



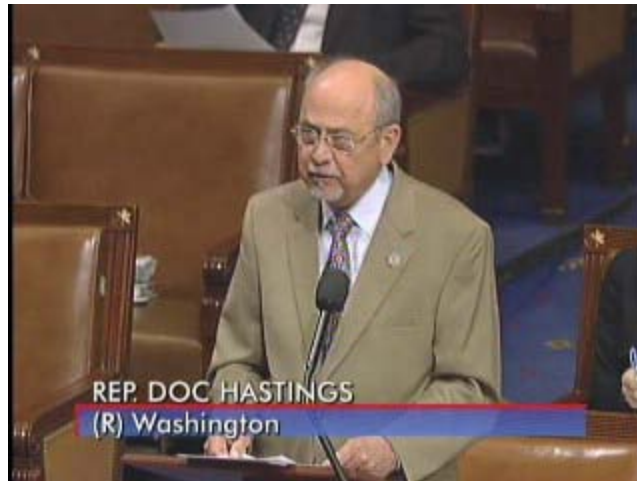
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Chairman Hastings' Floor Statement on Legislation to End Man-Made Droughts in California

"This bill is a chance to right the regulatory wrongs of the past, end future man-made droughts and protect the jobs and economic livelihoods of farm families and workers."

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings delivered the following statement on the House floor today in support of H.R. 1837, *the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act*. The bill would restore water supplies, provide job certainty to farmers and communities in California's San Joaquin Valley and decrease reliance on foreign food sources.



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"Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 1837, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act.

Like California, my Central Washington district is heavily dependent on irrigated water to support our agricultural industry. I understand the importance of having a stable, reliable water supply. I've also witnessed how government regulations and environmental lawsuits can create conflicts where people and jobs are the losers. However, I've never seen anything like the economic devastation that California's San Joaquin Valley has experienced as a direct result of federal policies that restrict water supplies and have caused a man-made drought.

In 2009, federal regulations to protect an endangered three-inch fish led to the deliberate diversion of over 300 billion gallons of water away from San Joaquin Valley farmers. This

caused hundreds of thousands of acres of fertile farmland to dry up, put thousands of people out of work and caused unemployment to reach 40 percent in some communities.

Last April, the Natural Resources Committee traveled to Fresno, CA for a field hearing where we heard directly from farm workers and valley growers who have been devastated and seen their livelihoods pushed to the brink due to this man-made drought. We heard stories of farm workers, who normally help feed the Nation, being forced to stand in food bank lines and receive handouts of carrots shipped from China.

Mother Nature temporarily rescued the region with historic precipitation last year, but another man-made drought is just around the corner if we do nothing. Rain and snow levels have declined and just last week the federal government announced that San Joaquin Valley farmers would only receive 30 percent of their initial water allocation for the year. This is unacceptable and if Congress doesn't act now we will once again see farm workers having to abandon the fields and return to the food lines.

Families and communities in California have waited far too long for Congress to act. In 2009 and 2010 while this man-made drought was devastating California, the Obama Administration and the Pelosi-led Congress did nothing. Republicans are ready to act today on bipartisan legislation that will end the man-made drought and protect up to 30,000 American jobs.

This comprehensive solution would restore water deliveries that have been cut-off due to federal regulations and environmental lawsuits, ensure a reliable water supply for people and fish, secure water rights, and save taxpayer money by ending unnecessary and dubious government projects.

I want to stress that this man-made drought does not just impact California, but has rippling effects across the entire Nation. California's San Joaquin Valley is a salad bowl for the world and provides a significant share of the fruits and vegetables for our country. The inability of these farmers to do their job leads to increased reliance on foreign food sources.

Also, according to an official analysis by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, this bill will repeal and reduce nearly \$300 million in federal spending over the next ten years, while also generating nearly \$250 million in revenue. To repeat, the bill cuts spending by nearly \$300 million and increases revenue to the tune of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars.

This bill is a chance to right the regulatory wrongs of the past, end future man-made droughts and protect the jobs and economic livelihoods of farm families and workers.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and reserve the balance of my time."

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