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# California State Senate

SENATOR  
JOHN LAIRD

SEVENTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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November 12, 2024

**Subject: Support for Monterey County Water Resources Agency's Dam Safety and Climate Resilience Local Assistance Program Proposal**

To Whom It May Concern:

As the State Senator representing the 17<sup>th</sup> Senate District, I am writing to express my support for the Monterey County Water Resources Agency's (MCWRA) Dam Safety and Climate Resilience Local Assistance Program (DSCRLAP) Proposal, submitted on October 21, 2024. This proposal seeks to make crucial improvements to the low-level outlet works at San Antonio Dam, complementing the Agency's ongoing efforts to replace the dam spillway, as mandated by the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams. As a former Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency, I understand the critical importance of maintaining our water infrastructure and ensuring resilience against climate impacts. I believe this initiative will greatly benefit our communities by enhancing public safety, improving water management, and supporting environmental sustainability in the region.

I want to particularly emphasize my support for the Agency's request to reduce its matching funds requirement from 50% to 22%. The Agency's current initiatives, including the spillway replacement at San Antonio Dam and the rehabilitation of the plunge pool at Nacimiento Dam, are placing significant strain on its financial resources. This request aligns with the DSCRLAP Guidelines, particularly Section 4.2, which provides special consideration to projects that directly benefit disadvantaged communities, as well as Section 5.2, which addresses local cost-share reduction based on an applicant's ability to pay.

The Agency's existing land-based assessments are inadequate to meet all funding needs for current dam safety projects. To generate necessary revenue, the Agency would have to increase assessments on more than 500,000 acres of farmland and 250,000 residents living downstream of the San Antonio Dam, many of whom are from disadvantaged communities. State support for this essential dam safety work not only reflects the values articulated in the DSCRLAP Guidelines but also promotes the continued production of healthy and affordable fruits and vegetables throughout the Salinas Valley.

Thank you for considering my support for this impactful project. I understand the needs across the state are significant; however, the contributions of the Salinas Valley to both California and the nation are unique and deserving of special consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Laird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "L".

John Laird  
State Senator, 17<sup>th</sup> District