



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 28, 2012
(House Rules)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1837 – Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act

(Rep. Nunes, R-California, and 2 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 1837, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act because the bill would unravel decades of work to forge consensus, solutions, and settlements that equitably address some of California's most complex water challenges.

H.R. 1837 would undermine five years of collaboration between local, State, and Federal stakeholders to develop the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. It would codify 20-year old, outdated science as the basis for managing California's water resources, resulting in inequitable treatment of one group of water users over another. And, contrary to 100 years of reclamation law that exhibits congressional deference to State water law, the bill would preempt California water law.

The bill also would reject the long-standing principle that beneficiaries should pay both the cost of developing water supplies and of mitigating any resulting development impacts, and would exacerbate current water shortages by repealing water pricing reforms that provide incentives for contractors to conserve water supplies.

Finally, H.R. 1837 would repeal the San Joaquin River Settlement Agreement, which the Congress enacted to resolve 18 years of contentious litigation. Repeal of the settlement agreement would likely result in the resumption of costly litigation, creating an uncertain future for river restoration and water delivery operations for all water users on the San Joaquin River.

The Administration strongly supports efforts to provide a more reliable water supply for California and to protect, restore, and enhance the overall quality of the Bay-Delta environment. The Administration has taken great strides toward achieving these co-equal goals through a coordinated Federal Action Plan, which has strengthened collaboration between Federal agencies and the State of California while achieving solid results. Unfortunately, H.R. 1837 would undermine these efforts and the progress that has been made. For this reason, were the Congress to pass H.R. 1837, the President's senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

* * * * *