

**TESTIMONY OF
FRED CHEN, PRESIDENT
ASIAN-AMERICAN ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION**

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
JULY 13, 1994**

Good (morning) (afternoon). My name is Fred Chen, and I am the immediate past president and director of the Asian-American Architects and Engineers Association of Southern California. We are a statewide organization of more than 500 professionals divided, roughly, half engineering and half architects.

While we may be divided professionally, we are not divided as a state, nor are we divided in our resolve to urge the state and federal governments to come together to solve what has become a crisis in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary.

The problems associated with this important ecological area have been known, to one degree or another, since the early 1950s. The estuary is one of the most studied environments in the United States.

The estuary is also one of the most critical water supply facilities in the country, providing drinking water to some two-thirds of all Californians.

Months ago, President Clinton, in a speech discussing the economic recovery of the nation, underscored the importance of California to the nation as a whole. He correctly noted that, and I am paraphrasing, "as goes California, so goes the nation," in terms of recovering

from the recession that has gripped the United States for too long. An assured supply of high quality water is a key ingredient to that recovery.

Businesses thinking about expanding or locating in California are either giving pause to that decision or, in fact, locating elsewhere. Jobs are either failing to be created, or they are moving somewhere else. Just as a solution in the Bay/Delta estuary is in gridlock, so is the economic growth and the expansion of employment opportunities in California in gridlock.

Clearly, the inability to solve Bay/Delta problems has impacted, and will continue to impact, the urban areas of all of California. In fact, it is interesting to note that the issue of water supplies that has historically divided California is now the point of focus that is bringing California's urban areas together.

We all have a stake in your deliberations and in the state's ability to work with the federal government in reaching reasonable standards in the delta . . . standards that are based on good science; standards that can be practically applied; standards that will help the delta environment and allow California's economy to continue to expand. This, in turn, can give the nation as a whole a lift.

We are all reasonable people, and, together, we can find reasonable solutions. All that requires is the will to work together and the desire to solve a problem rather than choosing not to decide. The Asian American Architects and Engineers Association urges that state to work with the federal government and end the water supply gridlock that ultimately will paralyze the state. Thank you.