

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2024

Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2186 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2084 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Fleischmann and Ranking Member Kaptur:

We write to thank you for your ongoing support of long-term sustainability and cost-effective solutions to combat severe drought and water needs of the American West. The WaterSMART Program and the Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program have been well received in our communities and have gone a long way towards building a more resilient, self-sufficient and drought-tolerant economy in the seventeen western states. **Specifically, we recommend that funding levels for WaterSMART be increased to \$300 million, \$150 million of which will go to the Title XVI program.**

WaterSMART Program

WaterSMART helps to implement the SECURE Water Act, a law that authorizes water and science agencies to work together with state and local water managers to plan for unpredictable weather patterns and other threats to water supplies.

WaterSMART allows all bureaus of the Department of Interior to work with Tribes, States, local governments, and non-governmental organizations to pursue a sustainable water supply for the nation by establishing a framework to coordinate water conservation activities. WaterSMART provides cost-shared funding for Water and Energy Efficiency Grants; System Optimization Review Grants; Advanced Water Treatment and Pilot and Demonstration Projects and Grants to Develop Climate Analysis Tools. These funding opportunities promote the projects critical to addressing the potential supply and demand imbalances faced across the West, and help resource managers save significant amounts of water. **Completed WaterSMART projects are saving an estimated 1.14 million acre-feet of water per year; enough water for 4.6 million people. WaterSMART grants leverage non-federal investment at greater than a 2:1 ratio.** We recommend increasing funding for the WaterSMART program; which includes the grants, basin studies, and Cooperative Watershed Management activities.

Title XVI, Water Reclamation and Reuse Program

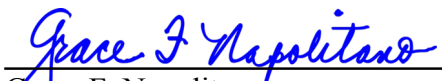
Title XVI of P.L. 102-575 provides authority for Reclamation's water recycling and reuse program. Through Title XVI, Reclamation identifies opportunities to reclaim and reuse municipal, industrial and agricultural wastewater and naturally impaired ground and surface water. Title XVI provides funding for planning studies and the construction of water recycling projects, on a project specific basis, in partnership with local governmental entities. Reclaimed water can support a variety of purposes, such as, groundwater recharge, industrial use, irrigation, power generation and environmental restoration. **In 2018, an estimated 431,000 acre-feet of water was recycled through completed Title XVI projects.**

Unfortunately, recent estimates show that there continues to be approximately a \$800 million backlog for eligible Title XVI projects. These projects are located across the West, and if additional funding were made available, we could prepare for eventual drought cycles and quicker delivery of much-needed water. Not only do these projects create jobs,

boost our local economies, farms and businesses, but they provide for long term savings. They represent a sound and critical investment in solutions to our water challenges and water sustainability while addressing our drought concerns. We recommend funding for the Title XVI program be increased to \$150 million for FY25.

Tens of millions of people rely on these programs to further drought proof our drinking water, irrigation, and recreation water supplies. With much of the nation facing forecasts of prolonged drought, and demands for water increasing, water conservation and efficiencies are required at the very minimum. Thank you for your consideration in funding these programs.

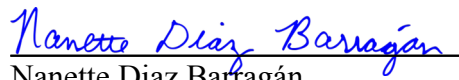
Sincerely,



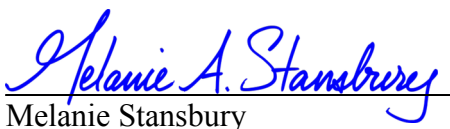
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



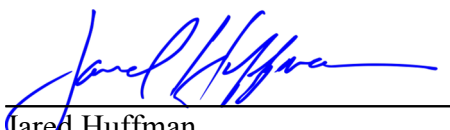
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



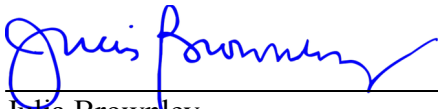
Raul Ruiz, M.D.
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Jared Huffman
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
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Julia Brownley
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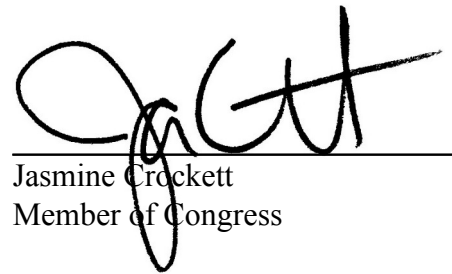
Doris Matsui
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Adam B. Schiff
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Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



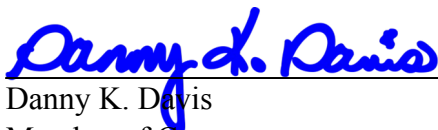
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



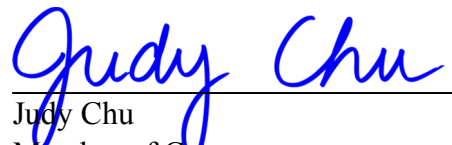
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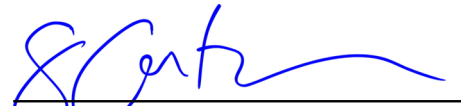
Mark Takano
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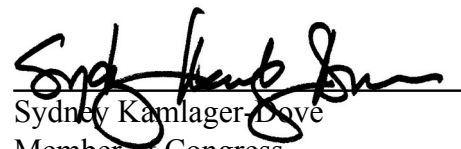
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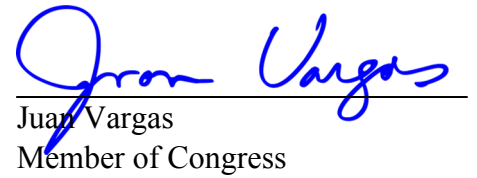


Steve Cohen
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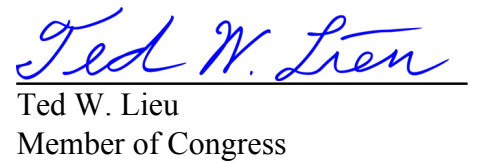

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

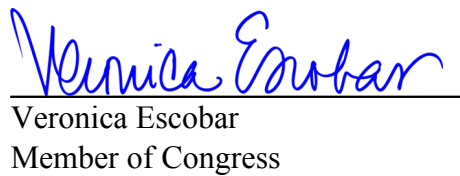

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

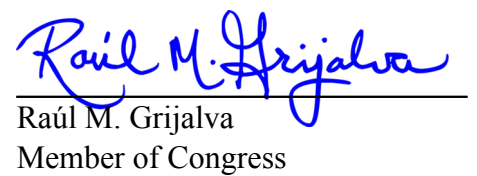

Mike Thompson
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Zoe Lofgren
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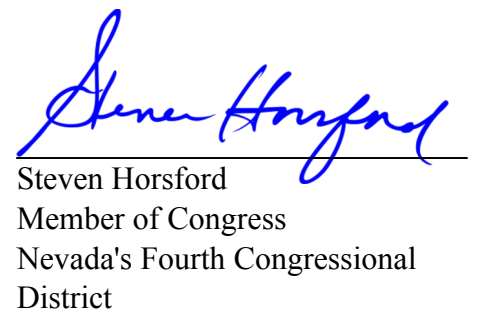

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Nevada's Fourth Congressional
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