

Merced County Office of Education

Steven E. Gomes, Ed.D., Superintendent



June 1, 2016

Felicia Marcus, Board Chairwoman
State Water Resources Control Board
PO Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Dear Chairwoman Marcus:

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTIVE DIALOG WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS

We, the undersigned, are the Superintendents of the 20 school districts located in Merced County. We join Merced County Superintendent of Schools, Steven Gomes, and urge you to engage in productive dialogue with the school districts that will be most impacted by the proposed flow increases outlined in your Bay-Delta Plan.

There is no doubt that your plan will impact the lives of the 70,000 students from pre-K to 12th grade within our districts. As you know, Merced County is both economically and educationally challenged. Many of our students overcome obstacles at home as their families struggle to make ends meet. We endeavor to do all we can to remove obstacles and create a learning environment where all students have the opportunity to thrive academically.

The availability of drinking water and water quality are essential components of campus quality of life and impact our ability to provide beneficial learning environments for our students. Our water for drinking and sanitation comes from groundwater, either through the school district itself or from City groundwater wells. Surface water is a vital source of groundwater recharge and we cannot achieve sustainability without it. Your plan to increase flows poses a serious threat to our districts. We cannot undertake the extraordinary additional costs of well repair or trucking in water on a permanent basis if your plan is implemented. The provision of sanitation services and drinking water through emergency means cannot be a permanent solution.

We request that you engage with us and other local stakeholders as you update the plan. Failure of the state to involve educators and other local stakeholders in the development of this plan does a serious disservice to the children of Merced County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Gomes".

STEVEN E. GOMES, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Felicia Marcus

June 1, 2016

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SANDRA SCHIBER, Ed.D.
Atwater Elementary School District



BRYAN BALLENGER
Ballico-Cressey Elementary School District



ADOLFO MELARA
Delhi Unified School District



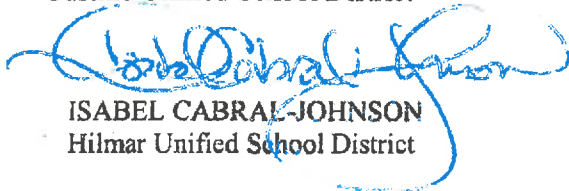
WILLIAM SPALDING
Dos Palos-Oro Loma Joint Unified School District



RAE ANN JIMENEZ
El Nido Elementary School District



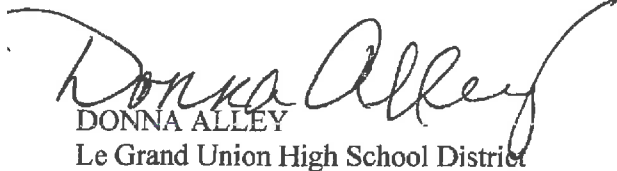
BILL MORONES
Gustine Unified School District



ISABEL CABRAL-JOHNSON
Hilmar Unified School District



ROSINA HURTADO
Le Grand Union Elementary School District



DONNA ALLEY
Le Grand Union High School District



ANDRES ZAMORA
Livingston Union Elementary School District



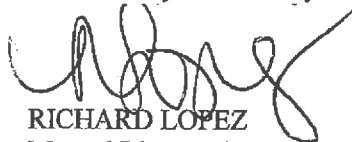
DEAN BUBAR, Interim
Los Banos Unified School District



HELIO BRASIL, Ed.D.
McSwain Union Elementary School District



ROSEMARY PARGA-DURAN, Ed.D.
Merced City Elementary School District



RICHARD LOPEZ
Merced River Union Elementary School District



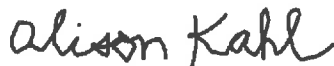
ALAN PETERSON
Merced Union High School District



KRISTI KINGSTON
Plainsburg Union Elementary School District



JOSE L. GONZALEZ
Planada Elementary School District



ALLISON KAHL
Snelling-Merced Falls Union Elem School District



JOHN CURRY
Weaver Union School District



RANDALL HELLER
Winton School District