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BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON
EDUCATION FINANCE
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 5 ON STATE
ADMINISTRATION

September 2, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum:

We, the undersigned members of the California Legislature, urge you to immediately halt and reject the proposed land exchange at Yosemite National Park now under consideration to benefit a private developer. Yosemite belongs to no one and to everyone. It is held in trust for generations yet to come, and this deal would break that promise.

This is not a close call. It is a proposal to transfer land inside one of the most treasured public spaces in America to a private company for its own commercial benefit. No land swap of this kind should be on the table. Yosemite is not a subdivision, and it is not for sale.

That principle is as old as Yosemite's federal protection. In 1864, in the middle of the Civil War, President Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant Act, setting aside Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias for public use and protection. It marked the first time the federal government set aside scenic land specifically for preservation and public use, and it laid the groundwork for the national park system that followed. What is being proposed now runs directly against that founding principle, more than a century and a half later.

This is also not a new idea. A previous owner sought private road access through park land beginning in the 2000s. The National Park Service refused, and the owner sued. In 2012, a federal appeals court upheld the rejection of the owner's claims to road access after years of litigation. That should have ended the matter.

Instead, after the current developer purchased the adjacent parcels in 2024 and renewed efforts to obtain direct access through Yosemite, the same underlying proposal has returned. Not through

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the courts this time, but through a land exchange negotiated directly with officials in your Department.

We are further concerned by reporting that the Department has considered using the Land and Water Conservation Fund to help pay for this exchange. That fund exists to acquire and protect public land, not to underwrite its handoff to a private developer.

Earlier this month, the California State Legislature adopted AJR 9, a resolution urging full funding and staffing for the National Park Service and opposing the transfer of federal park lands. We write in that same spirit. Our national parks belong equally to every American. They are not the Department's to trade away, and they are not for sale.

The existence of a land-exchange mechanism does not make this an appropriate use of it. Protecting Yosemite requires no creative interpretation of federal law, just the judgment to say no.

We respectfully request that you confirm immediately that the Department will not proceed with this exchange.

Sincerely,



Greg Wallis
Assemblymember, 47th District



Robert Rivas
Assembly Speaker



Chris Rogers
Assemblymember, 2nd District



Cecelia Aguiar-Curry
Assemblymember, 4th District



Joe Patterson
Assemblymember, 5th District



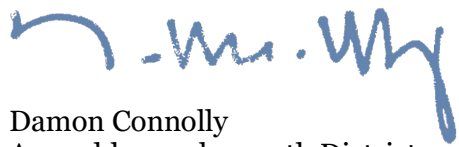
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Assemblywoman, 6th District



Josh Hoover
Assemblymember, 7th District



Heath Flora
Assemblymember, 9th District



Damon Connolly
Assemblymember, 12th District



Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Assemblymember, 16th District



Juan Alanis
Assemblymember, 22nd District



Ash Kalra
Assemblymember, 25th District



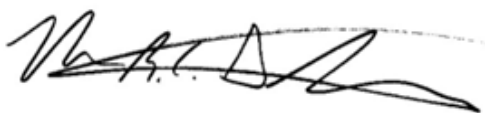
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Assemblymember, 36th District



Juan Carrillo
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John Harabedian
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Nick Schultz
Assemblymember, 44th District



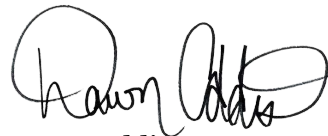
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Assemblymember, 15th District



Diane Papan
Assemblymember, 21st District



Marc Berman
Assemblymember, 23rd District



Dawn Addis
Assemblymember, 30th District



Steve Bennett
Assemblymember, 38th District



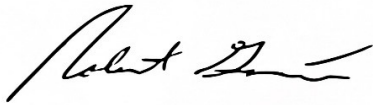
Pilar Schiavo
Assemblymember, 40th District



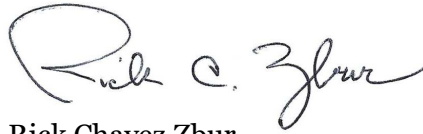
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James C. Ramos
Assemblymember, 45th District



Robert Garcia
Assemblymember, 50th District



Rick Chavez Zbur
Assemblymember, 51st District



Jessica M. Caloza
Assemblymember, 52nd District



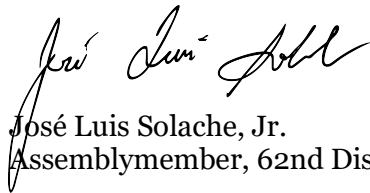
Isaac G. Bryan
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Lisa Calderon
Assemblymember, 56th District



Leticia Castillo
Assemblymember, 58th District



José Luis Solache, Jr.
Assemblymember, 62nd District



Cottie Petrie Norris
Assemblymember, 73rd District



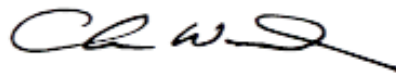
Laurie Davies
Assemblymember, 74th District



Dr. Darshana R. Patel
Assemblymember, 76th District



Tasha Boerner
Assemblymember, 77th District



Christopher M. Ward
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Dr. LaShae Sharp-Collins
Assemblywoman, 79th District



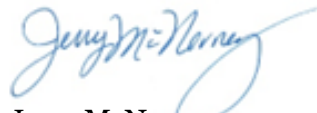
David Alvarez
Assemblymember, 80th District



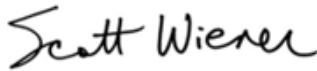
Brian W. Jones
Senate Minority Leader



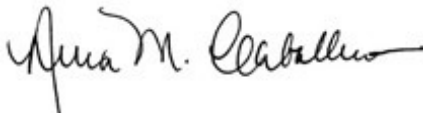
Christopher Cabaldon
Senator, 3rd District



Jerry McNerney
Senator, 5th District



Scott Weiner
Senator, 11th District



Anna M. Caballero
Senator, 14th District



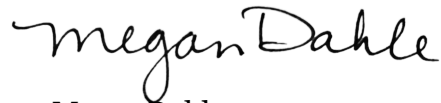
Rosilcie Ochoa Bogh
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Senator, 24th District



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Senator, 1st District



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Senator, 13th District



John Laird
Senator, 17th District



Caroline Menjivar
Senator, 20th District



Suzette Martinez Valladeres
Senator, 23rd District



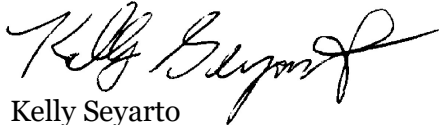
Maria Elena Durazo
Senator, 26th District



Henry Stern
Senator, 27th District



Bob Archuleta
Senator, 30th District



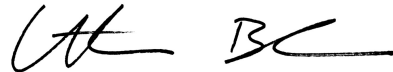
Kelly Seyarto
Senator, 32nd District



Thomas Umberg
Senator, 34th District



Tony Strickland
Senator, 36th District



Catherine S. Blakespear
Senator, 38th District



Akilah Weber Pierson, MD
Senator, 39th District