

# Jerry Brown signs drought relief package

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Gov. Jerry Brown signed a \$1.1 billion drought relief and flood protection package Friday, as California's dry conditions stretch into a fourth year.

The package's enactment marks the second time in two years that Brown and lawmakers approved emergency legislation related to California's ongoing drought.

"This funding is just one piece of a much larger effort to help those most impacted by the drought and prepare the state for an uncertain future," Brown said in a statement. "But make no mistake, from Modoc to Imperial County, rain is not in the forecast and every Californian must be doing their utmost to conserve water."

The measure largely serves to allocate bond funds that were previously approved, including \$660 million for flood control projects and about \$273 million in water recycling and drinking water quality programs.

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All but about \$30 million was proposed in Brown's January budget plan. The relief package will accelerate spending – allocating money immediately instead of after the July 1 start of the next budget year.

The package includes about \$75 million in general fund spending for programs such as emergency food aid for farmworkers displaced by the drought.

Brown and legislative leaders announced the drought legislation last week. It moved quickly through the Legislature despite protests from Republicans who said bill language will unnecessarily extend government reach into water policy.

GOP lawmakers objected to provisions authorizing fines of up to \$8,000 for people who illegally divert water from rivers and streams, and to the creation of a new state office to promote wastewater treatment and other water projects.

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