

COUNTY OF TULARE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



DENNIS A. TOWNSEND
District Five

April 4, 2022

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McCarthy:

I write to add my support to the introduction and passage into law of the Tule River Water Settlement bill. I have long followed the water right negotiations between the Tule River Tribe, the federal government, and the Tribe's neighboring downstream stakeholders. The resolution of federal reserved Indian water rights in this basin will mark a huge step forward in the arch of its history and serve as an assurance of rights and quantities of water that will have long-lasting positive impacts.

I understand the settlement agreement includes transferring certain lands within Tulare County to the federal government in trust for the Tribes. While this will impact tax rolls to some extent, I believe and agree this is a reasonable compromise to address unresolved questions regarding land title resulting from the history of how the Tule River Tribe's reservation was created. I also understand the impact to the county's bottom-line will be offset by the certainty, regarding land and water rights in our area, created as a result. This change will alleviate the risk of any potential cloud on associated title. I believe this legislation and the solutions contained therein will better enable our entire community to flourish and prosper. While Tulare County did not endeavor to create the historical issues associated with the location of the Tribe's reservation, I certainly recognize that it has benefitted over the years by the resulting outcome and can agree with now counterbalancing that benefit through the transfer of these lands. I am eager to put this history behind us and work with our Tribal neighbors to promote and enjoy an abundant and resilient economy. I support this legislation's introduction and passage into law and urge you in your capacity to do all you can to ensure its success.

The Tule River Water Settlement bill is a commonsense solution to the complicated history of water and land use in the Tule River basin. A guaranteed and stable supply of water is essential to the interested parties and continued growth within the community.

Thank you for your interest and support in this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (559) 909-1564.

Sincerely,


Dennis Townsend, District Five
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

cc: David Wetmore, Carpi & Clay