

**Clean Water Action * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice * Greenpeace
League of Conservation Voters * National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council * Sierra Club**

December 6, 2016

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing to urge you to strip the anti-environmental rider regarding California water from the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) (Subtitle J of Title III of S. 612). This poison pill rider would gut environmental protection in California's Bay-Delta, threatening thousands of salmon fishing jobs and worsening water quality conditions. These provisions are inconsistent with California law and expressly violate the requirements of biological opinions under the Endangered Species Act, and as a result are likely to lead to extensive litigation and undermine progress on long-term solutions. The White House announced today that the Administration opposes this language in WRDA. The broad opposition to this rider demonstrates that its inclusion threatens to scuttle enactment of WRDA.

This rider would not only affect California, but also threatens the thousands of fishing jobs across the West Coast that depend on salmon from California's Bay-Delta watershed. Moreover, the rider would authorize construction of new dams across the 17 Reclamation states, without Congressional review and authorization for these new projects.

Drought, not environmental laws, is the primary cause of low water supplies in California. The state of California is working to protect the environment and the economy by investing in sustainable water supply solutions including water use efficiency, water recycling, urban stormwater capture, and improved groundwater recharge and management. The Federal government should not undermine environmental protections under the guise of drought relief, but should instead complement state investments in sustainable water solutions.

Adding a poison pill rider undermining the Endangered Species Act and threatening thousands of fishing jobs sets up a false choice between clean water in Flint and healthy waterways in California. This is outrageous and unacceptable. The people of Flint have waited too long for safe drinking water to be victimized again by this kind of political backroom dealing.

We urge you to strike this anti-environmental rider. If this language remains, we urge you to vote to oppose the WRDA bill.

Sincerely,

Natural Resources Defense Council
League of Conservation Voters
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Sierra Club
National Audubon Society
Clean Water Action
National Parks Conservation Association
Greenpeace