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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GIVE supports emergency Water Supply Act of 2008

Gov. Schwarzenegger, Sen. Feinstein propose November ballot measure to address the dire circumstances facing California's future water needs.

CORONA, Calif. – The Green Institute for Village Empowerment, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting issues of sustainability, supports the compromise water legislation proposed Friday by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

The **Safe, Clean, Reliable Drinking Water Supply Act of 2008** is a \$9.3 billion bond proposal designed to increase water storage, improve water conveyance, restore the Delta ecosystem to allow California to take control of its own water systems, and increase conservation and tools to use water more efficiently.

Schwarzenegger and Feinstein called the measure a “compromise” approach that will move California toward establishing reliable water sources. It is \$2.6 less than the governor’s Strategic Growth Plan first proposed in 2006, but still addresses the key points necessary to pull the state water system out of disrepair.

California is facing the most significant water crisis in its history, the governor and senator declared in announcing their shared strategy. After experiencing two years of drought and the driest spring in recorded history, water reserves are extremely low and would not be able to meet public demand during a major disruption to the state’s water delivery system such as an earthquake or levee breach. With the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem near collapse, court-ordered restrictions on water deliveries from the Delta have reduced supplies from the state’s two largest water systems by 20 to 30 percent as demands from a growing population continue to rise.

Les Hamasaki, executive director of GIVE, said the measure will have statewide benefits that will help ensure water availability on a local level, too.

“The future growth of the Inland Empire will depend on the continuing supply of water to meet the needs of the 4 million people who live here and to accommodate more than 2 million additional residents in the next 20 years,” Hamasaki said. “We must first conserve what we have, and develop water storage and water-saving technology to ensure our economic and environmental future.”

Governor Schwarzenegger, in a press release announcing the measure, said California faces an urgent need for comprehensive water reform. “This bipartisan plan is offered as a potential compromise that puts us on the path toward restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, expanding water supplies and promoting conservation efforts that will ensure a clean, reliable water supply for California,” he said. “I know that legislative leaders recognize the urgent need to address California’s water crisis, and look forward to working with them to present a plan to voters this November.”

Feinstein said it is time to break the “long-standing stalemate over water.”

“The combination of drought, court ordered water restrictions, global warming, and an increasing population has placed a major strain on the existing infrastructure,” she said. “We need to prepare now for the future. ... I hope that all sides can come together around a consensus plan that can be approved this November.”

The Green Institute for Village Empowerment is a nonprofit organization established in 2005 to promote issues related to sustainability. GIVE hosts events and initiatives, and sponsors educational conferences and promotes activities within the Inland Empire and beyond. For more information visit www.giveforthefuture.org

GIVE is also the sponsor of the Green Valley Initiative, (GVI), an unprecedented regional economic development plan to promote green technologies, renewable energy, alternative transportation and sustainable lifestyles to the Inland Empire. Launched in 2007 as a project of the Green Institute for Village Empowerment, (GIVE), the Green Valley Initiative began with 100 stakeholders from the region, and now boasts the involvement of more than 500 people representing government, education, business, transportation, utilities, environmental groups and the community-at-large. Visit www.greenvalleynow.org

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