

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

June 4, 2015

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
State Capitol Building, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Sacramento River Temperature Management Plan Suspension

Dear Governor Brown:

We write to express our concern regarding State Water Resources Control Board (“Water Board”) Executive Director Tom Howard’s decision to suspend the Sacramento River Temperature Management Plan (“Plan”), impacting water flows from Shasta Reservoir.

Previously, Mr. Howard approved the Plan, including water releases from Shasta reservoir from May through September, based on assurance from the Bureau of Reclamation (“Reclamation”) that the Plan would maintain water temperature at or below 56 degrees Fahrenheit at the Clear Creek temperature compliance point. In turn, farmers in the San Joaquin Valley and other regions of the state relied on Mr. Howard’s decision, planted crops and incurred production expenses with the expectation they would receive sufficient water for the season.

Apparently Mr. Howard suspended the Plan because of information received at a Water Board workshop regarding adequate water temperature safeguards in the Plan. Thereafter, the Water Board learned that temperature gauges were incorrectly calibrated by Reclamation, resulting in water temperature in Shasta Reservoir being warmer than expected, likely making it impossible for Reclamation to meet the temperature requirements of the Plan.

We are informed that suspension of the Plan will reduce water releases from storage in an attempt to reduce water temperature required for the chinook salmon. However, there is no evidence that such action will have the intended effect on water temperature. The only certainty is that farmers will receive less water than was to be provided and crops will be lost.

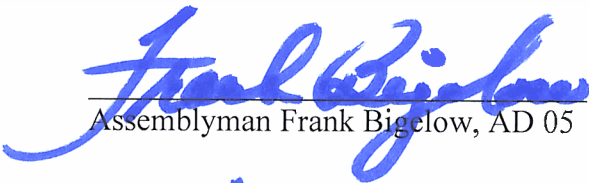
As you are aware, the drought has had a catastrophic impact on agriculture. A study conducted prior to the suspension by several UC Davis professors entitled *Preliminary Analysis: 2015 Drought Economic Impact Study* estimates the following:

- Farmers will have 2.7 million acre-feet less surface water than they would in a normal water year — about a 33% loss of water supply, on average.
- Roughly 560,000 acres or 6%-7% of California’s average annual irrigated cropland will be fallowed.

- The drought will cause direct costs of \$1.8 billion — about 4% of California's \$45 billion agricultural economy.
- The spillover effect of agriculture on the state's other economic sectors will account for a total cost on California's economy of \$2.7 billion and the loss of about 18,600 full and part-time jobs.

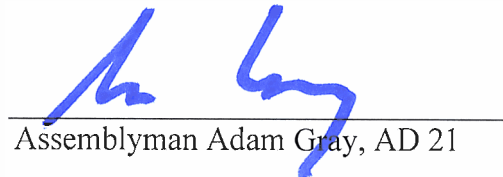
The magnitude of damage that will result from the foregoing is difficult to measure, but will likely be significant. We therefore request an immediate meeting with you so we can collectively develop solution oriented strategies.

Sincerely,



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Assemblyman Frank Bigelow, AD 05




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Assemblyman Adam Gray, AD 21



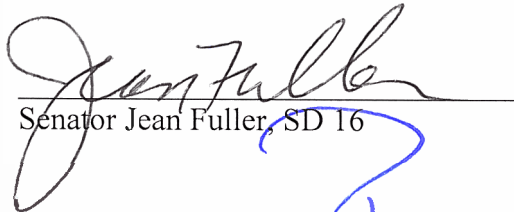
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Assemblyman Henry Perea, AD 31



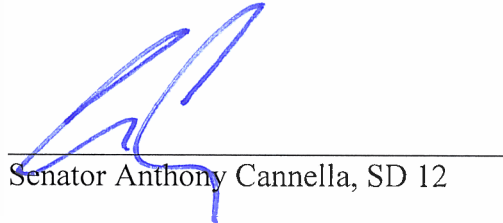
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Assemblyman Rudy Salas, AD 21




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Senator Jean Fuller, SD 16



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Senator Anthony Cannella, SD 12



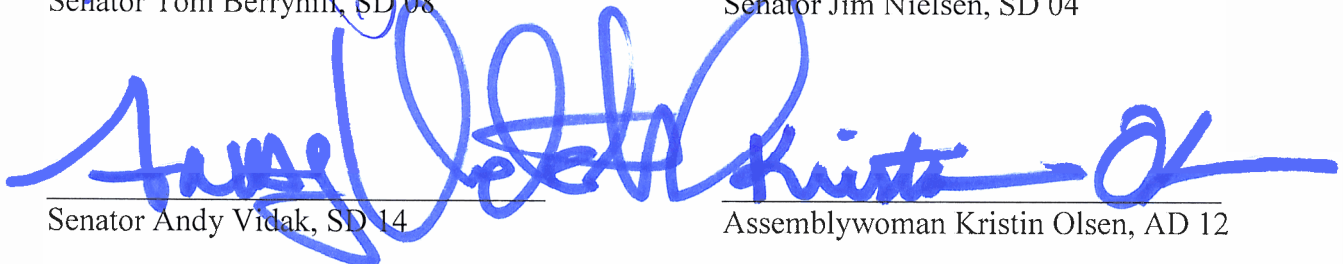
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Senator Tom Berryhill, SD 08



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Senator Jim Nielsen, SD 04



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Senator Andy Vidak, SD 14



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Assemblywoman Kristin Olsen, AD 12



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Assemblyman James Gallagher, AD 03