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COMMITTEES:
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FOREIGN RELATIONS

United States Senate

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August 24, 1999

Lester Snow, Executive Director
CALFED
1416 9th, #1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Snow:

I am writing to ask you for clarification with respect to a serious matter that has recently been brought to my attention.

As you know, I have long been an active supporter of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, the Bay-Delta Accord, and the whole CALFED effort to develop a forward-looking, multi-objective and comprehensive plan for California's water future. I have repeatedly called for all parties to "stay at the table" and continue to work toward a mutually agreeable solution. I also have opposed particular projects, such as Auburn Dam and the Peripheral Canal, both of which I believe to be unnecessary, polarizing and environmentally damaging.

It has been my impression that CALFED was in basic agreement with these views. Auburn Dam has been explicitly excluded from consideration as a surface storage project by CALFED. And, in the December 18, 1998 Revised Phase II Report CALFED had set out a seven-year planning process which explicitly deferred any decision on a Peripheral Canal until a carefully devised study program, assessing water quality, fishery improvement and other factors, had been completed. The media has widely reported that consideration of a Peripheral Canal is terminated for now, and you have been quoted as saying it is not part of the preferred alternative.

The recent June 1999 Revised Phase II Report, however, states that, subject to certain conditions, "a pilot screened diversion [of significant size and which I am told is on the alignment of the Peripheral Canal] would be constructed" and that its operations would then be evaluated in years five to seven of the CALFED Program.

Could you please clarify for me whether CALFED intended to change its position on the Peripheral Canal and Delta conveyance between December and June? If no change was intended, please so state and indicate that the December 1998 agreement with respect

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to the Peripheral Canal is still operative. If there has been a change, please inform me what the basis is for that change and describe the ways in which the relevant stakeholders were informed and consulted about this change.

Thank you for your prompt response to this inquiry. As you know, comments on the pending EIS/EIR are due in late September and hearings are underway on the plan. It would help all involved to know what CALFED's views are on this matter as soon as possible. Please direct your response to my San Francisco office, ATTN: Sam Chapman.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

cc: Regional Administrator Felicia Marcus, EPA
Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt
California Resources Secretary Mary Nichols