



IMPERIAL VALLEY JOINT CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

BRAWLEY

July 3, 2002

CALEXICO

CALIPATRIA

Arthur Baggett, Jr.
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812

EL CENTRO

HOLTVILLE

Dear Mr. Baggett:

IMPERIAL

WEST SHORES

The Imperial Valley Joint Chambers of Commerce is an organization consisting of all six Imperial County chambers of commerce. Collectively, we represent over 1,500 local businesses.

The Joint Chambers has kept abreast of the discussions related to the water transfer since the beginning, over five years ago. Many who have served on the Joint Chambers board and our chambers' boards have been in leadership roles with the Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) Citizen Advisory Commission and Imperial Valley United.

The water transfer agreement between IID and San Diego County Water Authority allows for the use of conserved water through on-farm conservation methods, and expressly prohibits the use of fallowing as a means to conserve water. The business community has been supportive of this type of transfer program because it would sustain our agricultural based economy and protect businesses from third party impacts.

The recent discussion to fallow farmland to conserve water is of great concern to the business community. This type of conservation program would devastate our local economy through the loss of more than 2,000 jobs. The businesses of this community would be the real losers by bearing the brunt of third party impacts.

Another concern for the business community involves the Salton Sea. Studies have predicted the demise of the Sea in about 20 years. Now, it appears the Imperial Valley is being asked to solve this problem too. It is ludicrous to expect the farming community of Imperial Valley to conserve water to transfer to San Diego and "save" the Salton Sea. We would be better served if the state, federal government and those communities

P.O. Box 1613 • El Centro, CA 92244 • Phone 760 352.3861 • Fax 760.352.3246

needing our water, step up to the plate and become a part of the solution to "save" the Sea.

The business community of Imperial Valley wants to play a role in California's plan to reduce its use of Colorado River water to 4.4 maf. However, we will not just stand by and allow an agreement that is currently on the table as a win-win for all, turn into a losing proposition for our valley.

Sincerely,


Daniel Romero
Chairman