

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 16, 2012

The Honorable Doc Hastings  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Edward J. Markey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Committee on Natural Resources  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water and  
Power  
Committee on Natural Resources  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hastings, Ranking Member Markey, Chairman McClintock, and Ranking Member Napolitano:

We are writing today to express our strong opposition to Representative Nunes's so-called Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act (H.R. 1837). As Northern Californians, we believe this legislation fundamentally runs counter to our established economic and environmental policies. These broadly supported policies were established to protect natural resources, promote conservation efforts, and foster economic development within the San Joaquin Valley region. This bill would repeal environmental protections and lead to catastrophic impacts to our valuable coastal resources, damage local businesses and tourism that rely on these resources, and could harm local farmers.

This bill grossly dismisses the best available science and further jeopardizes iconic salmon and steelhead that are the focal point of many California State regulations. We have seen what happens when science is ignored for the sake of politics – this became devastatingly clear during a Northern California salmon fish kill in 2002 and fishery disaster in 2006 that were a result of too little water being delivered to critical habitat. These disasters diminished a valued natural resource and harmed associated economies. H.R. 1837 sets the stage for a similar disaster in the Bay-Delta by reverting environmental protections back to 1994 levels, undermining the Endangered Species Act, and – equally important – countering the desires of community members, elected officials, and current State policies.

Aside from gutting environmental protections, H.R. 1837 does the exact opposite of what it claims: it kills local jobs. The diversion of water south of the Delta takes it from northern farmers who rely on this supply for successful harvests and livelihoods. Economic losses to the farming industry are added to those due to a decline in tourism and local business following the decline in the natural resources that support them.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act is nothing more than an attempt by powerful water districts south of the Sacramento River Delta to abscond with water from the north. This was highlighted in the two hearings on the bill, during which the majority of the witnesses' testimony indicated that it was seriously flawed. And yet, the Committee is voting on it with no further hearings, discussion, or collaboration.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge your reconsideration of H.R. 1837.

Sincerely,



MIKE THOMPSON

Member of Congress



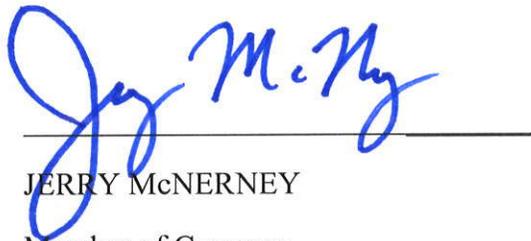
GEORGE MILLER

Member of Congress



DORIS MATSUI

Member of Congress



JERRY McNERNEY

Member of Congress



JOHN GARAMENDI

Member of Congress