



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

1127-11TH STREET, SUITE 626, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814 · PHONE (916) 446-4647

March 12, 2009

Honorable Dean Florez
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Florez:

RE: SB 170--OPPOSE

Farm Bureau has reviewed your SB 170 relative to Williamson Act contracts and we regret to inform you that we must oppose this measure. Creating a presumption that certain developed uses are in the public interest simply because the land was purchased by a Native American tribe will do irreparable harm to the Williamson Act as well as local planning and zoning.

California and 54 of its counties have made significant public trust investments in the conservation of agricultural land through their participation in the Williamson Act contracts. The California Supreme Court has also weighed-in with its landmark decision *Sierra Club v. Hayward*. To summarize, the court held that the enforceability of the land use restrictions, the contract, is critical to the constitutionally authorized preferential property tax treatment. Farm Bureau, for its part, has fought to protect the integrity of Williamson Act contracts. We firmly believe in the sanctity of agricultural preserves and Williamson Act contracts. Our state's farmers and ranchers have demand no less because they rightfully deserve protection from incompatible uses that the Williamson Act's agricultural preserve requirement provides. Allowing housing, infrastructure and people-serving event centers in the heart of exclusive agricultural zones should not automatically be presumed to outweigh the purposes of the Williamson Act. The purposes of the Act, as articulated in the Legislature findings Government Code Section 51220, would simply be cast aside in favor of incompatible developments that would also be contrary to county General Plans and zoning ordinances.

We sincerely hope that you would reconsider moving this measure forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Gamper".

John R. Gamper
Director
Taxation and Land Use

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.