

Editorial: Obama uses California as cash register

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Sometime today, a very fast jet carrying a very important man and his entourage will streak across the Central Valley sky.

That's the closest President Obama will get to the part of California where mortgages are upside down, where unemployment is disgracefully high and where levees are in need of rebuilding.

We understand that Obama did the politically smart thing during the 2012 campaign. Knowing he had a lock on this blue state's 55 electoral votes, he flew to the coast, picked the pockets of wealthy Californians and quickly left to stump for votes in battleground states. His only visit to the Valley was a photo op with Helen Chavez, widow of Cesar Chavez, in Kern County.

Now that the campaign is history and he never will have to run for office again, however, he should consider making a real visit to these parts.

The Central Valley has issues that are worthy of a president's attention, like how to irrigate the richest agriculture region in the nation while maintaining and restoring healthy rivers and a Delta.

Perhaps he could see how a successful farm-to-fork program works and come up with some ideas for his administration's crusade against childhood obesity. He definitely should see how decisions intended to help Indians are expanding gambling – a vice he used to oppose.

The president, who takes pride in having revamped the federal government's ability to respond to emergencies, should figure out how to free up money to repair Natomas levees before they fail.

Apparently, Obama was too busy on this visit to the Golden State. The Fundraiser in Chief hopes to help Democrats retake the House, and was vacuuming up money for that effort from billionaires and multi-millionaires in Sea Cliff, Pacific Heights and Atherton.

Maybe as he flies back over, he will gaze out the window, and realize California is a big state. Perhaps one of his political advisers will whisper something about how there are several swing congressional seats in this part of the state. Maybe he'll resolve that one of these days, he will stop by and learn a little bit about the other California.