

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2016

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senator
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell:

We are writing to you as the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to express our support for Senator Dianne Feinstein's S.2533, the California Long-Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief Act, and to request that you provide assistance to Senator Feinstein in passing this legislation.

Despite improved hydrologic conditions in 2016, many regions in California, including the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, and southern California, will continue to suffer water supply shortages resulting from four years of prolonged drought and regulations that affect the operations of the State's two major water supply projects. S.2533 provides reasonable solutions to address both the short-term and long-term water supply needs for the State. It does this by investing in water storage, conservation, recycling and desalination, along with innovative water infrastructure financing. These provisions align with Proposition 1, which was passed by California voters in 2014, thus enhancing State law with the coordinated activities of the Federal agencies.

The bill also avoids violating or overriding landmark environmental laws including the Endangered Species Act or the associated biological opinions that govern project operations at certain times of the year, and also upholds and protects state water rights and water law. There is an environmental protection mandate repeated throughout the text, as well as a clear savings clause that explicitly prohibits implementation of the bill a manner that "overrides, modifies, or amends the applicability of the Endangered Species Act . . . or the application of the smelt and salmonid biological opinions."

Moreover, S.2533 makes provision for additional protections for at-risk fish species and provides additional tools to improve the Sacramento San Joaquin Bay-Delta environment. This drought has shown that we must take a holistic look at how we manage the entire ecosystem for improved outcomes for both native species and water supply reliability. This bill looks at a variety of ways to protect imperiled fish species by providing funding to increase gravel rearing and spawning habitat, improve monitoring, reduce the effects of entrainment, reduce the impacts of predation, and improve the agencies' management of cold water.

In drafting S.2533 Senator Feinstein sought input from federal agencies charged with implementing federal statutes intended to protect the fish and wildlife resources, the State of California, public water agencies that serve virtually every region of the State, and conservation organizations interested in protecting wetlands, fish and wildlife, and other environmental resources. S.2533 is thoughtful legislation that protects the environment and will also improve the reliability of water supplies for the State in the short-term and build improved drought resiliency in the long term.

Again, we request that you support Senator Feinstein's efforts to pass this important legislation and make her aware of that support. We stand ready to provide any assistance you need.

Sincerely,



JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress




JIM COSTA
Member of Congress




TONY CARDENAS
Member of Congress



LORETTA SANCHEZ
Member of Congress



SCOTT PETERS
Member of Congress



JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress



ADAM SCHIFF
Member of Congress



KAREN BASS
Member of Congress