

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 14, 2017

President Donald Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

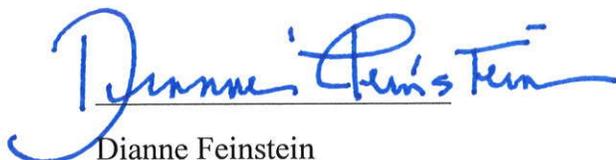
Dear President Trump:

We write to urge you to approve an emergency declaration for direct federal assistance for the counties of Butte, Sutter, and Yuba in California. This federal assistance is needed because of the potential failure of the Lake Oroville Dam emergency spillway, and the resulting catastrophic damage it would likely cause. If the emergency spillway were to fail, it would send a wall of water downstream, causing serious damage and catastrophic losses. State and local authorities have already evacuated approximately 188,000 residents downriver from Oroville Lake, and the Governor is now calling for direct federal assistance to save lives and to protect property, public health and safety, and to lessen the effects of this potentially devastating event.

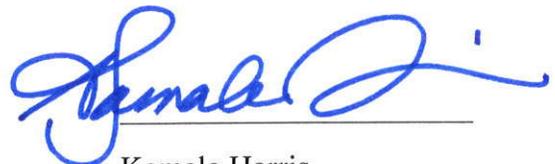
Since early January, California has been inundated with severe weather. Several atmospheric river systems have moved through the region, bringing heavy precipitation and high winds, and resulting in widespread damage. As a result of these storm systems, Lake Oroville was near full capacity when the main spillway at the Dam began to deteriorate on February 7, 2017. The emergency spillway was used for the first time in the Dam's history on February 11, 2017 to avoid catastrophic flooding. Very soon after the emergency spillway was used, the ground beneath the spillway began to show damage and erosion began. In response to these events, the Governor executed the State Emergency Plan, and proclaimed a State of Emergency on February 12, 2017.

Another storm system is moving into the area, and the emergency spillway may need to be used again. Due to the severe damage that would result from a failure of the emergency spillway, as well as the compounded impact of other major disasters that have impacted California in the past year and are likely to continue, the state is requesting emergency federal assistance pursuant to Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Federal disaster assistance will provide essential resources to assist state and local authorities. We respectfully ask that you approve an emergency declaration for the state of California and approve the state's request for assistance.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Kamala Harris  
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Robert Fenton, Acting Administrator, Federal Emergency  
Management Agency  
Dr. Ahsha Tribble, Acting Regional Administrator, Federal Emergency  
Management Agency, Region IX