

**DOUG VERBOON
BIO**

As a lifelong resident of Hanford, I am dedicated to serving the needs of Kings County. I have been active in our community for many years. As a 16 year trustee of Pioneer Elementary School District, I was instrumental in helping the school become the first charter school district in California. Since 2005, I have owned and managed the only fully occupied commercial property in California. Having served as the Kings County District 3 supervisor for the past twelve years, I feel qualified and obligated to continue to work toward the goals of the current board and administration. I am dedicated to representing our County's residents at the local, state, and federal levels. During my tenure on the Board of Supervisors, I have been extremely active in the fight against the mismanaged high speed rail and protecting the rights to water for all valley residents. In 2013, I was named Agriculturalist of the Year by the Lemoore Chamber of Commerce in recognition of my contribution to the agricultural community. As a 4th generation farmer, I understand the unique needs of our county and will continue to make every effort to protect the rights of the citizens of Kings County.

DOUG VERBOON

Supervisor
District 3



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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Written Testimony

To the Members of the House of Representatives:

Current and continued drought conditions are adversely affecting Kings County and the local community in various ways. The agricultural industry generates \$2.2 billion in annual revenue in Kings County. Drought conditions have hindered crop production and exports of food and fiber grown in the county. As the drought continues, farmers are left with little to no water to continue or grow operations. As farms continue to show a decrease in production, and in some cases a complete exit of the industry due to lack of water, many jobs are lost. Some farmers even opt to fallow land due to water reductions and decreases in crop production. Fallow land generates zero tax revenue for local governments. As many witness job loss and as decreased crop production generates fewer revenue, County services are directly impacted. Decreased revenue for the County means fewer resources to support law enforcement, public safety, public health, homelessness, mental health, and human services. At a time when unemployment, homelessness, crime, and inflation are at soaring heights, localized County services are more critical than ever. Any adverse impact to revenue supporting local programs has devastating impacts to all county residents and businesses.

Outside of direct impacts to critical County services, the local economy is feeling the impacts of continued drought conditions as well. With the drought causing a decrease in food and fiber production, people are experiencing drastic increases in food prices along with inflation on other goods. With unemployment on the rise due to the shrinking of farm operations, the community's ability to support local business and local economies is hindered. With more people out of work due to reductions in agriculture production caused by the drought, there is less money feeding the local economy as a result of the population's inability to support local economies increases. As some even migrate out of the area due to job loss, other tax revenue such as sales, income, and property tax that support local programs will continue to decrease and negatively impact the everyday lives of everyone in the county.

The Sustainable Groundwater Mitigation Act (SGMA) is generally a good idea and something that is needed to help the state's water problem. However, more time is needed to refine SGMA's limitations, protections, and goals to ensure that it does not hinder agribusiness and local communities more than it benefits them. One large issue regarding SGMA is the fact that many of those who have and continue to pump groundwater and sell it out of the county are the same individuals running the Groundwater Sustainability Authorities (GSA), who are in charge of implementing SGMA. Those that continue to pump and sell groundwater will continue to do so as they work around SGMA through the GSAs. There needs to be some sort of government protections within SGMA that protects local farmers and communities from groundwater continuing to be pumped and sold out of the county strictly for financial gain. Water has become too marketable, valuable, and monetized to where it pays more to sell the water outside of the area than it does to use it to farm ground and support local economies at home. The greed around water has to be addressed immediately.

Going forward, there are several things that can be done to help improve drought conditions and ongoing water concerns for the Valley's starving communities, one of which is water storage. There has to be significant investments made into water storage facilities that can be capitalized upon during wet years while shortening up the negative impacts during dry years. There has to be a method to capture and store enough water to support food and fiber production as well as support growing residential communities and businesses in the Valley. Additionally, if the environmentalists are correct in their assessment that global warming is real and that it is directly causing the polar ice caps to decrease and ocean levels to rise, water processing and treatment plants need to be constructed in coastal regions to help maintain sustainable ocean levels where ocean water can be treated for suitable and safe agriculture and residential use. If water can be treated and sent into the ocean, there should be a way to treat ocean water and

send it to the state's starving communities.

The ongoing drought, the lack of water storage infrastructure, the absence of protection for local farmers and communities to stop the pumping and sale of groundwater, and the inability to receive sufficient water flows due to ecological impacts at the Delta are crippling Kings County and other like communities. As agriculture continues to bare full responsibility for the current water issues facing everyone in the state, more and more farming operations will continue to shrink to the point of extinction. As more farms in Kings County leave the state due to insufficient resources and crippling regulations, rural and local communities in the county will continue to be adversely impacted. Unfortunately, many of these rural agricultural communities being affected are majority minority communities. As farmers sell ranches and move out of the state, field workers, migrants, and the county's most vulnerable local communities will be left to deal with the repercussions. If agriculture continues to decrease and leave Kings County, it will be decades before the county's, and the nation's, most robust agriculture infrastructure comes back, if it ever does. Kings County needs immediate action in order to address these devastating realities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Verboon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Verboon
Supervisor District 3