

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 26, 2017

Chairman Rob Bishop  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Raul Grijalva  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1329 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva:

As Representatives from California, we urge you to oppose controversial legislation before the Committee to authorize the settlement agreement between the United States and the Westlands Water District. H.R. 1769, the San Luis Unit Drainage Resolution Act purports to resolve decades-long litigation over federal drainage obligations, but fails to satisfy the public interest.

The agreement will burden state agencies, retire an inadequate number of acres, and lock in unsustainable water exports, all without sufficient consideration of alternatives or public comment. In addition, the lack of any cleanup plan, with measurable performance standards and enforceable milestones, makes this settlement and the bill to approve it particularly irresponsible, and will leave California's public health, communities, environment and migratory birds vulnerable to significant harm.

Further, the bill does not wholly relieve the government of liabilities in the San Joaquin Valley that prompted legal action over San Luis Unit drainage problems in the first place. H.R. 1769 excludes the other districts in the San Luis Unit, failing to fully relieve the federal government's obligation to provide drainage, and calling into question the legislation's underlying goal and estimated budget impacts. Meanwhile the legislation calls for an unjustified gift of over \$350 million of public funds to Westlands in the form of forgiven debt to the US, and compounds that with the conversion of the current Westlands two year water contract into a permanent entitlement. Together this constitutes an unjustified giveaway of public resources.

This committee should not approve an agreement with such significant potential impacts on California's water resources without requiring sufficient oversight, benchmarks, milestones, and monitoring of its implementation.

This bailout of the Westlands Water District comes at too high a cost to California water users, the environment, and American taxpayers. For these reasons we urge you to oppose the legislation.

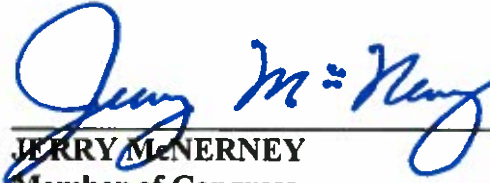
Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or concerns about this request,

please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,

  
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**MIKE THOMPSON**  
Member of Congress

  
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**MARK DeSAULNIER**  
Member of Congress

  
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**JERRY McNERNEY**  
Member of Congress

  
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**DORIS MATSUI**  
Member of Congress

  
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**ANNA G. ESHOO**  
Member of Congress