

# FRIANT WATER AUTHORITY

August 21, 2013

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Arvin-Edison W.S.D.  
Delano-Earlimart I.D.  
Exeter I.D.  
Fresno I.D.  
Ivanhoe I.D.  
Kaweah Delta W.C.D.  
Kern-Tulare W.D.  
Lindmore I.D.  
Lindsay-Strathmore I.D.  
Lower Tule River I.D.  
Madera I.D.  
Orange Cove I.D.  
Pixley I.D.  
Porterville I.D.  
Saucelito I.D.  
Shafter-Wasco I.D.  
Stone Corral I.D.  
Tea Pot Dome W.D.  
Terra Bella I.D.  
Tulare I.D.

The Honorable Anthony Rendon  
Chair, Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Water Bond Framework**

Dear Chair Rendon:

The Friant Water Authority (Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Water Bond Framework. As we stated in committee last week, we find the principles developed by the committee to be good starting point for the development of California's next water bond. And while we know the dollar amounts included in the Framework document are there to start a discussion, we cannot support a bond of only \$5 billion. The Authority supports the concept created by the Association of California Water Agencies which proposes a bond of approximately \$8.2 billion. While significantly less than the bond currently on the November 2014 ballot, we believe this level of funding is adequate to address a number of needs facing California.

The Authority operates and maintains the Friant-Kern Canal, a conveyance feature of the Central Valley Project. The Authority consists of 20 member water, irrigation, water conservation and water storage districts. The Friant Service Area includes over one million acres and 15,000 mostly small family farms on the east side of the southern San Joaquin Valley (Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern Counties). Friant Division water supplies are also relied upon by several cities and towns, including the City of Fresno, as a major portion of their municipal and industrial water supplies.

In committee we stated the importance of advancing a bond that can and will ultimately be supported by the voters of California. In our opinion, focusing on people, water management for water users and the environment and infrastructure are keys to the success of this bond.

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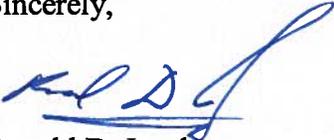
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**Protecting Watersheds, Climate Change Preparedness and Regional Self Reliance -**

These areas as identified in the Framework address important issues that provide statewide benefit while focusing on local and regional approaches to improving California's ability to manage this important resource and to create new areas of efficiency.

Thank you for considering our comments. We applaud the efforts made by you and the Committee thus far and look forward to continuing to work with you. If we can provide any additional information, please call me at (916) 442-8333 or contact Louie Brown, our Sacramento representative, at 916-448-3826.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ronald D. Jacobsma", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ronald D. Jacobsma,  
General Manager

Cc: Friant Member Districts

The ultimate size of the bond is dependent on voters finding value in it, meaning their communities will be improved and projects that bring statewide and local benefits are funded. Below we submit to you our thoughts regarding an allocation formula for the Framework discussed at the August 15, 2013 hearing.

**Storage for Climate Change – \$3 billion**

The Authority supports a \$3.0 billion allocation to Storage for Climate Change. The level of funding for additional storage was discussed and negotiated in 2009. Most believe \$3 billion is too low to adequately address the infrastructure needs facing California. However, with the competitive process created in Chapter 8 of SB X7 2 requiring at least a 50 percent match, we believe this amount is appropriate.

In addition, we reiterate our support for the language establishing criteria for funding storage projects contained in Chapter 8 of SB X7 2. This language creates a *competitive process* to fund the storage projects that provide the greatest “return for public investment as measured by the magnitude of the public benefits provided....” This language ensures that public funding will only be directed to the public benefits a project would provide, up to 50 percent of the total project cost, thereby ensuring that the public funding will generate statewide public benefits.

Section 79740 (b) calls for the continuous appropriation of the funds for the public benefits associated with storage projects. The continuous appropriation of these funds is the only way to provide the certainty of their availability that will allow funding partners to commit to the sizable cost shares necessary to construct the water storage projects.

This area of the SB X7 2 was thoroughly vetted and analyzed in 2009. It is in line with the Working Group’s principle of supporting projects based on a competitive process. The Authority strongly encourages the Working Group to include Chapter 8 as written in SB X7 2 and maintain the \$3 billion allocation.

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Sustainability - \$2.25 billion**

Funding for Delta Sustainability promotes the implementation of the co-equals goals, which was the framework of the legislative package developed in 2009, of improving the Delta ecosystem and water supply availability and reliability for the entire state.

**Water Quality – Clean and Safe Drinking Water**

In committee, the Authority testified about the importance of making this bond about people. In particular, it is important to focus on the water quality needs of Californians throughout the state. Numerous reports have been published about the quality of groundwater throughout the state. Focusing a significant level of funding from this bond to addressing groundwater contamination and cleanup efforts especially for disadvantaged communities is important to the Authority.