

# State lawmakers approve ballot measure for \$7.5 billion water bond

**Melanie Mason, Los Angeles Times, 8-14-14**

California lawmakers approved a ballot measure for a \$7.5 billion water bond Wednesday evening, following an eleventh-hour scramble to secure bipartisan support by increasing funding for new reservoirs.

Soon after lawmakers wrapped up, Brown signed AB 1471 by Assemblyman Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood), one of two identical measures they had approved. It had passed the Assembly on a 77-2 vote and won unanimous approval in the Senate.

“We hit the sweet spot when it comes to a balance between the various water needs of California -- between storage, groundwater, clean drinking water and the whole host of other investments that are in this bond,” said Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) in an interview before the vote.

As for the costs, Steinberg added, "I think \$7.5 [billion] hits it just about right."

Sen. Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) said past water plans were too focused on the Sacramento Delta, and the new bond recognizes the water supply needs of the whole state as well as the water rights of farmers and others.

“That is so critical to being able to complete one reservoir and most of another one,” Nielsen said. “This gives us the opportunity to guarantee the future.”

The plan replaces an \$11.1 billion bond written by lawmakers in 2009 that was set to go before voters in November. Legislators had already postponed a statewide vote on that bond twice, fearing its high price tag would doom it at the polls.