

Legislative work—cont.'d

support the Central Valley HIDTA's application for \$1.375 million through the Consolidated Priority Operational Targets (CPOT) program which targets drug kingpins. This funding can be used to more effectively combat the production, use, and distribution of meth.

Telecommunications

In today's world of large media conglomerates and digital cable, it seems that many of the smaller more locally focused television stations are being edged out. Congressman Nunes feared that this would soon happen in the San Joaquin Valley unless something was done to stop this encroachment, so he became a co-sponsor of H.R. 1626, the Local Voices on TV Act. This legislation would increase the number of low power television (LPTV) stations that would be eligible to receive mandatory carriage by their local cable systems. It would also require that the cable system carry a LPTV station should there not be enough signals from the high power stations to fill the channels set aside for local programming.

Trade

Olives (Doha and Morocco Free Trade Agreement (FTA))

In an effort to keep United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick informed about the San Joaquin Valley's interest in current trade negotiations, Congressman Nunes wrote to him to discuss issues of con-

cern to olive growers in relation to the Doha Development Agenda and the Morocco FTA.

International Shipping Rates

As someone from the San Joaquin Valley who has been involved with agriculture his whole life, Congressman Nunes understands how international shipping costs can hurt many businesses. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has recently requested to raise airfreight-shipping rates for lower density cargo. This will significantly increase shipping costs and create burdens for most San Joaquin Valley businesses. Consequently, Congressman Nunes sent a letter to Secretary of Transportation, Norman Mineta, requesting that he refuse this request from IATA.

Veterans

Under current law, federal employees pay their health premiums on a pre-tax basis. As a matter of fairness, Congressman Nunes co-sponsored H.R. 1231, sponsored by Representative Tom Davis (R-V A), which will permit veterans participating in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program to pay premiums on a pre-

tax basis. The bill also will permit TRICARE recipients to deduct premiums and fees from their taxes.

Water

Colorado River

The core of the California Colorado River Plan is the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA), which will provide for the conservation and voluntary reallocation of Colorado River water within Southern California. However, despite months of intense negotiations, the Southern California water agencies that are parties to the QSA have thus far been unable to finalize the agreement.

Consequently, Congressman Nunes sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton asking her to delay the proposed reduction of water deliveries to Southern California to allow Interior and the California water agencies to devote their full energies to crafting a QSA compromise.

