

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 19, 2018

The Honorable Brenda Burman  
Commissioner of Reclamation  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Commissioner Burman:

We write to request that you consider recommending \$10 million in appropriated Water Infrastructure for Improvements to the Nation (WIIN) Act Section 4007 storage funding for the expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir in California.

As you know, the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project (LVE) has already been identified in previous appropriations measures for the Bureau of Reclamation. The prior federal investment in this project has totaled approximately \$18 million, which helped to accomplish the Phase 1 expansion in 2012 and funded the completion of the draft Federal Feasibility Report for the Phase 2 expansion. The proposed project has scored highly in the California Water Commission evaluation process, and is well-positioned to receive \$459 million in State funding under Proposition 1.

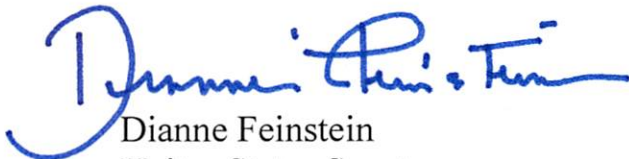
In February of this year, the federal Draft Feasibility Report for LVE was completed and recommended implementation of the project. In addition, during Water Commission consideration, LVE received letters of support from a diverse array of stakeholders, including urban water suppliers, waterfowl organizations, CVP contractors and national conservation groups. It is our understanding that LVE is on track to begin construction by 2020.

Section 4007 of the WIIN Act requires that federal investments in water storage projects provide federal benefits “including water supplies dedicated to specific purposes such as environmental enhancement and wildlife refuges.” Since 1992, federal law has required Reclamation to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to secure “Level 4” refuge water supplies to meet the needs of numerous federal, state, and privately managed refuges and wetland areas. The LVE project could be a major step forward in meeting that continuing goal. Given how much the price of water has been increasing, we believe it is a wise investment to take action now to fund a stable source of Level 4 water supply over the long-run.

According to the Contra Costa Water District, the \$5 million being requested for pre-construction activities is needed for such purposes as design, geotechnical investigations, permitting, and value engineering. These steps would be expected to follow the planned completion of the Final Federal Feasibility Report at the end of this year. The additional \$5 million being requested would be intended to secure necessary refuge-water delivery rights through the constructed LVE conveyance facilities. The stated purpose of this funding is to accelerate the delivery of water from the project to the refuges as allowed for under the WIIN Act.

We respectfully ask that you give the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion project your full and fair consideration consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and we trust that it will receive the serious consideration it deserves. Thank you for taking the time to consider our thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely yours,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator