



The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, Chair
Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, & Wildlife
1020 N Street, Room 160
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 4, 2019

Re: AB 1086 (Bauer-Kahan) – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Garcia,

We write in support of AB 1086 (Bauer-Kahan), a bill that puts the existing State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) in statute and makes some improvements to the program's implementation based on feedback from SWEEP stakeholders and irrigation experts.

This program has been critical to many farmers in our organizations' respective networks, providing them much-needed capital to upgrade their irrigation systems to increase their water use efficiency, reduce their energy use, and improve their crop yield and quality.

Overall, SWEEP has been a highly successful and popular program, with applications outnumbering awards by a nearly 3-to-1 ratio.¹ SWEEP has granted \$61.5 million to 600 projects across 33 counties, which are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 746,000 metric tons of CO₂, equivalent to the emissions of nearly 160,000 passenger vehicles driven for one year.² The program is ranked 10th out of 58 California Climate Investment Programs for emission reduction cost-effectiveness, at \$83/MTCO₂e.³ Of the 600 projects, 3-in-5 are located in critically-overdrafted groundwater basins and 1-in-3 are located in Disadvantaged Communities.⁴

SWEEP was created as part of Governor Brown's emergency drought response. The record-breaking drought has thankfully subsided, but our farmers know the risks of drought remain and are predicted to increase for the state as temperatures rise. Climate science predicts that California will experience a 50 percent increase in severe droughts by 2100.⁵

This program must continue to make California's family farms resilient to the next drought and to achieve the state's groundwater sustainability, climate, and water quality goals. AB 1086 enhances SWEEP by making improvements recommended by farmers in our networks, technical assistance providers, and irrigation experts. These improvements include: prioritizing small and mid-scale farms that need these investments the most; funding necessary trainings for irrigation managers; funding integrated pilot projects with irrigation districts and groundwater sustainability agencies; and setting up an advisory committee of stakeholders and experts to, among other things, improve the program's participation in Southern California, application process, and quantification methodology.

Everyone in California shares a responsibility to more efficiently use water. Agriculture has made great strides on this front; SWEEP and this bill can help our family farms go further. We appreciate your consistent support for this program and respectfully request your 'aye' vote on AB 1086 to protect and improve SWEEP going forward.

Sincerely,



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¹ Shobe, B., Merrill, J., 2018. Climate Smart: Saving Water and Energy on California Farms. Available at: <http://calclimateag.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/SWEEP-Policy-Brief-CalCAN-9-11-18.pdf>

² California Air Resources Board. 2019 California Climate Investments Annual Report. Table ES-2. Passenger vehicle equivalent calculated using the US Environmental Protection Agency's GHG Equivalency Calculator.

³ Ibid

⁴ Shobe, B., Merrill, J., 2018. Climate Smart: Saving Water and Energy on California Farms. Available at: <http://calclimateag.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/SWEEP-Policy-Brief-CalCAN-9-11-18.pdf>

⁵ Pathak, T., et. al. 2018. Climate change trends and impacts on California agriculture: A detailed review. Agronomy, (3)25.