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October 2025

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senator
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending Request
Fiscal Year 2027 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Act

Dear Senators Padilla and Schiff:

The Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority, a groundwater sustainability agency responsible for bringing this critically overdrafted basin into sustainability, respectfully requests a \$5 million Congressionally Directed Spending request to initiate a project for a 50-mile water pipeline connecting this isolated region to the State Water Project.

AUTHORIZATION

Item 411 of Section 4367 of the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act authorized \$50 million for water and water supply infrastructure pursuant to Section 219, Environmental Infrastructure assistance. The Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority (hereafter, "IWVGA" or "Authority") is the non-federal sponsor of the project. The Authority's Letter of Intent to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, is attached.

PROJECT: WATER REPLENISHMENT PIPELINE

The water supply infrastructure, known as the Indian Wells Valley Water Replenishment Pipeline, is an approximately 50-mile, 18" to 24" water pipeline that interconnects the currently isolated Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Basin with the State of California Water Project. The Project plans to bring up to 6,431 acre-feet per year of imported water into the Basin by 2070, thus reducing groundwater pumping. The project is more fully described in the sections below. The goal of the Project is to reduce groundwater production in the Basin

to sustainable levels, preserve the community's character, preserve the quality of life of those residing in the Basin, and sustain the mission of the U.S. Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake (“NAWSCL”).

The project is expected to take eight (8) years to construct.

THE GROUNDWATER BASIN

The Indian Wells Valley includes portions of Kern, Inyo, and San Bernardino counties. It is home to approximately 38,000 people and includes the City of Ridgecrest and the U.S. Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake (NAWSCL), a critical installation for weapons and low-flight operations. The basin's water uses include domestic, industrial, agricultural, and military.

IWVGA is a joint-powers authority comprising Kern County, San Bernardino County, Inyo County, the City of Ridgecrest, and the Indian Wells Valley Water District. Two federal ex officio member representatives from the United States Navy and the Bureau of Land Management are critical members of the IWVGA Board of Directors. The Joint Powers Authority was formed pursuant to SGMA as the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Indian Wells Valley Basin. SGMA requires groundwater basins to develop/submit a GSP. In January 2020, IWVGA submitted its GSP and received approval from the State on the suggested sustainability measure in 2021. Included within the approved GSP was an interconnection pipeline to facilitate the necessary imported water supplies to the Indian Wells Valley region. This critical infrastructure project is essential for achieving sustainability in the region.

PROJECT TIMING AND REQUIREMENTS

Water sustainability for the basin is required under California’s SGMA by 2040. The Water Replenishment Pipeline will initially provide 3,000-acre feet of imported water supplies to bring the groundwater basin into sustainability. The project has been sized for regional growth, potential supplies for on installation water needs at NAWSCL, and continuation of other basin uses.

Without this project, sustainability cannot be achieved. Future water needs at NAWSCL, both on installation and off installation, to serve military personnel, contractors, and dependents, cannot be met. Further, as many as one-in-three private wells are anticipated to fail in the next 15 years, compounding the critical urgency of the project.

We respectfully request your consideration of this \$5 million Congressionally Directed Spending Request to initiate a project start for this water infrastructure project.

Sincerely,

Scott Hayman
Chairman
Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority