlife, including those ecosystems of fish and wildlife in the Delta.” Only Temperance Flat and Sites Reservoir can efficiently and effectively provide all the ecosystem improvements required by this public benefit.

The remaining public benefits as stated in Chapter 8 are more often associated with these types of large capacity projects. They include: (i) water quality improvements to the Delta and river systems that provide public trust resources or restore groundwater resources; (ii) flood control benefits, including increases in reservoir storage capacity in response to decreasing California

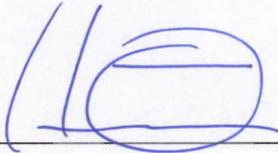
snowpack; (iii) emergency response, including securing emergency water supplies for salinity repulsion; and (iv) recreational purposes. Projects of this type, in contrast to local or regional storage projects, will provide all of these public benefits to the greatest extent. They will allow California to store more water in years of high rainfall, which will ease pressures placed on the Delta and groundwater supply during years of prolonged drought. With the increasing effects of climate change, Californians can no longer rely on a natural reservoir of snowpack. Increased above ground storage will allow the storage of snowmelt and timed releases of water to improve flow conditions and water temperatures.

Additional storage is also needed for the success of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) passed by the Legislature last session. SGMA is intended to bring the groundwater basins of California into a sustainable management system. Additional surface water is necessary to recharge and restore the groundwater basins of the state and to supplement the management process required by SGMA. Without a supply of surface water, communities will continue to be forced to tap into failing groundwater reserves thereby struggling to bring groundwater basins into balance. Due to SGMA's early beginning stages, the need for increased storage capacity is fundamental to supplement groundwater supplies in years of drought and clean currently contaminated groundwater basins.

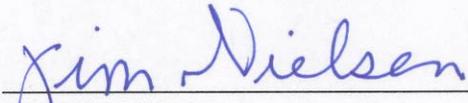
The goal of Chapter 8 of the Water Bond is to update California's aging water infrastructure, provide a reliable water supply for the public and our agricultural economy, and protect the Delta and the environmental health of California for years to come. The Legislature passed the Water Bond with bi-partisan support from throughout the state with a clear intent for Chapter 8 to provide funding for water storage projects, Temperance Flat and Sites Reservoir, so that they may provide the public benefits identified in Chapter 8 to the maximum extent. Furthermore, the voters resoundingly approved Proposition 1 with 67% support throughout the state. This unprecedented support for a water bond was based on the drought in California, bi-partisan support from every part of the state and a strong campaign by the Governor and many others that articulated the importance of "saving water for the future." If we are serious about saving water for the future, then these water storage projects are essential for California. Therefore, I must respectfully urge the Commission, in accordance with the intent of the Legislature, to select projects identified in the CALFED ROD for public funding under Chapter 8.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at (916) 319-2031.

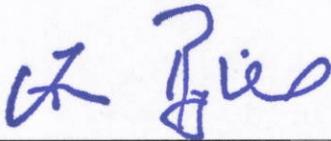
Sincerely,



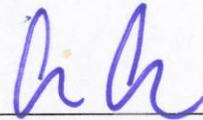
HENRY T. PEREA
Assemblymember, 31st District



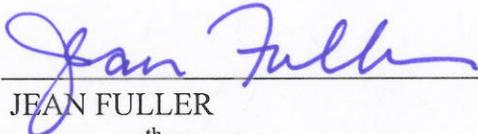
JIM NIELSEN
Senator, 4th District



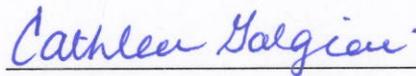
TOM BERRYHILL
Senator, 8th District



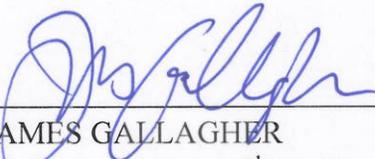
ANTHONY CANNELLA
Senator, 12th District



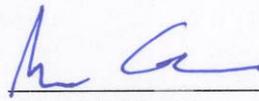
JEAN FULLER
Senator, 16th District



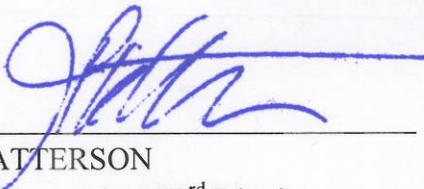
CATHLEEN GALGIANI
Senator, 5th District



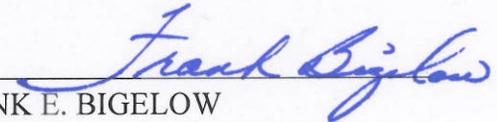
JAMES GALLAGHER
Assemblymember, 3rd District



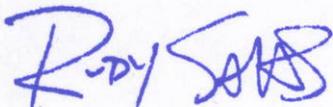
ADAM GRAY
Assemblymember, 21st District



JIM PATTERSON
Assemblymember, 23rd District



FRANK E. BIGELOW
Assemblymember, 5th District



RUDY SALAS
Assemblymember, 32nd District