

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

December 19, 2013

Director Mark Cowin
California Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento 95814-5515

RE: 200 Year Flood Mapping Concerns

Dear Director Cowin:

We write to you with growing concern regarding the ability of cities and counties in our districts to comply with the laudable goals included in the AB 5/SB 5 bill package from 2007.

In the last few months, your Department has provided mapping data for project levees to cities and counties that are subject to the provisions of the AB 5/SB 5 bill package. Unfortunately, project levees are only a small fraction of the total number of levees that need to be evaluated by local agencies to determine what level of flood protection those specific levees provide to the urban and urbanizing areas behind them.

Unless local agencies have adequate resources to study those levees, and be able to assert a particular level of protection exists, a moratorium on construction will commence in a little less than three years. The same communities that will be subject to this moratorium are some of the hardest-hit communities from the Great Recession. They are only beginning to recover – and this looming moratorium would halt recovery.

While we certainly would not wish to prolong the risk of life and property to our own constituents, halting construction will not enhance levee strength and security for those already living and working behind the levees. Future developments will be a critical funding source for communities needing levee improvements, and could constitute a substantial share of any local match to draw down State and Federal dollars to fund the levee improvements that are intended under the law.

We urge your Department to support making funds available to cities and counties that need to improve levees in order to achieve 200-year level flood protection for their communities. We also urge your Department to work collaboratively with cities and counties to find some additional flexibility within the current law to ensure that an

outright moratorium does not occur in the San Joaquin Valley. We firmly believe that we can agree on sensible policy that will balance the need for responsible growth with the need to protect current residents and businesses.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kristin Olsen
12th Assembly District



Anthony Cannella
12th Senate District



Tom Berryhill
8th Senate District



Susan Talamantes Eggman
13th Assembly District