

RECLAMATION
DISTRICT

108

975 Wilson Bend Road
P. O. Box 50
Grimes, CA 95950-0050
(530) 437-2221
Fax: (530) 437-2248
www.rd108.org

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February 3, 2016

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of Reclamation District 108 (RD 108), I am pleased to convey our District's support for Senate passage of your drought relief legislation. RD 108 strongly supports the portfolio of opportunities for federal assistance found in your legislation. We look forward to continuing to work with you, Representatives Doug LaMalfa and John Garamendi, Senator Boxer and the balance of the California House Congressional Delegation to secure Senate passage and enactment of final, balanced federal legislation to help address our region and state's water supply-related needs.

Specifically, we strongly support the following proposals in the draft legislation:

- The Reclamation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (RIFIA), which would provide low-cost, long-term federally-backed loans to help advance the construction of Sites Reservoir and other large-scale water infrastructure projects;
- Expanded grant opportunities under WaterSMART (the lesser of \$20 million or 25 percent of total project costs) to support small scale storage, conveyance, groundwater recharge, and other water supply and water management projects;
- Direct support from Reclamation for federal and non-federal water storage projects (the bill provides \$600 million to enable Reclamation to become a partner in the construction of large-scale water storage projects);
- Opening up the Title XVI water reuse program to currently unauthorized water reuse and desalination projects, which will help promote regional water self-sufficiency and reduce pressures on the Delta and the balance of the state's water delivery system; and
- Additional assistance through the National Marine Fisheries Service to help promote the recovery of endangered Sacramento River fish populations, which will have the added benefit of helping to reduce future pressures on available water supplies.

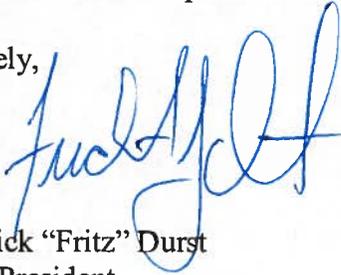
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In combination, and in certain instances coordination, these new tools will, significantly accelerate non-federal investments in much needed water supply infrastructure in our region.

Finally, we strongly support the provisions of your legislation that strengthen the federal commitment to California's system of water rights and priorities. Consistent with Title IV of the draft legislation, which we strongly support, RD 108 thanks you for including a specific reference to "applicable State water law" in the "Savings Clause" found in section 701 (a) (1), not just a general reference to applicable State law. Specific recognition of, and federal deference to, "State water law" has been imbedded in federal law since at least 1902, and we appreciate that you agree it bears repeating here.

Again, we support Senate passage of your proposed legislation. We believe it represents an important step forward in the legislative process that will ultimately authorize valuable tools and protections to help ensure a more secure water future for California and the west.

Sincerely,



Frederick "Fritz" Durst
Board President

cc: California Congressional Delegation