

Nunes wants raisins for Iraq

Rep. Devin Nunes has delivered a bipartisan letter to President George Bush, urging him to include California raisins in food aid sent to the recently liberated people of Iraq.

"I believe that it is impor-



tant for U.S. food aid not only to bear the flag of our nation, but also to consist of commodities produced on American farms," said Mr. Nunes, a member of the

Committee of Agriculture. "Raisins are ready to eat food, with no preparation required - making them ideal for humanitarian relief operations that depend on quick distribution. Raisins are also an integral part of the culinary traditions of the Iraqi people."

Congress earmarked \$250 million in funding for food aid programs in the current year, including relief operations in Iraq and other nations.

The letter was signed by several California congressman. The lawmakers noted that California raisins are virtually non-perishable, do not require refrigeration, and are easy to store and transport.

"They are an excellent source of energy and are high in caloric value," Mr. Nunes said.

The purchase of surplus raisins from California farm-

ers would serve the nutritional needs of people in Iraq, as well as provide relief to farmers suffering from the worst agriculture economy since the Great Depression. This dual benefit represents the best possible investment of tax dollars and would extend the benefits of our humanitarian relief operations to farmers in the United States, the letter states.

"This is a relief effort for not only countries like Iraq but domestically it will help Fresno growers. Raisins are the largest crop grown in this area and this could have a tremendous, positive economic impact," said John Beck, president of the California Raisin Marketing Board. "We are certainly grateful for Congressman Nunes' leadership on this issue."

Quick Facts

In May, Rep. Nunes wrote to 1,137 constituents in response to their inquiries. Year to date, Rep. Nunes has responded to 4,575 constituents via the U.S. Mail.

Grant funding for libraries

A library services bill co-sponsored by Rep. Devin Nunes is paying off for libraries in Fresno and Tulare counties.

In March, the congressman signed on to a bill that reauthorizes funding for the Library Services and Technology Act. It overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives on a 416-2 vote.

"I'm happy to see federal tax dollars returned to the district to help stimulate excellence in library services and promote access to learning resources for children and adults," said Mr. Nunes, an assistant Majority Whip.

Among the grants

awarded to libraries in the 21st Congressional District:

The Fresno County Free Library will receive from \$20,000-\$50,000 under the Public Library Services for People with Disabilities program.

The Fresno County Free Library, the Tulare City Library and the Tulare County Library will get amounts matching funds it receives from the California Council for the Humanities, which is sponsoring the "Reading *The Grapes of Wrath*" program in libraries throughout the state.

Funding will also go to the Live Homework Help program offered by the Fresno

County Free Library at the Cedar-Clinton Branch Library, the Clovis Regional Library and the Sunnyside Regional Library.

The Fresno County Free Library will get \$8,195 for the Public Library Staff Education Program that provides tuition reimbursement for public and county law library staff who are pursuing a Master's degree to upgrade their skills.

Other funds will be more generally distributed to libraries statewide, including libraries in the 21st Congressional District.