



July 16, 2002

VIA FACSIMILE AND FIRST CLASS MAIL – (202) 228-3954

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) represents the interests of 18 water providers serving over 500,000 people in the greater Sacramento area. RWA's primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources. For your reference, an RWA fact sheet is attached. On behalf of the members of RWA, we write to thank you for your dedication to the success of the CALFED Bay Delta Authorization Act (S. 1768) and to offer our support for your efforts.

RWA fully supports your work and this important legislation. The Bay-Delta supplies drinking water to over two-thirds of the people of California and irrigation water for over 7 million acres of highly productive agricultural land. The Bay-Delta is the largest estuary on the West Coast, and supports over 750 plant and animal species. It is also the hub of two massive water projects, the Central Valley Project (CVP), operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the State Water Project (SWP), operated by the California Department of Water Resources.

The Bay-Delta is in decline due to the decades of competing demands for its limited water resources. The area has experienced serious problems relating to water quality and fish and wildlife, raising compliance issues under both the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. Scores of species are in decline or are threatened or endangered. Water quality degradation makes it difficult and expensive to meet drinking water quality standards. Water supply reliability for urban and agricultural users is a difficult and challenging issue that has significant ramifications for the economy of the State.

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
July 16, 2002
Page 2

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is one of the most extensive ecosystem restoration efforts ever proposed, the most intensive water conservation effort ever attempted, the most far-reaching effort to improve drinking water quality for Californians, and the most significant investment in water storage and conveyance in California in decades. The State-Federal partnership has developed an implementation plan that has been adopted and certified as a federal Record of Decision. Federal authorization and funding is now needed to implement the plan as the 1996 authorization has expired.

The RWA commends you for your efforts on CALFED and fully supports S. 1768. We urge you to continue to press for final passage of the bill as soon as possible, and we stand ready to assist you in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Edward D. Winkler
Executive Director

attachment

Cc: The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
The Honorable Frank Murkowski
The Honorable Thomas A. Daschle
The Honorable Barbara Boxer