



Restore the Delta

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March _____, 2012

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the thousands of Restore the Delta supporters, I would like to thank you for your statement of opposition to H.R. 1837, passed by the House of Representatives on February 29, 2012.

As stated in our letter to Speaker Boehner of February 27, 2012, Delta communities oppose this piece of legislation for the following reasons:

H.R. 1837 overrides the public trust as defined in the California Constitution and state water laws. It reverses the long-standing Congressional principle that the federal government should follow state water law whenever possible.

H.R. 1837 would reduce water quality and water availability for Delta communities and Delta farmers. It seeks to ensure water flows to corporate agribusiness in the western and southern San Joaquin Valley at the expense of Delta family farmers. The recently-released Economic Sustainability Report authored by the Delta Protection Commission shows that Delta agriculture is worth \$4.2 billion annually and provides tens of thousands of jobs. Delta agriculture and jobs should not be sacrificed to benefit water users in other parts of the state, some of whom do not even use that water for agriculture.

H.R. 1837 would hinder efforts to restore fish populations in the Delta. Science-based protections for salmon and other endangered species are required under both California state law and the Endangered Species Act. Since 2009, the State of California has consistently opposed legislation that would weaken the Endangered Species Act in the San Francisco Bay-Delta and Estuary. Title I of H.R. 1837 would substitute measures that were part of a short-term agreement in 1994, when the health of the Delta had not deteriorated so seriously and when recent scientific studies had not yet been done.

H.R. 1837 would reverse San Joaquin River restoration, thereby further impacting water quality and quantity for the south Delta. While the San Joaquin River restoration allows for a limited flow of additional water into the south Delta, breaking the promise of San Joaquin River restoration would signal to Delta communities the federal government's sacrifice of the Delta for the preference of another region in California.

This deeply-flawed bill joins a long list of water strategies created behind closed doors without input from the Delta communities that rely on a healthy Delta for their livelihoods. It threatens the economic security of families, farmers, and small business owners in the Delta, as well as those in the Delta and Northern California who depend on recreational and commercial fisheries. It also threatens the urban economy surrounding the Delta – an area that is home to four million Californians and that is dependent on the Delta to meet its water user needs.

Again, we thank you for your support in opposing H.R. 1837.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla
Executive Director
Restore the Delta

Sign on opposition to H.R. 1837 --- Please print clearly. We will retype sign-on for presentation!

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