

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2014

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
The White House
Washington, DC 20515

Dear President Obama:

California's San Joaquin Valley is one of the most diverse regions in the Nation, yet remains one of its most hard-hit economically. This region has significant social, economic, and environmental challenges that warrant attention from your administration. Leveraging expertise and assistance from federal agencies to bring in private resources will greatly benefit the long-term growth and economic viability of the San Joaquin Valley (the Valley).

The Valley is home to more than 4 million people and is comprised of eight counties: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare. Each of these counties receives less per capita in federal assistance than the California state average of \$8.90, and approximately \$4 less than the National average of \$10.61. The San Joaquin Valley median is \$6.13.

In 2000, President Bill Clinton issued Executive Order 13173, establishing an Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley. The Task Force's intent was to coordinate and improve existing federal efforts in the Valley, and to work with local leaders to improve its economies. This Task Force ended in 2006.

We believe that the Task Force served a well-meaning and important function for our constituents. We encourage you to issue an Executive Order establishing an Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the San Joaquin Valley.

In issuing the Executive Order, please consider the following recommendations:

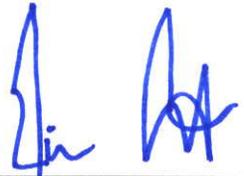
1. Omit a provision that required rotating leadership of the Task Force. This request was highlighted in the Task Force's June 2004 recommendations. We believe that leadership of the Task Forces should remain with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
2. Ensure all Federal Agencies are active participants in the Task Force. This is essential in maximizing available resources, targeting funds for the region, and coordinating efforts to address specific needs in the Valley.
3. Ensure that the Task Force works closely with local partners, as well as the Governor.
4. The Task Force should work closely with the Congressional Delegation that represents this region. We are keenly in tune with the needs of our constituents and can help your administration implement their input.

Again, we urge you to establish an Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the San Joaquin Valley. Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and we look forward to working with you to address the needs of California's San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress