



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0529**

July 26, 2018

Board of Supervisors  
County of Mono  
Attn: Shannon Kendall, Clerk of the Board  
P.O. Box 715  
Bridgeport, CA 93517

RE: LADWP's Future Water Management Practices – A Reflection of Our Shared Responsibility

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

As fellow elected officials, we are charged with representing our communities and finding common ground where possible when stakeholders have divergent interests. As representatives of Mono County, you have voiced concerns on behalf of your constituents regarding the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's (LADWP) decision to discontinue providing free water supplies to commercial ranchers in your community.

Representing the voice of our Los Angeles constituents, we write to address your concerns and explain why continuing this practice does not reflect our new climate reality and no longer aligns with the best interests of Los Angeles families. Ultimately, we hope that your county can relate to the purposeful and thoughtful process behind this important, but necessary and responsible decision.

As you know, commercial ranchers in your community have historically leased land from LADWP for grazing. Decades ago, LADWP began offering free water to the commercial ranchers to flood irrigate the grazing lands when the department had more water than it could accommodate in the Los Angeles Aqueduct. At LADWP's discretion, free water has since been offered to the commercial ranchers on an ad hoc basis when supplies were available. It was never a guarantee tied to the leases. The amounts have differed each year based on hydrological conditions and LADWP operational needs.

Due to continued weather extremes that have affected all our communities, as well as half of the Los Angeles Aqueduct water supplies continuing to flow into Mono and Inyo counties for environmental purposes, Los Angeles no longer has that surplus water available to provide for free water to the commercial ranchers. LADWP management has recommended offering to renew the leases for another 20 years – providing the ranchers a first right of refusal offer versus taking the leases to a competitive bid or exploring alternate uses for the land.

In Los Angeles, we must ultimately assess all water management practices through the lens of Los Angeles ratepayers. LADWP's mission is to deliver safe, reliable and cost-effective water to four million Los Angeles city residents and businesses. If LADWP continued to provide free water to Mono County commercial ranchers, LADWP would have to spend approximately \$18 million to purchase the amount of water requested and the lost hydropower it generates – a cost burden of approximately \$30 for each family per year. We cannot ask that Los Angeles families pay for free water for the commercial ranchers.

As we have all experienced in our communities, California's water supply challenges are mounting and have shifted with a new climate reality. We collectively must examine how we use every drop of water, and we're proud of the progress that Southern California has made in conservation. Los Angeles ratepayers have risen to the challenge. Los Angeles now uses the same amount of water today as it did 40 years ago, despite a population increase of more than one million people, and has one of the lowest per capita usage rates for large U.S. cities. The city is currently on pace to further reduce its water use by 25% by 2035.

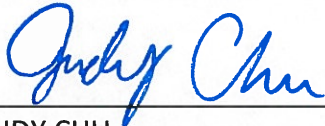
We place a high importance on environmental stewardship in all regions, and Mono County is no exception. The water LADWP has provided to commercial ranchers is separate and unrelated to the water LADWP continues to provide to serve the region's environment. LADWP is currently diverting water to protect the Sage Grouse habitat, while simultaneously working with local environmental organizations to ensure the habitat will continue to be protected in the future.

Faced with a new climate reality and diminishing water supplies, updating water management practices is a responsibility we must all bear as we strive for a sustainable future. We hope that we can forge a positive path forward for the public we serve.

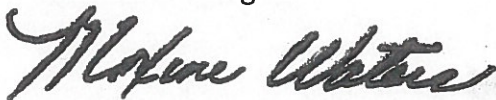
Sincerely,



TONY CÁRDENAS  
Member of Congress



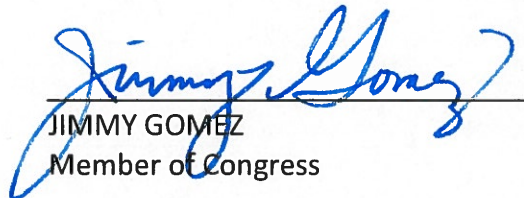
JUDY CHU  
Member of Congress



MAXINE WATERS  
Member of Congress



NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN  
Member of Congress



JIMMY GOMEZ  
Member of Congress

CC: U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Congressman Paul Cook  
U.S. Congressman Jim Costa  
Mayor Eric Garcetti  
California State Senator Tom Berryhill  
California State Senator Bob Hertzberg  
California State Senator Jeff Stone  
California State Senator Ben Allen  
California State Senator Henry Stern  
California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon  
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California State Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia  
California State Assemblymember James Gallagher  
California State Assemblymember Wendy Carillo  
California State Assemblymember Laura Friedman  
Secretary John Laird, California Natural Resources Agency  
Director Charlton Bonham, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Secretary Karen Ross, California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Supervisor Fred Stump, Mono County District 2  
Supervisor Bob Gardner, Mono County District 3  
Supervisor John Peters, Mono County District 4  
Supervisor Stacy Corless, Mono Count District 5  
Stacey Simon, County Counsel, Mono County