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October 20, 2025

The Honorable Jim Costa  
United States House of Representatives  
2081 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

***Submitted via email***

**Re: H.R. 338, Every Drop Counts Act - SUPPORT**

Dear Representative Costa:

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority ("Water Authority") is pleased to support the *Every Drop Counts Act*, and thanks you for your leadership in introducing this legislation that provides much needed clarity to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ("Reclamation") regarding the difference between surface storage and groundwater storage projects under Section 40903 of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, known as the Small Storage Program ("Program").

The Water Authority is a joint-powers authority that serves two important roles: 1) to provide representation on common interests of the Water Authority's 27 member agencies; and 2) to operate and maintain certain Central Valley Project ("CVP") facilities, including the Jones Pumping Plant, the Delta-Mendota Canal ("DMC") and the O'Neill Pumping Plant, that the Authority's member agencies depend on for delivery of CVP water. Twenty-five of the Water Authority's member agencies contract with the United States for the delivery of water from the CVP as the principal source of water they provide to users within their service areas. That water supply serves approximately 1.2 million acres of agricultural lands within areas of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Kings, San Benito, and Santa Clara Counties, a portion of the water supply for nearly 2 million people, including in urban areas within Santa Clara County referred to as the "Silicon Valley," and millions of waterfowl that depend upon up to 200,000 acres of managed wetlands and other critical habitat within the largest contiguous wetland in the western United States. The operations of the CVP and maintenance of CVP facilities are therefore of vital interest and importance to the Water Authority, its member agencies, and the people, farms, businesses, communities, and wildlife refuges they serve.

Improved water storage and conveyance are critical issues that must be addressed to improve water resilience in California's San Joaquin Valley. Groundwater recharge is a particularly important tool to successfully implement California's *Sustainable Groundwater Management Act*. H.R. 338 would modify the criteria in the Small Storage Program under Section 40903 of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* to provide additional clarity on the scope of projects eligible for funding. Reclamation is currently interpreting the statutory language as being a cap on the amount of groundwater recharge that can be performed on an annual basis, rather than the holding capacity of the facility, which is inconsistent with what Congress intended when it enacted the Small Storage Program and significantly restricts the amount of groundwater recharge projects that are able to be funded under the Program. H.R. 338 provides clarity by establishing specific and different criteria for groundwater recharge projects and surface storage



projects under the Program, ensuring that Reclamation is able to advance both surface storage and groundwater recharge projects in ways that are consistent with the development of those differing project types.

We urge Congress to swiftly pass this legislation that will advance improvements in water storage in the west, ultimately benefiting local municipalities, water and agricultural users, and migratory waterfowl and wildlife enthusiasts. Thank you for your leadership on this crucial issue.

Thank you for consideration of our views and if you have any further questions, please reach out to J. Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director, at [scott.petersen@sldmwa.org](mailto:scott.petersen@sldmwa.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Scott Petersen".

**J. Scott Petersen, P.E.**

*Water Policy Director*

*San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority*

cc: The Honorable Josh Harder (CA-09)  
The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier (CA-10)  
The Honorable Adam Gray (CA-13)  
The Honorable Eric Swalwell (CA-14)  
The Honorable Sam Liccardo (CA-16)  
The Honorable Ro Khanna (CA-17)  
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren (CA-18)  
The Honorable Jimmy Panetta (CA-19)  
The Honorable Vince Fong (CA-20)  
The Honorable David Valadao (CA-22)  
The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources  
The Honorable Jared Huffman, Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources  
The Honorable Harriet Hageman, Chairman, House Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries  
The Honorable Val Hoyle, Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries  
The Honorable Alex Padilla (D-CA)  
The Honorable Adam Schiff (D-CA)