County of Monterey

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Monterey County Water Resources Agency

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February 10, 2025

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
304 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 338, the Every Drop Counts Act. – SUPPORT

Dear Congressman Panetta and Congresswoman Lofgren:

On behalf of the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors and the Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, we are writing to express our support for the Every Drop Counts Act (H.R. 338). This legislation would build on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's impact by increasing funding and expanding support for groundwater recharge projects. Significantly, H.R. 338 would make it easier for groundwater projects to qualify for funding, increase the amount of water they can store, and stabilize underground aquifers.

This bill would amend the Bureau of Reclamation's Small Storage Program authorized through 2026 under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (a.k.a. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act or "BIL") to provide a federal cost share to eligible, small surface and groundwater storage projects. Currently, the Program has approximately $43.5 million available for federal fiscal-years 2025 and 2026 and the latest funding opportunity opened in September 2024. The federal cost share cannot exceed the lesser of 25 percent of project cost or $30 million dollars. Reclamation continues to accept feasibility study submissions at any time and is encouraging non-Federal entities to submit their feasibility studies by Spring 2025 for consideration. This funding opportunity provides financial assistance for projects that will increase water supply reliability, improve operational flexibility, and enhance climate resiliency of water and related infrastructure throughout the 17 western states, Alaska, and Hawaii. In accordance with the current BIL, as amended, projects must have a water storage capacity of not less than 200 acre-feet and not more than 30,000 acre-feet. Water conveyance projects are also eligible. H.R. 338 would extend authorization of the funding by another 5 years and expand eligibility by increasing the potential size of storage projects to a maximum recharge potential of 150,000 acre-feet.

We appreciate your continued support for the residents of the County of Monterey, and we urge you to cosponsor H.R. 338, the Every Drop Counts Act.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Chris M. Lopez
Chair, County of Monterey Board of Supervisors
Chair, Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency

cc: The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Senator for California
The Honorable Adam Schiff, U.S. Senator for California