

Opinion: Water bond needs to be taken off the table

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Jan. 12, 2012, Orange County Register.*

The last thing California needs now is more state bonds, with the interest and principal paid from the general fund. The state already can't pay its current bills, including debt service on past bonds.

There are signs the Legislature might dump from the November ballot an \$11 billion water bond measure originally planned for two years ago. It was originally called Proposition 18, but in 2010 the recession was in full force, and voters were in no mood to continue their decade-long splurging on bonds. So the Legislature pushed the vote off another two years.

Assembly Speaker John Perez, D-Los Angeles, believes that "\$11 billion is, I think, higher than voters would be willing to support right now. And there are superfluous projects that are included in that water bond that would be nice to have, but aren't crucial." He also believes water storage is important. He was quoted in an article by John Myers, Sacramento bureau chief for KQED/TV. And he correctly pointed out that a supermajority – a two-thirds vote – in both houses of the Legislature is the reason a Niagara of pork projects was included to bloat the bill.

Mr. Myers reported that "it also takes a two-thirds vote to either delay the water bond or rework it for 2012. Early signs on bipartisanship are good; Assembly GOP leader Connie Conway said ... she's also willing to take a second look at the issue."

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