

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

February 6, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor  
State of California  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

As you are fully aware, California is experiencing its third straight drought year, setting the stage for what experts believe may be the worst drought in California's modern history. We request that your Administration take immediate action to blunt the impact of this crisis by taking pre-emptive action to clarify and expand Executive Order S-06-08, which declared a statewide drought, and the State of Emergency Proclamation for the San Joaquin Valley that you issued last year.

Water is the lifeblood of agriculture. The \$34 billion agriculture industry, the backbone of the California economy, is continuing to face a crisis of epic proportions. Available supplies of water for irrigated agriculture have been substantially diminished over the past several years and reservoirs are at dangerously low levels. The Department of Water Resources is expected to reduce its water supply allocations to near zero, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is expected to provide no Central Valley Project water to South-of-Delta agricultural service contractors. A zero allocation is unprecedented in the history of the state and federal projects, and will cripple communities that rely upon project water deliveries. West-side agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley will be especially hard hit and large metropolitan areas in the East Bay and in Southern California will suffer as well.

On top of rapidly escalating input costs, the drought has unleashed a wave of anxiety throughout the agriculture industry. Growers throughout the state plant crops based on water delivery forecasts and promised allocations which appear to be undeliverable. Not only has it become a matter of whether to plant, farmers now face the immediate prospect of having to abandon permanent crops. Hard working growers and their families stand to lose considerable investments. Many families face the prospect of losing their entire farming operations that took generations to build.

The ripple effect on communities dependent on agriculture is likewise devastating. Lost crops equal lost jobs and thereby lost revenue to already struggling communities. A recent University of California study estimates that as many as 60,000 agricultural jobs and over \$1.6 billion in ag wages will be lost due to the drought. This study did not account for the loss in farm income. Last year, over 200,000 acres of some of the world's most productive farmland were fallowed, and that number is expected to significantly increase

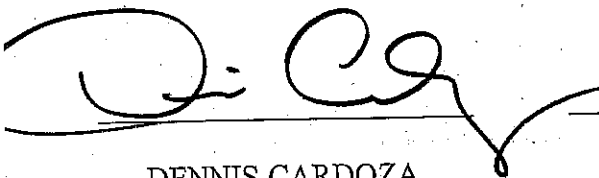
this year, causing even greater impacts. The San Joaquin Valley agriculture production and processing industries account for approximately 38% of the regional employment. With every \$1 produced on the farm generating over \$3 in the local and regional economies, the removal of these dollars from circulation is devastating communities. When agriculture struggles, rural populations struggle as well as neighboring municipalities. In the final analysis, the state's economy will weaken significantly at the worst possible time.

We urge your Administration to move quickly in advance of this larger crisis to expedite strategies which will provide California's farmers relief options and the support they will so desperately need in the coming days, weeks and months. We encourage you to expand the Executive Order and State of Emergency Proclamation to provide state agencies with the specific tools they need to expeditiously review and approve water transfers and projects and to take actions, including temporarily relaxing water quality standards, which will provide for supplemental water supplies.

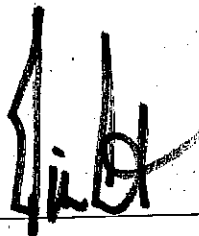
Just as important is the need to continue to move forward on long term solutions to address California's water crisis; to plan for our state's future. Without adequate storage and conveyance alternatives, opportunities to capture flood water releases are lost. It is essential that the state improve conveyance systems and build new storage facilities in order to increase our water supplies and enable better management of our entire water system for improved water quality, flood control and environmental enhancement.

As you, yourself stated, "The strength of California is tied to the economic success of the San Joaquin Valley." The San Joaquin Valley continues to be in jeopardy. We ask that you continue your commitment to the Valley and support our request for an expanded Executive Order and State of Emergency Proclamation as well as to continue to address California's long term water infrastructure needs. We stand ready to assist you in the Congress as well as with the new Administration in Washington. Thank you for your immediate attention to these pressing matters.

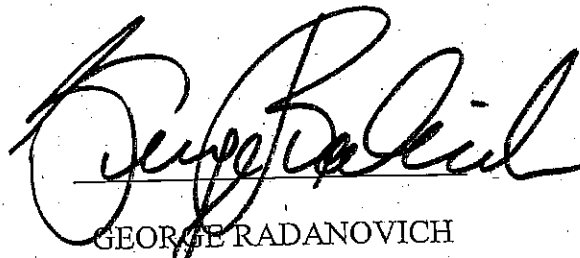
Sincerely,



DENNIS CARDOZA  
Member of Congress



JIM COSTA  
Member of Congress



GEORGE RADANOVICH  
Member of Congress

Cc:

Ken Salazar, Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior  
Mike Chrisman, Secretary, California Resources Agency  
Lester Snow, Director, California Department of Water Resources