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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## “Bond to Drown the State in Debt While Californians go Thirsty: Bay Area Joins State-wide Opposition to Water Bond”

Tuesday, August 12, 2008 at 10:30 AM—San Francisco City Hall, Polk Street Steps

For more information contact:  
Zach Tuller, Office of Supervisor Ammiano (415) 554-5148  
Jennifer Clary, Clean Water Action (707) 483-6352  
Linda Sheehan, California Coastkeeper Alliance (510) 219-7730

Supervisor and State Assembly candidate Tom Ammiano on Tuesday joins water leaders and advocates around the state in asking Governor Schwarzenegger and Senator Feinstein to remove their \$9.3 billion bond from consideration for the November ballot. Advocates want the Governor to instead distribute existing bond funds, and engage in a process to develop real solutions for California’s water challenges

“I don’t want to start my term in Sacramento telling mothers that their local school is closing so we can build a dam,” said Supervisor Ammiano, who was unchallenged in the Democratic primary for the seat being vacated by Assembly member Mark Leno. Ammiano, a former school board member, created San Francisco’s rainy day fund, which will provide schools with more than \$18 million for the current school year to partially offset state cuts. “I spent my years as a Supervisor bringing people together, and I want to do the same thing in Sacramento,” said Ammiano, citing his 2002 charter amendment which reformed the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission as an example of bringing all parties together to fix a broken system.

“In San Francisco, we’ve been working for years to ensure that our water system returns water to the environment and diversifies our local supply in a responsible manner,” said Jennifer Clary, a policy analyst for Clean Water Action, an environmental organization based in San Francisco. “This bond doesn’t reflect those priorities.”

Community organizations impacted by state budget cuts also came to express their strong disapproval for the proposed bond. “We support Central Valley communities that don’t have safe drinking water, and we support fishing communities on the coast that have been devastated by the collapse of the salmon industry,” said Karen Pierce of Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates. “Unfortunately, this bond doesn’t help them, and it hurts us, because the cost of repaying the debt will fall primarily on California’s poorest residents.”

“Our state is in dire need of leadership on water that amounts to more than simply spending billions more on failed strategies,” said Linda Sheehan, Executive Director of the California Coastkeeper Alliance, representing 12 California Waterkeepers including San Francisco Baykeeper. “California needs a strong foundation of policies that commit to clean, abundant water. Instead, California’s water policy is a house of cards that fails to hold up our vision of locally sustainable water supplies and healthy waterways.”

Adam Scow, California organizer for Food & Water Watch, agreed. “This billion dollar bond boondoggle will do little to solve our State’s water problems,” he said. “California needs a comprehensive water plan before allocating billions of dollars of taxpayer’s money.”

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