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September 27, 2013

The Honorable Jerry Brown  
California Governor

State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Secretary Sally Jewell  
United States Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Governor Brown and Secretary Jewell,

I am writing to express my support for your efforts to identify a solution to California's water challenges.

Southern California relies on imported water for more than 50% of its supply. Some communities in Southern California are nearly 100% dependent on the State Water Project for their water; and, while we continue to develop new local supplies and invest in conservation, imported water remains an essential resource.

The Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta region, through which we draw State Water Project supplies, is increasingly vulnerable. Environmental concerns are mounting and water supplies for 25 million people, businesses and farms throughout the state are in jeopardy.

We applaud you for recognizing that it is time for California to abandon the status quo and advance a new plan -- the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) -- which will restore and protect the Delta environment and ensure that California has a reliable water supply for years to come.

The construction of a new water conveyance is an essential element of the BDCP. The proposed twin tunnel system will protect public water supplies if a seismic event -- which the U.S. Geological Survey predicts in the coming years -- were to trigger levee breaks and cause saltwater to intrude from San Francisco Bay. New intakes in the northern Delta will reduce conflicts with migrating fish species such as salmon. And 50 years of regulatory stability will protect an estimated 1.1 million jobs throughout the state and create more than 177,000 jobs from construction projects and operations, according to a noted University of California, Berkeley professor.

Southern California is rebuilding its aging infrastructure to ensure its water supplies are reliable. We need the same kind of investment in the State Water Project to safeguard our imported supplies. A project of such magnitude will require some difficult decisions and compromise between stakeholders with varying priorities. However, California cannot sit idly by and wait for disaster.

On behalf of the Los Angeles Business Council, we appreciate you taking the necessary steps to move the BDCP process forward. Thank you for your continued leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Leslie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Leslie  
President

CC: Secretary John Laird, California Natural Resources Agency  
Congressional and State Delegation Members