

April 24, 2018

The Honorable Andy Vidak
State Capitol, Room 3082
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 495- Amending the Fish and Game Code

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors supports Senate Bill 495 (Vidak) amending the Fish and Game Code. The Allensworth Community Services District has a Safe Drinking Water Project to drill a new water well for the community of Allensworth and the Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. The community worked diligently to find a new well site and found the only location available to be a parcel adjacent to a wildlife preserve. As such, the new well location is habitat to the endangered Blunt-Nosed Leopard Lizard. The Blunt-Nosed Leopard Lizard currently has fully protected status under the California Endangered Species Act. As such, there is no ability for the community to environmentally mitigate their project and it cannot move forward.

SB 495 proposes to add a new section to the California Fish and Game code which will allow the California Department of Fish and Wildlife discretion to issue an incidental take permit of the Blunt-Nosed Leopard Lizard specifically for the Allensworth Community Services District Safe Drinking Water Project. While this move does not guarantee a viable project for Allensworth, it does allow necessary discretion for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife providing a way for the Department to work collaboratively with the community on establishing feasible mitigation measures. Without this bill Allensworth has no project and no way of accessing safe drinking water. Therefore, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors fully supports SB 495.

Sincerely,

J. Steven Worthley
Chairman of the Board
District Four

Kuyler Crocker
Vice Chairman of the Board
District One

Pete Vander Poel
District Two

Amy Shuklian
District Three

Michael Ennis
District Five

CC Tulare County Delegation