



April 24, 2017

VIA EMAIL: Committee Secretary Chinook Shin, Chinook.Shin@asm.ca.gov

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
Chair, Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
State Capitol, Room 4140
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments on Proposed Legislation to Implement Executive Order B-37-16, “Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life”

Dear Chair Garcia,

The undersigned agencies appreciate this opportunity to submit comments on legislation currently under review by the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee to implement the Governor’s Executive Order B-37-16, “Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life”

Water resource management in California faces unprecedented challenges from climate change and a growing population. The Chino Groundwater Basin region, located primarily in the western end of San Bernardino County, is at the cutting edge of these challenges, as our region lies in the interior hotter area of southern California and is one of the fastest growing areas of the State.

Collectively, our agencies have worked hard to develop a robust portfolio of local, drought-resilient water supplies that also help us reduce our dependence on imported water. Over the past 15 years, we have invested nearly five hundred million dollars in ratepayer and state/federal funding to develop over 100,000 acre-feet of new water supplies from recycled water, groundwater desalination, storm water capture and recharge, and improved water efficiency. We also did our part to achieve the Governor’s mandated reductions in residential water use during the drought. The success of our collective work is underscored by the fact that the Chino Basin is one of the only regions in the State in which groundwater supplies increased between 2013 and 2016.

In December 2016, we supported and offered suggestions to improve the state agency draft report, “Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life, Implementing Executive Order B-37-16.” The final report incorporates many of our requested changes, including recognition of drought-resilient supplies, local use of state data, and an ongoing stakeholder process.

Consistent with our previous comments to the Administration, as you consider legislation to implement the Governor's order we request that each of the following elements be included in bills forwarded to the Assembly floor.

1. **Explicitly recognize the value of all locally developed, drought resilient, and hydrologically independent water supplies in the water shortage contingency plans.** Development of local water supplies that are not impacted by droughts should be deemed fully reliable under all historical drought hydrology and plausible climate change impacts. These supplies include not only recycled water, potable reuse, and ocean desalination, but also treatment/reuse of contaminated groundwater and designated storage accounts in sustainably managed groundwater basins. Suppliers that have developed these types of supplies should be recognized for their advanced planning and investments, and these water supplies should not be subject to reductions under shortage conditions.
2. **Build upon existing long-term water efficiency standards set under the authorized regulatory processes and supported by the Legislature.** Use of landscape budgets with efficiency standards to establish outdoor targets has been authorized by the Legislature since 1992, and these requirements have been updated twice (as recently as 2015) through Department of Water Resources regulatory proceedings on the state's Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance. Similarly, the Legislature in 2015 directed the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt performance standards for reducing urban water losses due to leaks (SB 555). Consistent with the State's final report, these existing efficiency standards should be used as the starting point for setting and/or updating future statewide water efficiency standards.
3. **Avoid overlap between existing and future compliance targets.** Consistent with the State's final report, maintain the requirement under SB X7-7 for water suppliers to meet the existing statutory 20 percent urban water use reduction goal by 2020, and require compliance with newly adopted urban water use targets in 2025. This avoids the confusion of overlapping regulatory requirements.
4. **Ensure compliance requirements recognize variations in local conditions.** Compliance with water use efficiency requirements must recognize the diversity of water supply conditions and uses across the State. We support customized water efficiency targets based on statewide standards and local water supplier control over their actions to achieve the efficiency targets. We also support regional collaboration in assisting individual agencies' efforts in achieving compliance.
5. **Ensure that appropriate considerations be given to water supplier targets based upon unique local conditions.** An adjustment process for unique circumstances such as seasonal increases in the population served, use of swamp coolers, and provision of water for horses and other livestock in areas served by water suppliers, is appropriate to customize efficiency-based targets to local conditions.
6. **Clearly affirm that water rights under the framework are protected consistent with existing law.** Legislation should include explicit language that maintains protection of rights to conserved water.

Finally, we are encouraged that the Legislature is considering all of the bills related to this important area of public policy through the regular policy committee process, as initiated by your Committee hearing on April 25.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Eunice Ulloa, Executive Director
Chino Basin Water Conservation District



Rad Bartlam, City Manager
City of Chino Hills



Chad Blais, Public Works Director
City of Norco



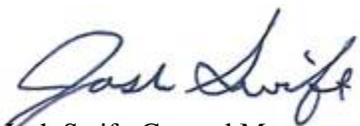
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Martin Thouvenell, Interim City Manager
City of Upland



Martin Zvirbulis, General Manager
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Josh Swift, General Manager
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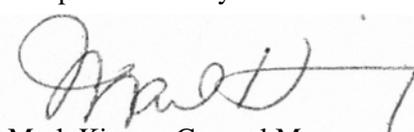
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