

April 9, 2004

The Honorable Barbara Matthews, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 5155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 1896 (Jerome Horton), relating to Agricultural Inspectors, California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association...Oppose unless funded.

Dear Assemblymember Matthews:

The California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association (CACASA) oppose unless funded Assembly Bill 1896 that is scheduled for hearing before your Assembly Appropriations Committee on Wednesday, April 14, 2004.

Existing law prohibits the Secretary of Food and Agriculture from entering into a cooperative agreement with a county of the first class unless all Agricultural Inspector Aides performing work under the cooperative agreement are afforded the protections of permanent employees. AB 1896 would revise this requirement to 50% of the aides to be permanent employees for fiscal year 2004-05 and 100% for fiscal year 2005-06.

Although AB 1896 only affects one county, it sets a precedent by requiring Los Angeles County to provide permanent employment to a specified number of Agricultural Inspector Aides without the requisite funding to implement that requirement. The Secretary of the Department of Food and Agriculture has indicated that although these services are provided under contract by the County Agricultural Commission, there is no additional state funding for this purpose.

The Association urges your opposition to AB 1896 unless adequate funding is provided to the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioners.

Sincerely,

William H. Siverling
Legislative Advocate

Cc: Assemblymember Jerome Horton
Each Member and Consultant, Assembly Agriculture Committee