

The Issue:

Californians Continue To Suffer From A Man-Made Drought. While over the past three years our state has experienced incredibly low rainfall, there are a number of redundant and scientifically unfounded regulations that severely reduce the amount of water delivered to the farmers and ranchers that feed America.

- Even in a year with high rainfall, government overregulation is still limiting water to our farmers. This year, the Sierra Snowpack peaked at 165 percent of average, but some farmers are only receiving 80 percent of their contracted water supplies. In fact, because of scientifically unfounded regulations, our farmers are getting a full 10 percent less water this year than they otherwise would, according to Kern County Water Agency (KCWA) General Manager Jim Beck.

A Reliable Water Supply Is Vital To Our Local, State And National Economies. During the past three years of drought, unemployment rates in the Central Valley skyrocketed and farmers were forced to fallow thousands of acres of fertile land. This not only hurts our local economies, but as the nation's largest producer and exporter of agricultural goods – its impacts reach much further.

The Action:

The San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act Addresses Our Man-Made Drought And Gets Water Flowing In The Valley Again. This bill would increase the annual amount of water delivered to Kern County farmers and ranchers, support tens of thousands of acres of farmland, create tens of thousands of jobs for the region, and save American taxpayers nearly \$1 billion. Specifically, this bill would:

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Return Delta Pump Operations To The 1994 Bay-Delta Accord To Increase Water Deliveries To Farmers And Ranchers. In 1994, the Bay-Delta Accord was signed by California Governor Pete Wilson, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and EPA Director Carol Browner, as well as various local water agencies and key environmental

interest groups, as a consensus on the amount of water that could be pumped through the Delta. Since this agreement, new state regulations and unsound biological opinions have increased regulations to such a degree that our farmers are receiving far less water than they are entitled. The San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act returns the pump operations to the 1994 consensus, which will increase water deliveries while still upholding a sound, environmentally-respectful agreement on Delta water.

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This legislation ensures that any action taken by the Federal government or State of California cannot reduce water flows below the historic, bipartisan 1994 Bay-Delta Accord.

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Replace The San Joaquin River Settlement With A More Environmentally Reasonable And Economically Feasible Habitat Restoration Program To Increase Water Deliveries. The San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement sends up to 600,000 acre-feet of water down the San Joaquin River from the Friant Water Authority (FWA), most of which is lost out to sea. This is water that could otherwise go to Kern County farmers and ranchers. This bill would replace the current program with a more reasonable approach to ensure that enough water is going down the river to satisfy state law to support a live fishery, while delivering more water to our local farmers and ranchers. Repealing the settlement is expected to save American taxpayers close to \$1 billion.

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This legislation ensures that water flowing below Friant Dam satisfies Federal law and California Department of Fish and Game code and protects the Friant Water Authority from future litigation under state law.

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Reform The Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) To Create More Accountability And Increase Water Supplies. This bill: (1) focuses CVPIA on native species

in the Delta to reduce onerous regulations on nonnative species that can reduce water flows; (2) provides incentives for water districts to expand use of surface and groundwater stores; (3) reaffirms the original CVPIA commitment that a maximum of 800,000 acre-feet of water will be dedicated to environmental purposes—currently, 1.2 million acre-feet are being diverted; (4) restores accountability to the CVPIA Restoration Fund and ensures the fees CVP contractors are putting into the fund are used in and around the communities from where they come; and (5) increases certainty for farmers and ranchers by directing the Secretary to provide successive 40 year renewal of existing long-term CVP contracts.

The Result:

This Legislation Would Create A More Reliable Water Supply For Our Farmers And Ranchers, Create Jobs And Save Taxpayer Dollars. All told, this legislation is expected to increase annual water deliveries to San Joaquin Valley farmers and ranchers by 1.4 million acre-feet (456 billion gallons of water). Specifically, this legislation would deliver an estimated additional 300,000 acre-feet (97 billion gallons) of water annually to State Water Project contractors, including Kern County, which could support tens of thousands of acres of farmland. In addition, the end of regulatory uncertainty and the availability of reliable water supplies are expected to create up to 30,000 jobs in the region. Finally, replacing the San Joaquin River Settlement with a plan that prioritizes enhancing water supplies for communities and farms, while ensuring a live fishery, is expected to save American taxpayers close to \$1 billion.

What They're Saying:

Congressman Kevin McCarthy: *"It is unacceptable that California's man-made drought is taking away water our communities need to grow crops and create local jobs. This landmark legislation would get water flowing again in the Central Valley by knocking down onerous and unfounded government regulations that can leave our farmers high and dry. The bottom line is that without water, our local farmers and ranchers will continue to struggle. This bill ensures the government is not turning off the faucet on jobs and families in our communities."*

Farmer And Former KCWA Director Fred Starrh Sr.: *"This Legislation covers many of the issues that have created our water problem. It provides the opportunity to secure more water for agriculture and correct some of the inequities that are presently in the Central Valley Project*

Improvement Act that cause water to be wasted."

KCWA General Manager Jim Beck: *"The Delta's ecosystem problems have only gotten worse since 1994.□ Returning to the Bay-Delta Accord to guide the operation of the State and Federal water projects will improve Kern County's water supplies and give the Delta ecosystem a fighting chance."*