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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515**

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June 25, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

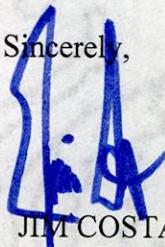
Dear Mr. President:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has requested that you declare a major disaster for the State of California in the County of Fresno commencing April 14, 2009 under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Having asked in February that the Governor take pre-emptive action to blunt the impact of this crisis throughout the San Joaquin Valley, I write in strong support of the Governor's request.

Hard working farmers, their families and their workers stand to lose considerable investments as a result of the drought and economic crisis. Many farm families face the prospect of losing their entire operations that have taken generations to build. At the same time, farmworkers in small communities throughout the San Joaquin Valley are standing in food lines and being turned away. It is the ultimate irony that some of the nation's hardest working people who work to put food on America's dinner table cannot now feed themselves. Now more than ever, relief is needed to sustain our communities through these trying times.

As the nation's top agricultural producer, the stability of Fresno County and the San Joaquin Valley directly affects the economy of the entire state. The crisis in the Valley stands to place California's economy at even greater risk. We ask that you support Governor Schwarzenegger's request to declare a major disaster for Fresno County. Thank you for your immediate attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,



JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

CC: Ms. Nancy Ward
Regional Administrator, Region IX, Federal Emergency Management Agency

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