



May 23, 2016

The Honorable Marc Levine  
State Capitol, Room 5135  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2304 (Levine) - SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblyman Levine:

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is a statewide organization that represents both farmers and non-farm urban residents who support sustainable food and farming policies. CAFF is pleased to support your AB 2304, which creates a California Water Marketing Clearinghouse in the Natural Resources Agency to make the water transfer process more transparent and efficient and to enhance access to voluntary water transfers that provide environmental or social benefits.

CAFF has taken positions on a number of bills over the years dealing with water transfers, with the main goal of ensuring that farmers and rural communities do not suffer adverse impacts from water transfers that originate in their region. The first step in this process - and often the most frustrating one - is to make information about potential transfers available to the public so they can accurately determine the impacts of a transfer, both positive and negative. By creating a centralized statewide clearinghouse for essential information about potential and pending water transfers and ensuring that the information is readily available to the public, AB 2304 will establish the critical foundation for all parties to assess the impacts of proposed water transfers.

AB 2304 also requires the Secretary of Natural Resources to convene a task force to recommend to the Clearinghouse what information should be submitted in a water transfer application and, after a transfer is approved, how to ensure the public can track the progress of a proposed transfer through agency review, as well as procedures and standards to ensure that transfers are efficient, timely and protective of environmental and community resources, including groundwater, in areas of origin.

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The detailed direction given the task force in AB 2304 recognizes the complex interests involved in water transfers, and we believe the task force's work is critical to the success of the Clearinghouse. As a longstanding advocate for the sustainability of local farms and rural communities and for the efficient use of water resources, CAFF looks forward to participating fully in the task force process.

CAFF believes AB 2304 will make a significant contribution to improving transparency and efficiency in the state's process for considering and carrying out water transfers. We look forward to supporting AB 2304 as it moves through the Legislature and to the Governor.

Sincerely,



David Runsten  
Policy Director

cc: The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair, Assembly Appropriations  
Committee  
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee