

# Merced County Farm Bureau



January 30, 2017

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

Dear Representative Valadao,

California has long struggled with water problems and one needs to look no further than to the experiences and lack of water allocations to the Central Valley than over the last few years. This has caused a wide range of situations with many farms laying ground fallow, or ultimately and unfortunately, leaving the farming community and California agriculture. On behalf of the Merced County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and our membership of over 1,200 farming, ranching and dairy families, we support H.R. 23, the Guiding Responsibility on Water (GROW) Act.

Central Valley farms, businesses, and residents need water infrastructure and reliability now. The Grow Act provides working principles enabling families to continue working and residing here through the building of new storage reservoirs and structural improvements to those built years ago. Our growers rely on water rights to produce the foods that feed the world and this bill provides the security for these rights.

Agriculturalists are the true stewards of land and water, but have continually been hampered by regulatory guidelines set forth through the Endangered Species Act. While we understand the need to ensure the continuation of a species, we cannot stand by and allow more water to flow past some of the most disadvantaged communities, as has been the case for far too long. Consideration of other methods, such as removal of non-native predator species to protect those that are in danger, is in dire need.

Our valley economy rests on a safe and consistent water supply and action has never been more evident than now. We unwaveringly support the introduction of H.R. 23 and thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Scoto'.

Joe Scoto  
President