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April 6, 2015

Assembly Member Marc Levine
Chair, Water, Parks & Wildlife
1020 N. Street, Room 160
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: SUPPORT - AB 1242 (Gray) Water quality: impacts on groundwater basins: mitigation measures

Dear Assembly Member Levine:

On behalf of California Women for Agriculture (CWA), I am writing to express our support for AB 1242. CWA is the largest volunteer organization representing the interests of California family farmers. Our membership is comprised of farmers, consumers, and business professionals interested in the continued viability of California agriculture.

This legislation would require the State Water Board, when adopting or approving a water quality control plan, to consider impacts on groundwater basin. This legislation would further prohibit the Board from adopting plans without mitigating measures that reduce significant adverse impacts.

The State Water Board has been considering a proposal to develop new unimpaired flow requirements on the Tuolumne, Merced, and Stanislaus rivers which would require an additional 350,000 acre feet of water annually to be diverted from the rivers to flow out to San Francisco Bay Delta. This proposal would devastate the groundwater basins of the Valley and cause considerable damage to farmers in the region.

Local communities are empowered by the passage of the Sustainability Groundwater Management Act to achieve sustainable management goals. If the Board adopts their proposal without mitigating measures, this would deny the Central Valley basins with one of their most important tools – the ability to recharge the depleted groundwater table with surface flows.

AB 1242 ensures that the State Water Board consider and mitigate the adverse impact of any new water quality control plan. We would urge your support of this important legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara LeVake
State Legislative Director

Cc: Assembly Member Adam Gray
Members of the Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee