

CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE



RURAL CAUCUS

May 21, 2007

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: Budget Bill Item 9100-101-0001 Local Assistance Tax Relief
Subventions for Open Space - Williamson Act of 1965**

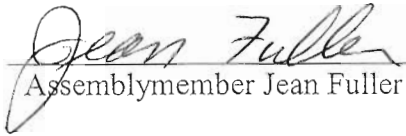
Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:


We respectfully request that you restore funding for the Open Space Subventions to counties in the 2007-2008 California State Budget. We realize that California is confronting enormous budget challenges, however the Governor's 2007-08 Budget proposes to delete the entire program in the amount of \$39 million.

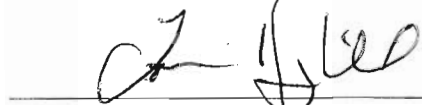
The Williamson Act provides an opportunity to preserve agricultural land amidst the challenges of urban encroachment and development. Recent statistics indicate approximately 15.9 million acres are enrolled in Williamson Act contracts statewide. Enacted in 1965, the California Land Conservation Act, more commonly known as the Williamson Act, enables counties and cities to contract with landowners to restrict the use of their land to agricultural, scenic and open space purposes for a minimum of ten years. Landowners receive a lower tax assessment based on the "use value" rather than "market value" of the property. The state provides reimbursements to local governments to partially defray the loss of property tax revenues. These funds are critical to rural agricultural counties that rely on the subventions to pay for programs such as county libraries, fire protection, and law enforcement.

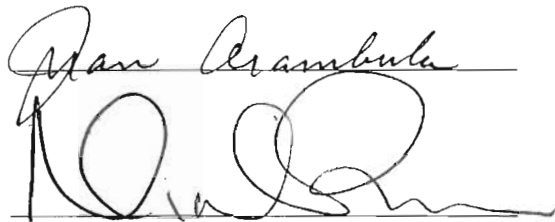
We realize that California is facing yet another unprecedented budget shortfall but we would appreciate your review and consideration to restore funding to this worthy program. Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you should have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Assemblymember Fuller at (916) 319-2032 or Assemblymember Galgiani at (916) 319-2017.

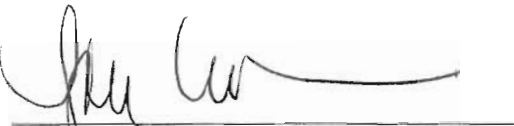
Sincerely,


Assemblymember Jean Fuller

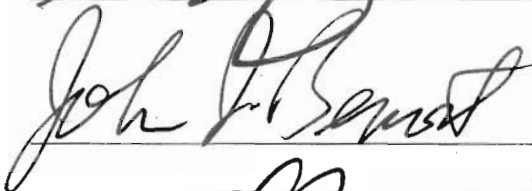

Assemblymember Catherine Galgiani


Assemblymember Tom Berryhill

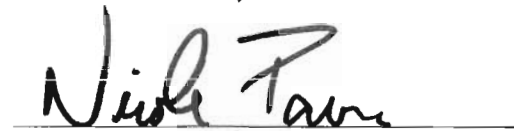




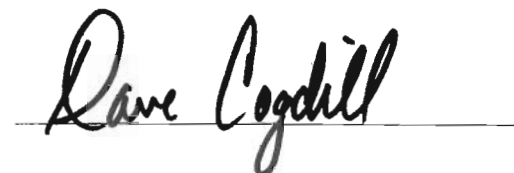


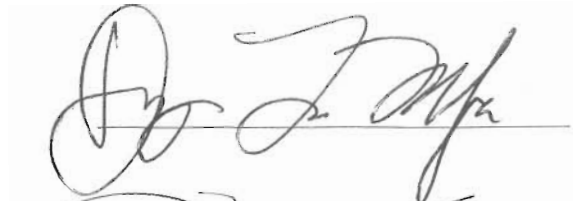








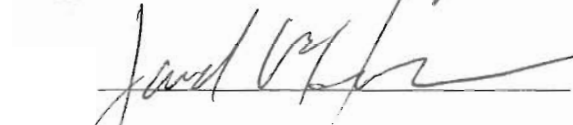








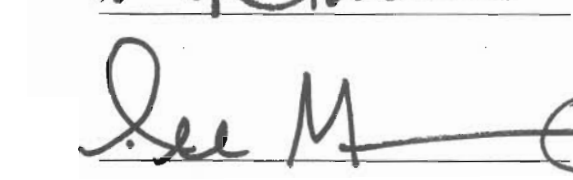


















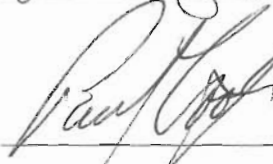


Noreen Egan

Patty Berg



Audra Reichley



Cc: Honorable Fabian Núñez, Speaker, California State Assembly
Honorable Don Perata, President pro Tempore, California State Senate
Honorable Juan Arambula, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4
Honorable Mike Machado, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #4

**Letter to Governor Schwarzenegger
Requesting the Williamson Act Funding be Restored in the
Budget**

List of Signers:

Assemblymembers:

1. Asm. Jean Fuller
2. Asm. Cathleen Galgiani
3. Asm. Tom Berryhill
4. Asm. Anthony Adams
5. Asm. Greg Aghazarian
6. Asm. Joel Anderson
7. Asm. Juan Arambula
8. Asm. John Benoit
9. Asm. Patty Berg
10. Asm. Sam Blakeslee
11. Asm. Paul Cook
12. Asm. Noreen Evans
13. Asm. Ted Gaines
14. Asm. Bonnie Garcia
15. Asm. Guy Houston
16. Asm. Jared Huffman
17. Asm. Kevin Jeffries
18. Asm. Rick Keene
19. Asm. Doug La Malfa
20. Asm. Bill Maze
21. Asm. Nakanishi
22. Asm. Nicole Parra
23. Asm. Sharon Runner
24. Asm. Audra Strickland
25. Asm. Lois Wolk

Senators:

1. Sen. Sam Aanestaad
2. Sen. Roy Ashburn
3. Sen. Dave Cogdill
4. Sen. Dave Cox
5. Sen. Jeff Denham
6. Sen. Maldonado