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**Board of Supervisors**  
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March 1, 2026

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

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
United States Congressman  
2205 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raul Ruiz  
United States Congressman  
2342 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, Congressman Ruiz and Congressman Calvert:

As supervisor for Imperial County's Fourth District, and also as a Director of the Salton Sea Authority, I am writing to convey my strong support for the Salton Sea Authority's FY2027 Energy and Water Appropriations request for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding to advance the Salton Sea Imperial Streams Feasibility Study (Corps Feasibility Study).

The Salton Sea spans 370 square miles in Imperial and Riverside counties and is California's largest lake. The Sea has been sustained by agricultural return flows, which have declined nearly 15 feet since 2003, and will expose roughly 30,000 acres of dry lakebed. It has been estimated that the Sea's playa will become exposed at a rate of 5,500 acres per year and that by 2045 there will be total increase of between 75,000 and 92,300 acres relative to 2003. The Sea is also now twice as salty as the ocean, causing major declines in fish and bird populations along a major stopover in the Pacific Flyway.

Air pollution linked to Salton Sea playa exposure contributes to high rates of asthma and respiratory illness, particularly in children. For example, a recent study evaluating the impact of particulate matter pollution on Imperial Valley school children found that 24% had an asthma diagnosis, much higher than California and national averages. Disadvantaged communities surrounding the Salton Sea also suffer from the highest rates of these illnesses in the state.

The negative impacts caused by declining Sea inflows are likely to accelerate and expand because of anticipated federal water supply cutbacks likely to be adopted as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Colorado River guidelines revisions. Now in draft form, Reclamation contemplates Sea impacts from cutbacks will be addressed through the Corps Feasibility Study.

The completion of the Corps Feasibility Study is a required prerequisite to securing 65% federal funding to address these critical concerns. Given the likelihood that these problems will be compounded by Reclamation's anticipated action, I ask that you ensure the Corps Feasibility Study is fully funded and accelerated to protect the communities I represent.

Sincerely,



Ryan E. Kelley  
Supervisor, District 4  
Imperial County Board of Supervisors