Tulare County Hispanic Roundtable, Inc.

March 18, 2011

Katherine Hart
Chair, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Dear Chairperson Hart and Board Members:

The Tulare County Hispanic Roundtable's membership is comprised of business owners, educators, concerned citizen activist and organizations that support our mission. We strongly support regulations that will result in a healthier environment for our communities.

Although none of our current membership is actively employed as field workers, nor reside in our rural improvised communities; many of us did work in the fields in our youth, side by side with our parents or we are the children or grand children of field workers.

We know firsthand the health impact of the ill responsible use of pesticides and fertilizers. Thanks to the work of previous generations the most egregious acts of environmental contamination and worker safety have been stopped. However the residue of past acts and current practices still impact our lives and current regulations do not go far enough to mitigate either.

We ask that the Regional Water Board develop an Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program that is strong enough to reduce fertilizer and pesticide pollution of our valley's water resources before any more communities lose their source of safe drinking water.

We desire, support, and will advocate for an effective regulatory program that includes:

1) Effective on-farm programs that actually reduce polluted runoff;

2) Basic data collection on farm practices and water quality in order to establish a baseline, evaluate management practices and measure progress towards water quality objectives;

3) Clear standards for compliance to ensure that water quality goals and timelines are met; and

4) Strong enforcement powers to ensure compliance; and 5) provisions for cleanup and abatement of legacy agricultural contamination.

We urge the Board to incorporate our recommendations into the framework prior to adoption.

Robert Aguilar

Robert Aguilar, Ed.D., Chairman
Tulare County Hispanic Roundtable

Michael Cortes. President
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