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gram; a list of any federal programs the San Joaquin Valley has not used to its full potential and why; a comparison of San Joaquin Valley economic data with other high poverty areas; a comprehensive review of any existing studies on the San Joaquin Valley and the principle findings; a review of current environmental concerns face the San Joaquin Valley.

Health

Health Professional Shortage

Under the "Conrad 30 program," states are entitled to as many as 30 waivers of the J-1 immigration visa "home residency requirement," if they agree to work in health profession shortage areas within the United States. This program has permitted a limited number of foreign medical graduates to serve in American communities, which have otherwise been unable to attract health care providers. Congressman Nunes recently cosponsored H.R. 4156, which would reauthorize this program.

Housing

Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program

Congressman Nunes became a cosponsor of H.R. 4363, the Helping Hands for Homeownership Act of 2004. This bill would block a rule change made by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that would restrict the use of "sweat equity" hours by groups that apply for Self-Help Homeownership

Opportunity Program (SHOP). This program provides competitive grants for groups like Habitat for Humanity to overcome the largest obstacle to house building - land and infrastructure expenses. These funds are crucial in helping Habitat affiliates across the country acquire sites for affordable home and community building.

Portugal

Commending the Portuguese Government

Rep. Nunes introduced legislation (H.Res. 688) that would commend the Government of Portugal and the Portuguese people for their long-standing friendship, stalwart leadership, and unwavering support of the United States in the effort to combat international terrorism. The United States and Portugal have a long history of consistent friendship and support.

Transportation

Mexicana Airlines and Fresno Yosemite International Airport

Rep. Nunes is aware of the ongoing discussions between the Fresno City Council and Mexicana Airlines to allow direct flights between Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FYI) and various cities in Mexico. In a letter to the Fresno City Council, Rep. Nunes commended the City Council for its work to increase economic development and jobs in the San Joaquin Valley and expressed support for the concept of direct flights

from Fresno to numerous international destinations. However, this support is contingent on the highest standards of agricultural inspections based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations. The threat of infestation from exotic pests or disease is real and can potentially destroy the livelihood of many families in the San Joaquin Valley. Rep. Nunes encouraged the Fresno City Council to work with USDA, Department of Transportation, and Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive plan to protect the San Joaquin Valley.

Water

Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Feasibility Study

Rep. Nunes wrote to President Bush requesting that he include \$5 million line item for the Upper San Joaquin River Basin storage feasibility study in his Fiscal Year 2006 Budget. The San Joaquin Valley continues to face a water crisis in which our water supplies have become inadequate to meet expanding needs. Demands by domestic users, industry, and environmental needs continue to grow with no relief in sight. The Upper San Joaquin River Basin storage feasibility study would take the next step in the process to resolve this pervasive problem. In fact, this study will determine the feasibility of increasing water storage capability on the Upper San Joaquin River in California.

Quick Facts

In June, Rep. Nunes helped 47 constituents overcome problems with government agencies. For the year, the Congressman has directly solved cases for 214 constituents and is currently assisting 399 others.