

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2023

Ms. Eileen Sobeck
Executive Director State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Sobeck,

Perhaps surpassed in importance only by the air we breathe, the availability of sufficient water supplies to meet the needs of our citizens is the foundation of a stable society. The effects of climate change are having a profound impact locally and globally on the how we live. As an example, the last 10 years clearly demonstrated the threat climate change poses to the durability and reliability of our interconnected water storage and conveyance system. In that time California experienced six of the ten driest years in its recorded history, yet also two of its wettest years.

These impacts are felt across all our sources of water, from the Colorado River to the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds. These rapid changes in hydrology demand new management strategies that are responsive to the new realities our citizens are experiencing, including prolonged extreme periods of drought and historical flooding events. The world is changing, and we must adapt our historical approaches to many things - including water management - that we have taken for granted in order to create a stable future for all Californians.

We must do several things to adapt effectively to a changing climate, but two stand most prominent; 1) we must address its root causes, and 2) we must modify how we live to create new stability that is grounded in the availability of our most vital resources. That's why we are working with Governor Newsom and our local water agencies on interim and long-term solutions to adapt California's water system to meet current demands while building a more resilient water system for our shared future.

To that end, we write to thank you for approving the Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) requested by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). Among other benefits, this action is critical for bolstering drinking water supply reliability for our cities and the people we serve.

The TUCP will now allow the operators of California's critical water systems to temporarily protect the storage and delivery of water through March. This action will help to offset the state-wide drought effects experienced by our citizens, rural and urban alike, during the last three years. The action you took to approve this TUCP is critical for the following reasons:

1. California is still experiencing the effects of the multi-year drought. The temporary, two-month modification allows the Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of

Reclamation to mitigate for the impact of drought on California's communities, business, and the environment. Importantly, had this action not been taken, water preserved from the December and January storms would be lost if the dry conditions in February persisted – some estimates indicate that we would lose more water than is currently in Folsom Reservoir. This temporary change will pay long-term benefits for flows needed later this year to support our citizens and our environment.

2. The two-month change approved by the Water Board provides two-months relief from a single regulation, leaving all others in place that protect the environment, while saving enough water to meet clean drinking water and other municipal needs of more than 6.1 million people for a year. The Governor's recent Executive Order along the TUCP approval is intended to provide additional resilience later in the year by conserving upstream water for cold water pools for salmon and steelhead, enhancing instream conditions for fish and wildlife, improving water quality, protecting carryover storage, ensuring minimum health and safety water supplies, or providing opportunities to maintain or expand water supplies both north and south of the Delta.
3. Importantly, both the Department of Water Resources and the Bureau of Reclamation conducted a biological review and concluded that the approved changes would not result in unreasonable impacts to fish and wildlife. California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff reviewed the change request and associated biological review and agreed with the agencies' assessment.

We must adapt to our new reality and the Governor's Executive Order and the TUCP are one manifestation of this adaptive management approach. We thank you for taking proactive steps to increase drought resilience and commit to continue our collective efforts to building a more adaptive, responsive, and resilient water future for all Californians.

Sincerely,

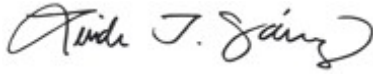


Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress