

CAPITOL OFFICE  
STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 651-4004

CHICO DISTRICT OFFICE  
2635 FOREST AVE., STE. 110  
CHICO, CA 95928  
(530) 879-7424

ROSEVILLE DISTRICT OFFICE  
2200A DOUGLAS BLVD., STE. 100  
ROSEVILLE, CA 95765  
(916) 772-0571

YUBA CITY DISTRICT OFFICE  
1100 CIVIC CENTER BLVD., STE. 202-A  
YUBA CITY, CA 95993  
(530) 751-8657

# California State Senate



SENATOR  
JIM NIELSEN

FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT

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HEALTH  
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VICE CHAIR

May 1, 2017

Senator Wieckowski, Chair  
Budget Sub Committee No. 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy and  
Transportation State Capitol, Room 112  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Wieckowski,

We respectfully request Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy, and Transportation hear a proposal to appropriate \$100 million General Fund annually to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for critical and serious infrastructure repairs and reimbursements for flood control infrastructure.

The significant amount of rainfall received this year and the severe damage to the Oroville Dam spillways have caused substantial damage to flood control structures that need to be addressed as soon as possible. Furthermore, the need for a consistent and reliable source of funding to reduce flood-risk in our state is vital to the protection of human life and property.

Our levees have suffered significant damage that could prevent them from functioning properly in the next high-water event unless emergency repairs are completed this year. Additionally, consistent funding is necessary to address the backlog of operation and maintenance needs across the state.

**Critical Repairs:** Critical repairs must be prioritized for construction prior to the start of the next flood season, and there is approximately \$100 million in immediate critical need. The Sacramento, Feather, and Yuba River levees along with the Sutter and Yolo Bypasses are in critical need of infrastructure repair. Some examples include Reclamation District 108 levee slips (\$2 million), Sacramento West Side Levee District levee seepage (\$10 million), and Levee District 1 (Yuba City) levee seepage (\$25 million).

**Serious Repairs:** Serious repairs must be made to urban and rural flood protection facilities in high flood risk areas. There repairs should be made concurrently with critical repairs over the next year. Current need is estimated at \$150 million, but the total extent of damage is difficult to assess until water levels recede.

**Reimbursement:** Local agencies have already spent over \$25 million this year on emergency response activity. For example, the Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency and Reclamation District 17 have each invested \$5 million, and Reclamation District 563 (Tyler Island) has invested \$2.5 million. State funds must be made available to reimburse local agencies for these investments and to help them recover from these considerable financial hits.

The Central Valley Flood Protection Plan estimates up to \$21 billion needed over 30 years for upkeep of the State Plan of Flood Control system of levees and bypasses while an analysis by the DWR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers identified more than \$50 billion in needs in a 2013 report. This request of \$100 million represents the amount of work that can be achieved each year to incrementally reduce this backlog of deferred maintenance needs.


This requested funding investment in our water infrastructure will save lives, protect property, and save the state billions in avoided emergency repairs.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please feel free to contact Senator Nielsen or his Legislative Director, Colin Sueyres, at (916) 651-4004 or at [colin.sueyres@sen.ca.gov](mailto:colin.sueyres@sen.ca.gov) if you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,

  
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- cc: Senator Holly Mitchell, Chair, Standing Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review  
Senator Joel Anderson  
Senator Jim Beall  
Senator Steven M. Glazer  
Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson  
Senator Mike McGuire  
Senator Tony Mendoza  
Senator Bill Monning  
Senator John M. W. Moorlach  
Senator Richard Pan  
Senator Anthony J. Portantino  
Senator Richard D. Roth  
Senator Nancy Skinner  
Senator Jeff Stone  
Senator Bob Wieckowski  
Senator Scott Wilk  
John Laird, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency  
Michael Cohen, Director, Department of Finance  
Camille Wagner, Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Office of Governor Jerry Brown