



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

January 23, 2017

The Honorable David G. Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
1728 Longworth Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Valadao,

California's Central Valley, which provides the majority of fruits and vegetables for the country, has been suffering from a drought, which has been made worse by federal regulations. As a result, over 300 billion gallons of water have been diverted away from the region in an effort to protect the Delta Smelt. Today, citizens and farmers in the Central Valley are receiving less water, if any at all, than they previously contracted for and purchased. The water system that established California as a beacon of ingenuity has been pushed to the wayside for a bait fish and has had devastating consequences for farmers, as they now fallow thousands of acres of farmland. In addition, many communities in the Central Valley have run completely dry, and have resorted to relying solely on trucks to deliver potable water to residents.

Often these are the very communities which have the highest unemployment rates and are plagued with crime. Water is not the only component to this problem, but we owe our residents access to nutritious food and water, especially our children. A sustainable and safe community is more likely to offer a child an opportunity to grow up free of violence, pollution, and poverty.

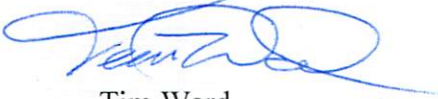
For years, you have fought to bring water back to the valley; this year is no different. We support your introduction of H.R. 23, the Gaining Responsibility On Water (GROW) Act of 2017. This legislation would ensure reliable water deliveries for our valley, secure private property and senior water rights, and save millions of dollars by ending wasteful protectionist plans. To ensure water reliability in the future, the bill obligates the federal government to complete feasibility studies for multiple water storage projects in California and increases the scope of investigation for dam safety throughout the West, including expansion.

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Now is the time to enact long term, meaningful solutions to California's water supply issues and we are hopeful this legislation is the next step in addressing the challenges we face. We look forward to working with you on advancing H.R. 23, the GROW Act, this Congress.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Tim Ward
District Attorney

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