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Assembly California Legislature



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July 26, 2016

Ms. Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California WaterFix

Ms. Marcus, members of the board,

Thank you for this opportunity to register my concerns about the administration's plan to divert fresh water under the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta through a pair of massive tunnels whose mere construction, let alone operation, will cause substantial harm to the environment and to threatened species, as well as to the region's economy.

In the State Assembly I represent the Delta communities of Stockton, Tracy and Mountain House, nearly half a million people who both live in and depend upon the Delta for their health, well-being and prosperity.

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 established as co-equal goals the provision of "a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem," to be accomplished "in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place."

It also states that it is the policy of the State of California to "reduce reliance on the Delta in meeting California's future water supply needs." California WaterFix and its predecessor project, the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, is a multi-billion dollar project that fails to meet any of these statutory requirements.

The tunnels are purportedly necessary to guarantee a supply of water to downstream users in the event of an earthquake that causes catastrophic levee failure, leading to substantial saltwater intrusion into the Delta. This is despite the demonstrated performance of the levees, and that to protect water quality as well as the lives of Delta residents, there must be continued and ongoing investment in building, upgrading and repairing its network of levees to withstand exactly such an earthquake.

And yet the project only manages to enhance the security of water deliveries to contractors by guaranteeing increased saltwater intrusion in the Delta, reducing the quality of water available not only to farmers and other residents, but also to fish and other species that depend upon it.



It is also telling that the project is justified by a scenario that would threaten millions of people in the Delta itself, but does nothing to protect the quality of water available to them, let alone their lives and property.

The project, both its permanent features and those temporary during construction, will destroy prime farmland in a region whose economy is almost wholly dependent on agriculture.

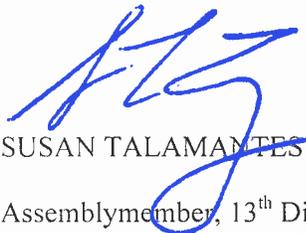
Further, it is a substantial expenditure on water infrastructure that promises to do absolutely nothing to provide a greater supply of water to a growing population. This is despite a severe, ongoing drought that has resulted in such a drastically reduced supply of Delta water that some of the most senior water rights holders in the Delta were recently told, at least temporarily, that there was no water available to them, though they were the sole supplier of potable water to thousands of people.

In other words, the earthquake scenario isn't keeping up with what climate change is causing *right now*.

It is reckless to waste so much time and resources on a project that will cause substantial harm in order to move a supply of water that is dwindling. Rather than reducing the state's reliance on the Delta, such an approach ensures it in perpetuity.

Because of the substantial harm posed to the Delta by California WaterFix, and the opportunity cost of investing resources in its completion, I must register my vehement opposition to the project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



SUSAN TALAMANTES EGGMAN
Assemblymember, 13th District