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BOARD SECRETARY:  
KAIT KNIGHT

## AGENDA

The Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of Diablo Water District will be held on January 18, 2024 at 1:30 pm at the Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta, 69 Big Break Road, Oakley, CA 94561. This meeting is being conducted in person for all five Board of Directors. Members of the public and District staff may attend the meeting.

The District's agendas and supporting documents are available on the District's website: [www.diablowater.org](http://www.diablowater.org), or by calling Kait Knight at (925) 625-6587. A fee may be charged for copies.

If you have a special accommodation needs to attend the meeting, please provide at least two (2) working days' notice prior to the meeting by calling Kait Knight at (925) 625-6587.

### **1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance.**

### **2. Public Input.**

Anyone present may address the Board of Directors on any subject within the jurisdiction of Diablo Water District. If the subject item is on this Agenda, please hold public comment until the appropriate item. **All virtual attendees will remain on mute until called upon to address the Board.**

## Action Items

### **3. Consent Calendar.**

It is recommended by the General Manager that these items, which are expected to be routine in nature and without controversy, be received and acted upon by the Board without discussion. If any Board member or interested party requests that an item be removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion, it will be considered separately. *The consent calendar may be approved by a single motion to approve, followed by a second and then a call for vote.*

**A. California State Water and Wastewater Extended Arrearage Payment Program.**

Staff Recommendation: Adopt Resolution No. 2024-01, authorizing the General Manager to submit the reimbursement request for the State Water Resources Control Board's Extended Arrearages Payment Program.

**Discussion Items**

**4. Strategic Planning Discussion.**

**5. Next Meetings of the Board of Directors.**

- January 24, 2024 Regular Meeting – 6:30 pm
- February 28, 2024 Regular Meeting – 6:30 pm
- March 27, 2024 Regular Meeting – 6:30 pm

**6. Adjournment.**

*Posted this 16<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.*



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**Dan Muelrath, General Manager**

# DIABLO WATER DISTRICT

January 18, 2024 Board Meeting

Item Number 3

TO: Each Director

FROM: Jennifer McCoy, Finance & Accounting Manager

SUBJECT: California State Water and Wastewater Extended Arrearage Payment Program.

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As part of the Federal COVID-19 relief package, the California State Legislature has allocated \$985 million to the State Water Board to provide relief to community water systems for unpaid water and wastewater bills accrued between March 4, 2020, and June 15, 2021. The State Water Board disbursed over \$385 million for arrearages.

On July 10, 2023, Governor Newsom signed a budget trailer bill expanding the Arrearages Program. This new extended water and wastewater arrearage payment program extends the COVID Relief Period to December 31, 2022, with the state legislature allocating the remaining \$600 million in federal funding for this program. Staff has reviewed all eligible accounts and filled out all the necessary forms for the General Manager to sign after the Board delegates signatory authority. There are a total of 155 accounts with \$47,588.30 in eligible invoices that could be paid by the program. The program also allows for an additional 3% (approximately \$1,427.65) to cover administrative costs.

Applications will be eligible for submission through January 31, 2024, and disbursement of funds will begin immediately after. If we are approved, upon receiving payment from the State, Staff will have 60 days to disburse bill credits. The program also requires water systems to waive late fees (approximately \$14,752.47) for the invoices that were paid by the State program during the COVID relief period from June 16, 2021, through December 31, 2022. Staff will then be required to offer affected customers a payment plan for the remaining balances owing to their accounts.

Staff has been diligent in offering payment plans for customers since the moratorium for water shut-offs expired in January 2022. The majority of the accounts that we are submitting payment for from this extended program are inactive accounts, whereas the customer left the District with an owing balance.

## RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution No. 2024-01, authorizing the General Manager to submit the reimbursement request for the State Water Resources Control Board's Extended Arrearages Payment Program.

Jennifer McCoy

Jennifer McCoy

Finance & Accounting Manager

Attached: Resolution No. 2024-01

## **RESOLUTION NO. 2024 – 01**

### **A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF DIABLO WATER DISTRICT AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER TO SUBMIT THE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FOR THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD’S EXTENDED WATER ARREARAGES PAYMENT PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the District has remained committed to proactiveness in our communication regarding payment plan options to our customers; and

WHEREAS, the District has contacted delinquent customers multiple times in 2020, 2021, and 2022 encouraging customers to make payments or enroll in a payment plan; and

WHEREAS, the District has begun the application for state funds that may help pay some or all of customers’ arrearage due to COVID and desires to submit this application.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Diablo Water District:

1. Authorize the General Manager to sign and file, for and on behalf of the District, all necessary forms and supporting documentation for the State Water Resources Control Board’s Extended Water Arrearages Payment Program.
2. Certify that the General Manager is designated as the signing authority on all such related forms and documents.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted by the Board of Directors of Diablo Water District at a meeting thereof held on January 18, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

DATED:

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Kait Knight, Secretary

**DIABLO WATER DISTRICT**  
January 18, 2024 Board Meeting  
Item Number 4

TO: Each Director

FROM: Dan Muelrath, General Manager

SUBJECT: Strategic Planning Discussion.

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Staff will present on the items below. Presentations will be overviews with time for discussion.

**1. Cybersecurity.**

**2. Future Water Supply / Quality.**

- Blue Sky Planning Update
- Recycled Water Update
- Delta Conveyance
  - Local Counties are challenging the EIR.
- Jersey Island
- RBWTP

**3. Directors Legislative and Community Engagement Opportunities.**

- Legislative options.
- Engaging with and assisting local non-profit organizations.
- Community projects.

**4. Water Rates.**

- New conservation regulations
- Shifting consumer water usage patterns
- Increased funding for current workloads

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive and discuss.

*Dan Muelrath*

Dan Muelrath  
General Manager



## DIVE BRIEF

# Authorities raise alarm on threats against water, other critical sectors

An ongoing cyber campaign against Unitronics PLC devices has impacted multiple U.S. water facilities, but authorities are also monitoring energy, healthcare, and food and beverage manufacturing.

Published Dec. 4, 2023



David Jones  
Reporter

*Alex Potemkin via Getty Images*

### Dive Brief:

- Hackers affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps are behind a series of attacks targeting devices used in U.S. water and wastewater facilities, the FBI and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency warned in a joint advisory with Israel and other U.S. agencies on Friday.
- The threat group, operating under the name Cyber Av3ngers, is targeting Israeli-made Unitronics Vision Series programmable logic controllers, which are used in water and wastewater plants alongside other sectors, including energy, healthcare and food and beverage manufacturing.
- Authorities said the hackers have compromised devices that use default credentials since at least Nov. 22 with defacing messages and could possibly render them inoperable. At least a half dozen facilities across the U.S. have been impacted, according to a

source familiar with the attacks.

### **Dive Insight:**

The attacks arrive against a backdrop of heightened concerns about water and wastewater security in the U.S. The security of public drinking water and other water facilities has been a major focus of CISA and the Environmental Protection Agency, which attempted to implement mandatory water system audits in March but later had to withdraw the plan after a legal challenge.

Cyber Av3ngners has been linked to the late November attack against the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa in Pennsylvania. The hackers have targeted Israel since 2020 and have a history of making exaggerated and false claims about attacks against critical infrastructure, according to authorities.

“Even if they shut down water at these sites, their goal would be the same,” John Hultquist, chief analyst at Mandiant Intelligence, a Google Cloud unit, said via email. “They are trying to undermine our sense of security. It doesn’t really matter whether they do that through expertise or exaggeration.”

There are more than 1,800 Unitronics PLC devices exposed to the internet worldwide, according to research released by Forescout Wednesday. Dozens of them are exposed in several U.S. locations, including Chicago, Dallas and Chesterfield, S.C.

Researchers at Shadowserver reported 539 Unitronics instances still exposed as of Saturday.

Organizations using these devices should immediately change any default passwords, disconnect the PLC from the public facing internet and implement multifactor authentication to protect access to the OT network.

Between Sept. 13 and Oct. 30, Cyber Avengers claimed on a Telegram channel numerous attacks against critical infrastructure in Israel, however many of the claims were false, according to the advisory. Others, however, were legitimate.

The water and wastewater sector has already documented multiple attacks in recent weeks. A separate suspected ransomware attack, linked to the the Daixan Team threat group, was reported in North Texas last month

An October ransomware attack against Atlanta-based Mueller Water Products, disrupted the company's operations and delayed its earnings report for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30. The company said Wednesday it had finally contained the incident and would report its fiscal 2023 earnings no later than Dec. 14, according to a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Camden, N.J.-based American Water, the nation's largest regulated water and wastewater utility, said it was not impacted by the attacks, but "has taken several steps to help maintain the security of our systems," and has worked with local, state and federal officials to prepare against potential threats.

"We recognize cyber threats' sophistication and focus on understanding and minimizing impact if a breach occurs by constantly testing our cyber response protocols," a company spokesperson said via email.



**California Special  
Districts Association**

*Districts Stronger Together*

# Grassroots Advocacy Guide

**A GUIDE TO BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE FOR SPECIAL DISTRICTS.**



## Effective Advocacy

This guide provides special districts with an overview on public outreach, insights into the legislative process, ideas on how to advocate on behalf of your district and what your district can do to share in CSDA's efforts.

The perception of special districts in the court of public opinion and particularly in the halls of the State Capitol affect the everyday operation of all special districts and the services provided to constituents. This guide provides special districts with an overview on public outreach, insights into the legislative process, ideas on how to advocate on behalf of your district and what your district can do to share in CSDA's efforts.

Whether engaging in a local public information campaign or influencing significant statewide policy, there is an important role for each of California's independent special districts and their board members to play in order to impact public policy both at home and in Sacramento.

Grassroots advocacy is critical to the mission of any agency but it doesn't have to be difficult. This guide and other resources provided by CSDA will allow your district to better deliver its message and ultimately its core services.

A large, light gray decorative swirl graphic that starts from the top right and curves around the right side of the page, ending near the bottom right.

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## Public Outreach

It is fundamentally important that the goal of any public awareness program be specific and measureable.

Keeping the public informed about what you do and asking them for guidance on how you're doing is a fundamental responsibility for any public agency. They are the boss, after all, and all of us understand from personal experience that our jobs are a lot easier and a lot less stressful when the boss knows about and approves of what you're doing.

It doesn't have to be expensive or labor intensive, but it needs to be well thought-out and focused on answering four basic questions:

- What are your goals?
- Who is your audience?
- What is your message?
- How do you get your message out?



## What are your goals?

It is fundamentally important that the goal of any public awareness program be specific and measurable. If the goal is to reduce water use by 20 percent, for example, make that clear. Tracking water use is measurable. Without a measurable goal, it's impossible to determine the effectiveness of your efforts. You can't save money by pulling back when you've reached your goal, and just as importantly, you can't change course if you see you're missing your mark.

Sometimes your goal isn't to change behavior, but to increase public awareness of the district and its programs. Even here, your goal has to be specific and measurable. Are more people using the district's website? Are more people calling or attending board meetings?



### Knowing your audience

For a good illustration, go to [www.crpdp.org](http://www.crpdp.org), the website for the Conejo Recreation and Park District. Their website and outreach programs are targeted at specific audiences, reflecting the different users of their recreation classes and facilities.

## Who is your audience?

Effective public awareness campaigns have to be structured like a conversation, not a lecture. That means talking to a person, not a crowd. So, when you think about who you're talking to, it's important to realize you're not talking to "The Public." You're trying to have a conversation with real people who are the target market for your campaign. Maybe you're talking to community residents about rate issues. Maybe you're talking to homeowners about watering lawns.

The point is, your efforts aren't directed at a faceless "Public," but at identifiable people and communities.

## What is your message?

The basic messages of the campaign should be clear and concise, without any "insider" jargon or acronyms. They should also feature a specific "Call to Action" of some kind (Turn off your tap! Use mosquito repellent, etc.) that advances the goal of your campaign.

Your messages should also be about your target audience—not about you. Suggesting that some course of action "will be good for the district" or "will save the district money" doesn't mean anything to your target audience. Messages always need to be expressed in terms of how an action will help people, residents, families, etc.

## How do you get your message out?

There's a time and a place for paid advertising, but not all districts can afford it and not all programs warrant it. Paid advertising works best in situations where a sustained effort is called for to change behavior, like increasing recycling or decreasing water use.

Whether or not you have the resources to mount a large advertising campaign, you're still faced with the same challenge—how do I get my message out to my target audience and how do I make sure I'm having a conversation with my constituents, not a lecture?

### *Drive People to Your Website*

The best way to carry on a conversation with your target audience is to get people to use your website. If your district doesn't have one, get one. There's no better way to have clear, direct, two-way communication with constituents than through your website.

Driving people there doesn't have to be difficult. The address for your website should be prominently featured on all district news releases and correspondence. The website doesn't need complicated graphics (see [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), for example), but it does need to be user-friendly and updated regularly.

It should also work hand-in-glove with your media relations and community relations efforts. All your news releases and publications should be available for download on your website. All of your community relations materials should include your web address.



### **Attracting web traffic**

A good illustration of this is the "Fight the Bite" website maintained by the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District ([www.fightthebite.net](http://www.fightthebite.net)). The district heavily promotes its website through advertising and news media in an effort to keep the public informed about pest-borne diseases and the efforts needed to keep them in check. Their "Call to Action" effectively makes it clear that the entire community—not just employees of the district—need to work together to help control illnesses like West Nile virus.

Social media, like Twitter and Facebook, have a place too. For one thing, their technology allows you to “push” messages and information out to users when you have something urgent or newsworthy to say. For another, it carries the concept of a “conversation” one step further, because both actively encourage the kind of two-way conversation needed to get your points across.

Anyone with access to your website can sign up for Twitter and Facebook updates. Whenever you send out a news release, send out a “tweet” or put it on your Facebook page. You can also be more informal when using social media. Consider posting pictures from district activities, or progress reports for ongoing projects, i.e. anything that advances the idea that you’re having a conversation with your audience.



### **Social media**

For a good example, go to [www.mwdoc.com](http://www.mwdoc.com), the website for the Municipal Water District of Orange County. MWDOC uses Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other services in an effort to keep residents and the media informed of their activities.

### ***And Speaking of News Releases...***

Social media services like Facebook and Twitter haven’t replaced news releases and other traditional forms of reaching out to the media; they’ve just enhanced it and created another channel for getting them into the hands of reporters and the public.

An effective news release has three basic qualities:

1. It follows the “inverted pyramid” format, meaning the lead sentence should contain the most important information in the release.
2. It answers the traditional questions of “who, what, when, where, why and how.”
3. It is newsworthy. Numbers and facts aren’t newsworthy. Compelling stories about how those numbers and facts affect real people and real communities are.

For example, the news illustrates farm stories by reporting from a farm or stories about water from a stream or a treatment plant. If you invite the media to an event or a news conference to cover your story, it’s important to pay attention to the picture you’re presenting. “Talking heads” speaking in an office or an auditorium don’t illustrate or reinforce your message, so always keep the picture in mind.

### **The Bottom Line**

A public awareness program doesn’t have to be expensive, but it does have to be well thought out and directed. Make sure your messages are relevant to your target audience, your “Call to Action” is clear and concise and the effects of your efforts can be measured.



## INVERTED PYRAMID

*Lead – Summarize entire story in 1 or 2 sentences with most important information first*



*Quote from spokesperson you would like to see in the news*



*Background information and key facts, making sure to provide the reader with the “who, what, when, where, why and how” of your story*



*2nd quote from spokesperson*



*Standard paragraph about your organization, where it is, what it does, and who it serves*





## Legislative Outreach

You can make a significant difference through your efforts. Legislators always find time to listen to the voters they represent locally.

Since the California Legislature, governor, and state agencies create and execute public policy, it is crucial to understand how California's policymaking occurs and how you can affect that process. You don't need to be an expert, but your input on the local impact of statewide policy helps elected officials recognize which policies work and which could have adverse consequences.

You can make a significant difference through your efforts. Legislators always find time to listen to the voters they represent locally. Special districts not only deliver services to constituents in legislators' districts, they are constituents! By cultivating relationships and becoming a valuable resource, district leaders, managers and employees can ensure the district's perspective on issues is understood and that legislators have the information they need.

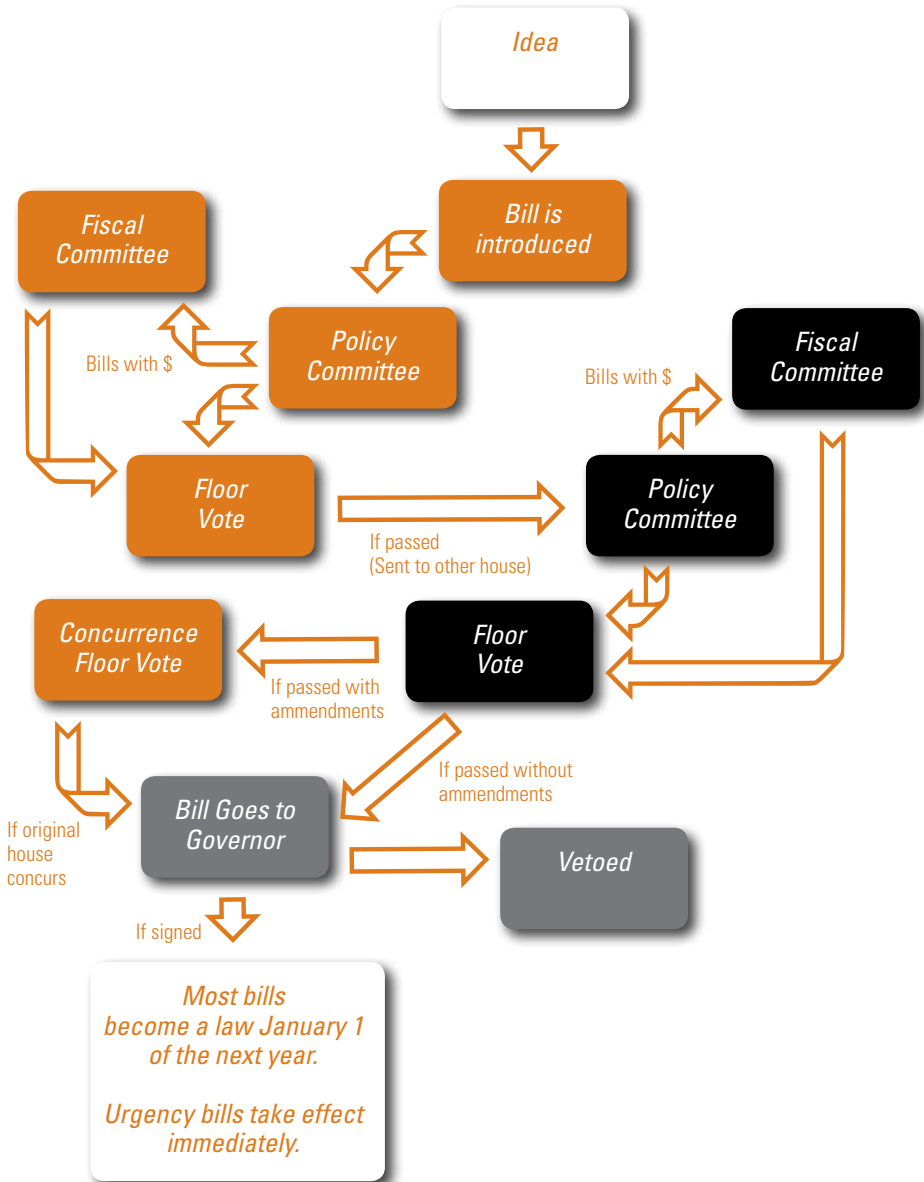








## THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS



# Understanding the Capitol Landscape

## *Legislative Staff*

Polymakers vote on complicated legislation in high volumes, and they rarely have time to read every section of every bill. State legislators must cast votes on over two thousand bills each year. Therefore, they depend upon legislative aides to provide information on how specific pieces of legislation will affect their constituents.

Legislative aides are key support staff for legislators and important gatekeepers who can facilitate your relationship with your elected representative. Some aides also have considerable influence on policy issues and help to form the legislator's positions. Regardless of how much policy influence a particular aide has, it will benefit you to establish a strong working relationship with your legislator's staff.

## *Committee Staff and Members*

Due to the overwhelming workload that lawmakers are confronted with, most of the discussion and decision-making is accomplished by legislative committees and their staff. Committees are where CSDA seeks to share information, facts, data, anecdotes and opinions from local practitioners who are experts in core service delivery. This can be an essential place for your participation. Legislative committees are charged with analyzing the technical policy impacts of every bill and will often incorporate pertinent background from local agencies into their analyses when made available.

## *Daily File*

This document, published daily by the State Senate and Assembly, lists bills eligible for floor action and also includes a schedule of committee hearings. The Daily File is an excellent tool for determining the time and location of committee hearings as well as the hearing date of a particular bill of interest. It is the Legislature's version of the agenda that special districts must post before a board meeting. The Daily File can be found and downloaded at [leginfo.ca.gov/dayfile.html](http://leginfo.ca.gov/dayfile.html).

# Your Voice in the Capitol

## *Importance of Communicating with Your Legislators*

As a district, the most important thing that board members and staff can do is to work with and get to know the Senators and Assembly Members who represent your area. Educate them about the services you provide and talk about ways you can work with the Legislature to improve those services. CSDA advocates on behalf of all types of special districts. However, legislators appreciate hearing directly from their constituents—that's you! Before legislators vote on a bill, they take into consideration who is in support and opposition to the measure, what are its anticipated costs, and most importantly, how it affects their legislative district.

## ***Respond to CSDA “Calls to Action”***

“Calls to Action” are a key component to CSDA’s success in lobbying the most significant bills impacting all types of special districts. CSDA will issue these requests to its membership via eNews, Legislative Alerts, and the CSDA website. Combined efforts between CSDA’s legislative advocates and special district leaders can significantly alter the outcome of decisions made in the Capitol. There are a number of ways you can respond to a Call to Action, including:

- Phoning your legislator.
- Writing a support/ opposition letter on behalf of your district.
- Meeting with your legislator in person.

### ***Phone Your Legislator***

Initial contact with your legislator’s office will usually begin with a phone call to discuss a particular issue. Lawmakers take notice when constituents make the effort to call and convey their views on the issues important to them. Being prepared and utilizing talking points to further your district’s stance is always beneficial.



## **DO’S AND DON’T’S**

### **Calling on your legislator**

- Make sure to identify yourself as a constituent, and provide your name, title, and name of the district you represent.
- Briefly identify the service(s) your district provides and the number of residents, as well as the region/ communities, your district serves.
- Identify the specific issue or bill number you are interested in discussing.
- Ask to speak with the legislative staff member who covers the issue of interest.
- Inquire regarding the legislator’s stance or position on the issue.
- Do not be afraid to share your district’s position or to respectfully request that the legislator take a particular action.
- If speaking to staff, ask that your message be relayed to the legislator.
- Provide your contact information should the staff member or legislator wish to follow up on the issue or any other issue in the future.

### ***Write a Support/Opposition Letter on a Bill of Interest***

Letter writing is an easy and effective way to encourage legislators to support your position. Lawmakers and their staff pay attention to their mail, so make sure to give careful thought to your letter. You can write to a legislator to voice your support or opposition to a piece of legislation or particular policy issue, provide information regarding a problem in your community, share your experiences or knowledge with them, or even to show gratitude for their vote on a specific bill.

Every bill is assigned to a policy committee in the Legislature. These committees analyze and list organizations in support and opposition of each bill. Furthermore, the minority party’s caucus writes its own separate analysis from the policy committee



## DO'S AND DON'T'S

### Keys to successful letters

- Write on your agency letterhead if possible.
- Identify the region/communities your district serves.
- Be brief but thoughtful.
- Explain how the issue affects your agency, the constituents you and the legislator jointly serve and why you support/oppose it.
- When possible, include anecdotes, facts, statistics, examples, and cost estimates from your district.
- Ask for the legislator's support or opposition.
- Be reasonable and tactful in your correspondence. Don't ask for the impossible. Don't threaten.
- Provide CSDA a copy of your letter and a copy of the response you receive from your legislator so we also know what issues are important to you and can track and coordinate grassroots efforts.
- Send the appropriate policy committee hearing the bill a copy of your letter so that your agency's position will be listed in its analysis (usually at least a week before the scheduled hearing of the bill, although this varies slightly by committee).
- Send the minority party's caucus a copy of your letter so that your agency will be listed in the caucus analysis.

analysis. Oftentimes, legislators base their vote largely off of these analyses. Therefore, submitting a copy of your letter to the legislative policy committees and minority party caucuses makes a big impact.

### *Meeting with Your Legislator*

As long-time CSDA legislative advocate Ralph Heim would say, "When you put in a call to a legislator, do they return your phone call?" CSDA recommends that special districts meet with their Senator(s) and Assembly Member(s) at least once per year in each legislator's district office as well as annually at CSDA's Special Districts Legislative Days in Sacramento.

The more legislators know about the districts they represent, the more educated they will be on state legislation that affects all special districts. CSDA annually sends each state Senator and Assembly Member a welcome packet with a list of all the special districts in his or her legislative district. However, putting a face to the name and having a meaningful relationship with your representative is invaluable.

A meeting can be scheduled at a legislator's Capitol office or local district office. You can also invite them to your facility or an event your district is hosting. Simply contact your legislator's office and ask who his or her scheduler is. Then send the scheduler a written "request for meeting" that concisely includes "who, what, when, where and why." Such requests are common protocol and helpful to schedulers. Legislators receive hundreds of meeting requests each month, so you may need to follow up on your meeting request. Be positive, but more importantly, be polite and understanding.

# Sample Letter

(Printed on your agency's Letterhead)

[Date]

The Honorable [Your Legislator's Name]  
California State Senate/Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate/Assembly Bill XXX (Author's Last Name) – SUPPORT/OPPOSE**

Dear Senator/Assembly Member [Your Legislator's Last Name]:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of [Name of your district], I am writing to support/respectfully oppose Senate/Assembly Bill XXX by [Author's name].  
[Include a brief description of your district].

[Give brief but thoughtful explanation of your position. Try to keep to one page.]

[Be sure to explain how the proposed legislation will help or hurt your community and the constituents you share with the legislator.]

For these reasons, the [Name of your District] supports/respectfully opposes AB/SB XXX.

Sincerely,

[Your name, Title]  
[Name of your district]

cc: [Author of Bill]  
[Committee Chair and Members]  
[Committee Consultant]  
[Minority Party's Caucus Consultant]  
California Special Districts Association



## Your Action Can Make All the Difference

As part of a "Call to Action," CSDA may request the special district community to submit letters of support/opposition regarding a particular bill. Letter writing campaigns often play a pivotal role in advocating on behalf of special districts. For example, CSDA successfully worked on an effort in 2010 to stop AB 155, a bill that would have created unnecessary obstacles for local agencies in need of Chapter 9 bankruptcy protections. The efforts of individual special districts that sent letters and made calls to their legislators helped prevent this bill from reaching the governor's desk.

## *Ways to Cultivate Relationships with Your Legislators*

Once you have met with your legislators it will be important to continue to cultivate a relationship with them. Some ideas are:

- Offer to be a resource, and be responsive to their requests for information and help.
- Add legislators and their staff to district mailing and press release lists to receive your newsletter and other public information materials.
- Make phone calls to touch base.
- Send press clips and other pieces of information you think they may find interesting, along with a short personal hand-written note.
- Toot your district's horn when you receive an award, positive media coverage or public acknowledgement.
- Provide a district tour to each of your legislators and their staff.



*Photo of Senator Mark DeSaulnier's Capitol Office  
Framed picture loaned to the Senator by the Contra Costa Water District*



### **Awareness of the Legislative Calendar**

During the legislative session, lawmakers work in the Capitol Monday-Thursday and in their districts on Fridays. During summer recess and fall interim recess, legislators primarily work out of their district offices. For a copy of the legislative calendar, go to [www.legislature.ca.gov](http://www.legislature.ca.gov) and click on "Calendar and Schedules."



### **How do I find out who my state legislators are?**

Your district's service area is represented by at least one State Senator and one State Assembly Member. You can find your legislators by going to [www.legislature.ca.gov](http://www.legislature.ca.gov), clicking on "Districts," and entering your address.



## DO'S AND DON'T'S

### When meeting with your legislator

- Know your legislator. Look on his or her website and do some research. Where is he or she from? What was his or her past profession? What are his or her main policy interests and what committees does he or she sit on?
- Be thoroughly prepared. Talking points, district fact sheets, copies of position letters, relevant research, analyses and more can be used in an information kit.
- Stay focused on your issue, but share relevant personal experiences as much as possible.
- Present positions clearly and concisely. Most meetings in the Capitol office last about 15-30 minutes. District office meetings may be granted more time when available.
- Offer to be a resource. As a special purpose district, you are the local expert in your field. This is a significant value to a legislator who must vote on a myriad of issues.
- Leave a business card. Legislators and their staff meet with thousands of people throughout the year. Anything you can do to make it easier to identify you is helpful—even if you have met before.
- Do not take your discussions personally. Never argue or threaten your elected official. Be understanding that your position may differ from your legislator.
- Write a thank you note following the meeting.

## How to stay connected with CSDA's Advocacy Efforts

There are several ways that members can stay informed on the key issues being discussed in the Capitol by partnering with CSDA.

### *CSDA Legislative Committee*

The Legislative Committee plays a central role in establishing priorities and positions on legislation introduced each legislative session. Any CSDA member or business affiliate may apply to serve on the committee. CSDA annually sends a Committee and Volunteer Interest Form to all members, and ratification of committee membership takes place at the CSDA Board planning session.

### *Expert Feedback Teams*

Expert Feedback Teams provide invaluable expertise to CSDA. The teams are comprised of district staff, management, directors and business affiliates who work within specified disciplines. When a need for feedback arises on a particular policy matter, CSDA will send an email to the pertinent expert feedback team asking for input. Team members need only reply with their thoughts, opinions and experiences. Sign up by sending your name, title, district name, phone number, issue expertise (For example: budget/finance, environmental, public contracting, etc.) and a short description of your qualifications to CSDA.

## Your Tools

In addition to the many ways you can be involved with CSDA's advocacy efforts, CSDA offers a variety of tools to keep you up-to-date and assist your district.

- **eNews and Legislative Alerts**

CSDA's electronic newsletter detailing the most important public policy issues affecting special districts. Legislative alerts notify members of urgent legislative threats and opportunities.

- **CSDA Website ([csda.net](http://csda.net))**

CSDA's website contains many useful resources for your district, including bill reports, assistance to set up a meeting with your legislator, helpful guides and more!

- **Social Media**

Stay connected to the special district community. Follow "specialdistrict" on Twitter and "like" California Special Districts Association on Facebook.

## Share your Stories

CSDA enjoys hearing stories about your interactions and the relationships you have built with your legislators.

Your experiences regarding advocacy efforts not only assist CSDA in our representation of special districts, but they can also serve as an example to districts throughout the state. Please contact CSDA to share your story!



### Mission Statement

The California Special Districts Association provides legislative advocacy, education and member service for all special districts.



## Special Districts Legislative Days

A simple way to begin or build upon relationships with your legislators is to attend CSDA's Special Districts Legislative Days in Sacramento. This annual legislative conference affords you the opportunity to tell your legislators about the critical services your district provides, significant projects your district is working on, and your district's involvement in its local community. Meetings with your legislators are scheduled for you and participating will allow you to become accustomed to interacting with your representatives.





**California Special  
Districts Association**

*Districts Stronger Together*

1112 I Street, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
toll-free: 877.924.2732  
csda.net

# OUTREACH HANDBOOK

DECEMBER 2022



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ACWA's Outreach Handbook is a valuable tool for engaging legislators, key regulators and administration officials on policy issues that are important to our industry. The handbook is a guide for ACWA member agencies to provide Boards of Directors and management with an overview of the Association's Outreach Program. It also serves as a guide for member agencies' advocacy professionals and as a training resource for new staff. With helpful diagrams, hyperlinks and templates, the Outreach Handbook will increase your advocacy engagement and effectiveness – from your community to two Capitols. Your efforts may even garner an ACWA Outreach Award for your agency!

– Stacy Taylor, Water Policy Manager, Mesa Water District

# The Outreach Program: A Grassroots Network

## History of the Outreach Program

In November 2000, the ACWA Board of Directors approved the development of an Outreach Program to serve as the grassroots function for the association and actively engage members in advancing ACWA's legislative and regulatory goals. Since that time, ACWA's Outreach Program has grown to over 2,100 members. The program has positively influenced legislation in Sacramento and Washington D.C. As the official grassroots arm of the association, ACWA's 10 region boards play a key role in ensuring participation by their region and region committee representatives.

## About the Outreach Program

ACWA speaks as one voice for California water, but can only do so with the backing of an informed, engaged membership. ACWA member involvement – through direct outreach to legislators, regulators and administration officials – is what strengthens the association's state and federal advocacy efforts.

Any employee at a member agency can become a part of ACWA's Outreach Program by signing up **online** to receive Alerts and Advisories, joining the Outreach Task Force and becoming an outreach ambassador. The data collected through the online form enables ACWA to target participants according to their legislative districts and contact with legislators.

### **Participants automatically enrolled in the Outreach Program include:**

ACWA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS →

REGION BOARDS →

MEMBERS OF ACWA'S 13 STANDING COMMITTEES →



# Outreach Program Structure

## OUTREACH TASK FORCE

Helps guide ACWA's Outreach Program, implements new policies, creates programs and resolves issues that arise during the two-year term. The Outreach Task Force is comprised of region appointed outreach captain(s), two at-large appointments, and two representatives from each of the following committees: Communications, Federal Affairs, Groundwater, Local Government, State Legislative, Water Management, Water Quality. Committee representatives as well as at-large representatives are appointed by the ACWA President.

## OUTREACH CAPTAINS

Serves by appointment of the region boards for a two-year term. Outreach captains also serve on the Outreach Task Force and work closely with region board members and ACWA staff to develop outreach strategies, coordinate local outreach efforts, advance ACWA's policy goals and recruit Outreach Program participants within the region.

## OUTREACH AMBASSADORS

Connects your agency to the latest available news affecting California's water community through the email list of California water professionals receiving ACWA Alerts and Advisories, as well as the necessary information to become an effective part of ACWA's advocacy efforts through contacting legislators, key regulators and administration officials. At the same time, member agencies rely on Outreach Ambassadors to stay informed on current developments and spread the word to co-workers, management and agency board members.



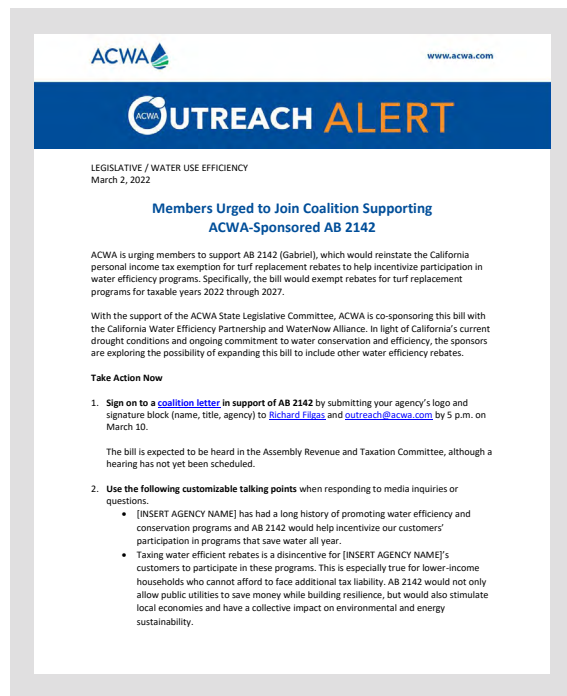
## SUBSCRIBE TO OUTREACH ALERTS & ADVISORIES

All ACWA members can participate in the Outreach Program by signing up to become an outreach ambassador and receive Outreach Alerts and Advisories.



# ACWA Alerts & Advisories

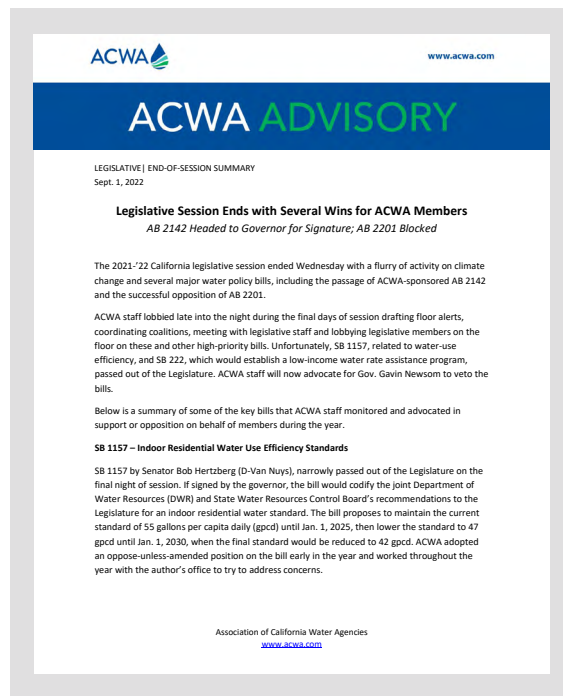
Personal contact from constituents through letters, phone calls and personal visits make an impact on legislators and regulators at critical points in the legislative or regulatory process. The following are some of the ways your participation will occur as part of the Outreach Program.



## ALERTS = ACTION NEEDED

You will be part of the statewide network of members contacted when ACWA needs action on issues. When contacted with an Alert, you are being asked to take action. Potential actions could include:

- **Write/submit a personal letter** supporting or opposing a bill or proposed regulation (or other position consistent with ACWA).
- **Write/submit an official agency** (position) letter supporting or opposing a bill or proposed regulation.
- **Make contact with a legislator or other decision maker** by phone or through a personal visit at a key point in the legislative process. See page 14 for tips.
- **Join a coalition of other ACWA members** supporting or opposing a bill or proposed regulation.



## ADVISORIES = INFORMATION

Legislative, regulatory and communication Advisories provide pertinent information to keep you informed of the latest issues. Advisories help you and other agencies in your area prepare for upcoming issues.



Grassroots outreach is one of the strongest leverages ACWA members have to influence policy that impacts their constituents. The easy-to-use outreach handbook arms ACWA members with the knowledge and tips to effectively put grassroots outreach into action.

– **Cristel Tufenkjian, Director of External Affairs, Kings River Conservation District**

## In-Person Outreach

Members of the Outreach Program are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities such as the ACWA Legislative Symposium, Washington D.C. Conference, and Regulatory Summit in order to maximize opportunities to schedule in-person meetings with your state or federal legislators and regulators.



## ACWA Outreach Awards

ACWA's Outreach Awards recognize members for their advocacy efforts on issues critical to the water industry. Throughout the year, ACWA asks its members to take action on important legislative and regulatory issues, helping create a coalition to directly affect the outcomes of numerous decisions and advance the association's legislative and regulatory agenda. ACWA's Outreach Awards recognize the most active member agency in each region, as well as an overall winner and three winners of the outreach special recognition categories.

ACWA member agencies that qualify are encouraged to apply for recognition in three special outreach categories:

- The **Most Active Small Agency Award** honors a member agency with fewer than 50 full-time employees that has engaged on an issue of importance.
- The **Rising Star Award** recognizes an agency that has not participated in the Outreach Program within the past five years.
- The **Most Effective Agency on a Federal Issue** recognizes a member agency that has engaged on a federal issue as prioritized by the ACWA Federal Affairs Committee.

### STAFF CONTACT

Michael Cervantes, Senior Regional Affairs Representative, (916) 669-2380, email [michaelc@acwa.com](mailto:michaelc@acwa.com)

### OUTREACH INTERACTION

Complete the online outreach interaction form.

### OUTREACH SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Apply for the three special outreach awards.

# ACWA Policy Process

## ACWA Committees

ACWA's committees play a crucial role for the organization. Subject matter expertise and guidance from the committees provide the direction that ACWA takes in advocacy efforts at the federal, state and regulatory levels. Learn more about the individual committees and their makeup [here](#).

## Federal Affairs Committee

ACWA's Federal Affairs Committee is responsible for developing policy positions and working on key federal water proposals. Federal policy and legislation evolves more slowly than state legislation. Specific bills are often preceded by years of informational hearings and research. This methodical process enables ACWA to take the lead on issues affecting members.

Federal policy advocacy is two-pronged. With representation in the nation's Capitol, ACWA has an active presence during Congressional sessions, complemented by special trips to Washington, D.C., by delegations of ACWA members. In addition, ACWA members can help influence the federal legislative process by maintaining good relationships with their local Congressional representatives.

Committee meetings are held on a quarterly basis to discuss federal legislation and related issues; two meetings occurring during ACWA's bi-annual conferences. Ad hoc meetings of both the whole committee and subcommittees are held as deemed necessary by the Federal Affairs chair and staff.

ACWA positions on federal legislation are determined by the committee based on analyses and recommendations prepared by ACWA Federal Relations staff. Analyses are sent to members of the committee and subscribers of the Federal Affairs informational listserv before each meeting and as significant legislative developments occur. The committee reviews each bill during its meetings and votes on positions.

### STAFF CONTACT

David Reynolds, ACWA Director of Federal Relations, email [davidr@acwa.com](mailto:davidr@acwa.com)

### HELPFUL LINKS

U.S. Senate Legislative Calendar [→](#)

U.S. House Legislative Calendar [→](#)

Majority Leader Calendar [→](#)





# State Legislative Committee

The ACWA State Legislative Committee is made up of forty-one members – four from each of ACWA's 10 geographically based regions plus the committee chair. Each committee member serves for a two-year term. The committee's composition reflects the association's diverse membership needs and concerns.

It is the committee's responsibility to review relevant legislation, adopt positions and establish priorities. When the Legislature is in session, the committee meets every three weeks to keep up-to-date of developments and to determine ACWA positions.

Initially, ACWA staff reviews proposed legislation and drafts recommended positions for committee review. The committee can accept the staff recommendation or discuss the bill in question. Amendments may be suggested to address member concerns.

The committee's positions and priorities dictate the level of effort staff and members devote to particular bills. Activity may range from a simple letter indicating approval or disapproval of a bill to active support or opposition, including testimony before legislative committees, coalitions with other like-minded organizations, solicitation of editorial support of ACWA positions and other measures.

ACWA positions on legislation are determined by the committee based on analyses and recommendations prepared by ACWA legislative staff. Analyses are sent to members of the committee and subscribers of the legislative bill service in two separate mailings between every committee meeting. Subscription information for the bill packets is available through ACWA's State Legislative staff. The committee reviews each bill during its meetings and, if necessary, votes on positions. Otherwise, the staff recommendation is approved without discussion.

The membership is kept informed of ACWA's legislative activities through ACWA News, Legislative Alerts, Advisories and [www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com).

## STAFF CONTACT

Adam Quinonez, ACWA Director of State Legislative Relations, (916) 669-2434, email [adamq@acwa.com](mailto:adamq@acwa.com)

## HELPFUL LINKS

CA State Assembly Legislative Calendar 

CA State Senate Legislative Calendar 



## BILL TRACKER

Search by bill number or keyword to find bill information or view ACWA's bill positions and analyses.  
(Member only content)

# The Role of ACWA Members

To establish priorities for the legislative session, the State Legislative Committee each year solicits proposals for legislation that it will review and consider sponsoring or supporting. ACWA staff analyzes the proposals and provides them to committee members. The full committee reviews proposals in the fall at its annual planning meeting and determines legislative priorities for the following year. ACWA's legislative staff work with member agencies on their proposals to prepare the proposals for introduction and assists members in securing legislators to author the legislation.

While there is no avenue for ACWA to sponsor legislation at the federal level, ACWA members are often sought after as the preferred consultants and developers of a congressional representative's bill idea. ACWA staff facilitates these interactions, acting as a conduit for ACWA members and congressional staff.

An effective advocacy program depends on a strong partnership between ACWA and its members.

## MEMBERS

- Provide invaluable input for policy development
- Suggest legislation and identify the need for ACWA to sponsor bills
- Assist the state legislative and federal affairs committees in setting priorities
- Supply necessary information and technical expertise to advance member interests
- Testify for bills and seek legislators to sponsor bills



ACWA's Outreach Handbook provides the essential tools and information to ensure any advocacy effort has a successful foundation and gets the results you are looking for. In the fast-paced environment of Sacramento, having the right tools to help guide your strategic activities to influence decisions and policy discussion is imperative. The ACWA Outreach Handbook is a must for any agency's political or legislative outreach and EVMWD relies on it regularly.

– **Greg Morrison, Government Relations Officer,  
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District**

# Position Adoption Policy

The ACWA Board of Directors has a strong policy commitment to comprehensive water solutions. With the active involvement of its member and coalition partners, ACWA is dedicated to advancing policies that improve water supply reliability, protect local agency decision making and promote an integrated, comprehensive approach to water policy and management. ACWA's policy agenda is driven by its Board of Directors through the adoption of policy principles and identification of goals in the association's Board approved strategic plan.

ACWA's State Legislative Committee's policy on adopting positions on legislation is simple: Positions are taken on legislation that, if enacted, will impact ACWA members. Positions are not taken on legislation if member agencies are on opposite sides of an issue, unless the legislation, if enacted, will establish poor precedent if applied broadly to ACWA member agencies. If a particular bill requires further review before consensus on a position can be determined, policy subcommittees are formed.

To provide adequate information to the entire membership, ACWA communicates legislative updates in *ACWA News*, posts positions and other information on ACWA's website at [www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com) and social media outlets, and sends Advisories and Alerts on key legislation. ACWA's legislative staff is available to provide specific information on bills, and committee members are encouraged to communicate ACWA positions on priority legislation at the region level.

## Description of ACWA Positions

The following descriptions of ACWA positions reflect ACWA staff's advocacy efforts.

- **ACWA Sponsored:** A bill proposed by ACWA or a member. ACWA-sponsored legislation requires the association to take the lead in securing passage, including resolving any disputes with opponents of the bill. *Not applicable to Federal Legislation.*
- **Support:** Staff will actively support this bill, writing letters to legislators, testifying at hearings and taking other actions as necessary.
- **Favor:** Staff writes letters of support but does not actively lobby the bill unless the author specifically requests it.
- **Oppose:** Staff writes letters of opposition, testifies at hearings, works with legislators to amend offending portions, or aggressively works to defeat a bill.
- **Not Favor:** Staff writes letters of opposition but does not otherwise lobby the bill.
- **Watch:** Staff and the State Legislative Committee review all amendments to determine whether a change of position is warranted. No lobbying is done.
- **No Action:** The bill does not warrant ACWA attention.
- **NOTE:** "Amend" may be added to any position upon committee vote.

# State Regulatory Relations

## REGULATORY PROCESSES AND STATE AGENCIES

After a state legislative bill is signed into law, it is then implemented by the enforcing or administering state agency. State agencies lead both informal stakeholder engagement activities and formal rulemaking processes for regulation setting. Some legislation directs state agencies to informally engage with stakeholders in regulatory activities or on the implementation of legislation. Other enacted legislation requires formal regulation adoption by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) to ensure that California state agencies comply with the rulemaking procedures and standards set forth in California's Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The APA requirements are designed to provide the public with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the adoption of regulations or rules that have the force of law by California state agencies and to ensure the creation of an adequate record for the OAL and judicial review.

Initially, ACWA staff reviews proposed regulations or notices of regulatory action. Typically, the state regulatory policy committees form working groups or subcommittees to draft recommended positions and formal comments to provide in written letters and/or in testimony to the state agency when regulations or regulatory matters are approved or heard by State regulatory boards, commissions or agencies.

## THE ROLE OF ACWA REGULATORY POLICY COMMITTEES

ACWA's State Regulatory Relations staff work with policy committees to support the development of ACWA policy principles for approval by the Board of Directors and make recommendations on regulatory policies and programs to the ACWA Board, State Legislative Committee, Federal Affairs Committee, and other committees as needed. These committees review and recommend positions on proposed regulations to state agencies and the administration, as well as assist in gathering data and disseminating relevant information on regulatory matters to ACWA members.

## THE ROLE OF ACWA MEMBERS

ACWA members can engage on regulatory matters through several different opportunities:



## STAFF CONTACT

Chelsea Haines, Regulatory Relations Manager, (916) 669-2431, email [chelseah@acwa.com](mailto:chelseah@acwa.com)



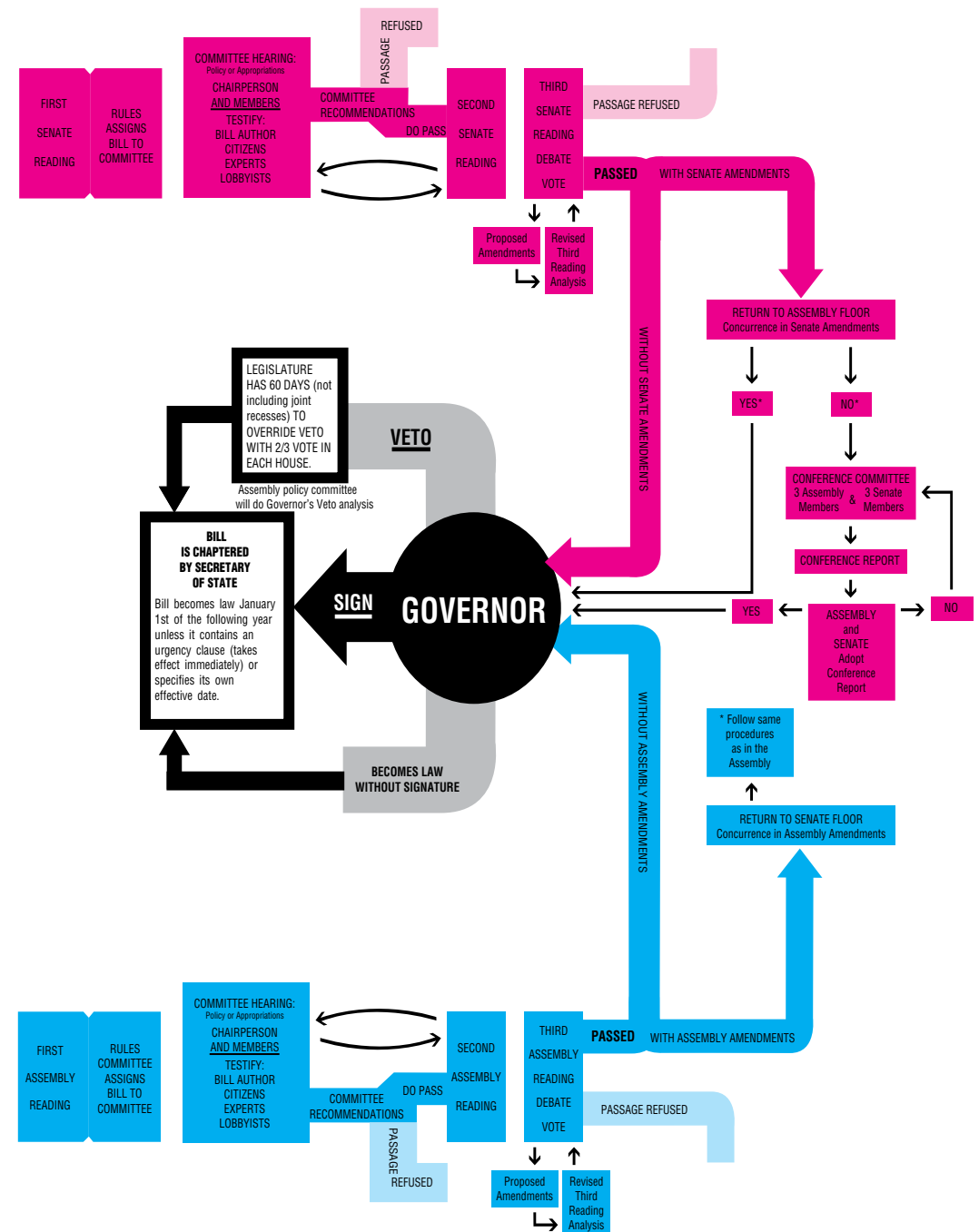
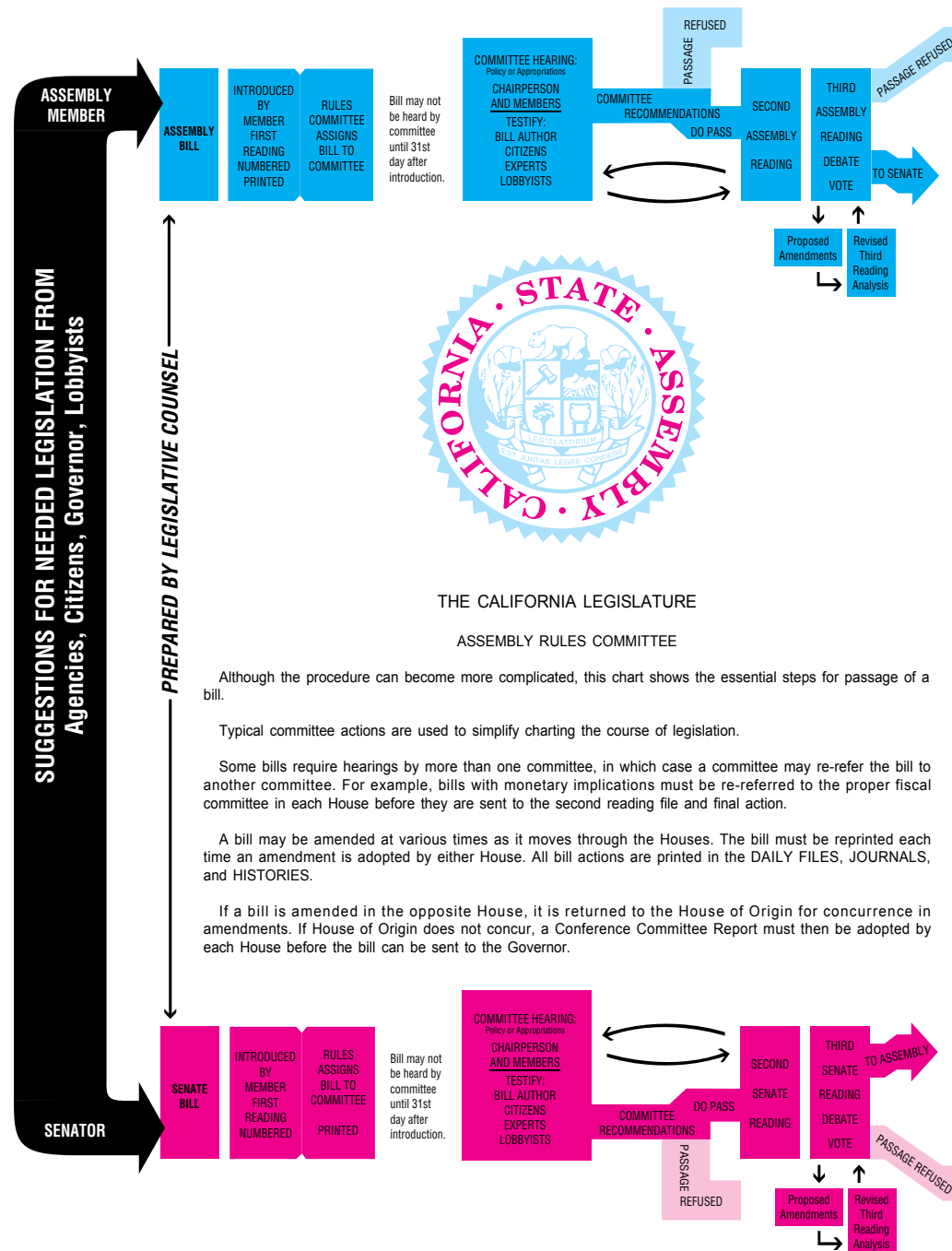


# Understanding the California State Legislative Process

Source: **California State Assembly**

## THE LIFE CYCLE OF LEGISLATION

## — From Idea into Law



# How to Read A Bill

## Federal Bill

- 1 Congress and Session:** Identifies what Congress and which session the bill is to be considered in. Congresses are comprised of two, one year sessions.
- 2. Bill Number:** Bills are introduced in sequential order in their respective chambers. Bills will carry H.R. for House of Representatives or S. for Senate.
- 3. Bill Origin:** Indicates the bill's chamber of origin, House or Senate.
- 4. Bill Date:** The date of introduction or amendment of the bill.
- 5. Authors and Cosponsors:** Indicates which member introduced the bill and with whom.
- 6. Referral and Current Location:** Identifies where the bill has been referred. This referral will be updated as the bill moves to the floor, other chamber, or is re-referred to additional committees.
- 7. Bill Description:** Identifies what the bill will make law, if enacted. May identify sections of Public Law to be amended.

AUTHENTICATED  
U.S. GOVERNMENT  
INFORMATION  
GPO

I

**1** 116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION **H. R. 34** **2**

To ensure consideration of water intensity in the Department of Energy's energy research, development, and demonstration programs to help guarantee efficient, reliable, and sustainable delivery of energy and clean water resources.

**3** IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2019 **4**

**5** Ms. JOHNSON of Texas (for herself and Mr. LUCAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology **6**

**A BILL**

**7** To ensure consideration of water intensity in the Department of Energy's energy research, development, and demonstration programs to help guarantee efficient, reliable, and sustainable delivery of energy and clean water resources.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**8** 3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**  
4 This Act may be cited as the "Energy and Water Re-  
5 search Integration Act of 2019".

- 8. Short Title:** Identifies an alternative, official short title of the bill. Not all bills will have short titles.



# State Bill

- 1 **Amend Date:** Indicates each time bill is amended
- 2 **Bill Origin:** Indicates house of origin, Assembly or Senate
- 3 **Bill Number:** Bills are introduced on sequential order in each house
- 4 **Bill Date:** The date the bill was introduced
- 5 **Strikethrough text:** Indicates language being deleted by an amendment
- 6 **Code Section:** Code section being added/amended
- 7 **Legislative Summary:** Legislative Counsel drafts all legislation and writes a summary
- 8 **Italicized text:** Indicates language being added by an amendment

Note: The actual language that will be part of the state code when the bill is enacted into law appears on subsequent pages, following the line: *"The people of the state of California do enact as follows."*

1

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 27, 2019

2

SENATE BILL

3

No. 699

Introduced by Senator Hill

4

February 22, 2019

5

6

An act to amend Section 125 Sections 73514 and 81653 of the Water Code, relating to water.

7

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

8

SB 699, as amended, Hill. ~~Director of Water Resources. San Francisco Bay Area regional water system.~~

*Under existing law, the City and County of San Francisco operates the Hetch Hetchy Project as a regional water system, supplying water to persons and entities in San Francisco and the Counties of Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara. Existing law, the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water System Financing Authority Act, creates the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water System Financing Authority, composed as prescribed. The act authorizes the authority to issue revenue bonds until December 31, 2020, as specified, to improve the reliability of San Francisco's regional water system and requires the bond proceeds to be made available upon terms and conditions that include San Francisco entering into contracts with the authority that, among other things, require San Francisco, on behalf of the authority, to impose a surcharge to generate revenue to pay the debt service on the revenue bonds issued by the authority and the operating expenses of the authority, as specified. The act requires the authority to dissolve upon the repayment of all revenue bonds issued by the authority and the satisfaction of all other debts and obligations of the authority.*

*This bill would authorize the authority to issue revenue bonds until December 31, 2030. By extending the operation of the requirements*

98



# Outreach to Legislators

Outreach etiquette and best practices for meeting with your legislative representatives.

## SCHEDULING A MEETING

- Be patient and flexible
- Ask for a half-hour meeting, but accept a shorter one
- Meet with staff if the legislator is unavailable
- Be proactive – don't wait for a crisis to meet
- Build relationships over time
- Schedule appointments in advance and keep them
- Don't just drop in for a surprise visit

## PREPARING FOR A MEETING

- Research your legislator (background, interests, accomplishments and legislative priorities)
- Bring business cards and agency materials (fact sheets, etc.)

## DURING THE MEETING

- Serve as the local expert on water
- Provide background and information on local water issues
- Develop relationships with staff who can be your advocate from within
- Invite your legislator and their staff on a tour of your facilities and operations
- Ask them to include your water district on their mailing lists and offer to add them to your agency's lists
- Don't overload with information
- Keep written materials short, simple and relevant to your issue and agency
- Communicate in layman's terms
- Spell out water-related acronyms
- Be a good listener
- Don't monopolize the meeting, but allow the legislator to ask questions and express concerns
- Don't worry about having all the answers, but offer to follow up on a question if you don't have an answer during the meeting
- Stay focused on the issue at hand and try not to get sidetracked
- Don't mix policy with political campaigns (i.e. don't discuss past or future campaign contributions along with legislative action or votes)
- Don't be confrontational and avoid getting into arguments that could damage your relationship with your legislator over one vote or issue

## AFTER THE MEETING

- Thank your legislator and staff with an email or handwritten note
- Be sure to follow up on any unresolved questions, concerns, or commitments made to the legislator or staff during the meeting
- Stay in touch with your legislator and staff throughout the year

# Letter Writing Tips

- 1 Letterhead:** Use agency letterhead when communicating the agency's official position on a bill
- 2 Addressing your letter:** Always start with "The Honorable [name]"
- 3 Address:** Address to your local elected official and/or to members of the committee where action is being taken
- 4 Regard:** Indicate the bill you're addressing and action being requested (support/oppose/sign/veto)
- 5 Dear:** Begin your letter with "Dear Governor, Senator, Assembly Member, or Representative" (whichever is applicable)
- 6 Identify your agency:** Be sure to make it clear who you are speaking on behalf early in the letter
- 7 Get to the point quickly:** It should be clear why you support/oppose
- 8 Bold:** Use bold font to emphasize important points
- 9 Provide solid information and specific examples on the impact of proposed legislation to your district:** Specifics about the bill and general impacts on the water industry are usually contained in the ACWA Alert
- 10 Clear action:** Be clear in the action you are requesting
- 11 From:** Letters from a person in authority have a greater impact on elected officials than letters from staff
- 12 Copy:** Send a copy to your other elected officials so they are aware of your position and to ACWA staff for advocacy tracking and award efforts

**WATER DISTRICT LETTERHEAD** **1**

1234 Agency Street  
City, State Zip  
Agency Phone

[DATE] **2**

The Honorable Bill Dodd **3**  
California State Senate State  
Capitol 4032  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 669 (Caballero): Safe Drinking Water Trust - SUPPORT** **4**

Dear Chair Dodd, **5**

**6** [AGENCY'S NAME] supports SB 669 (Caballero), which would create the Safe Drinking Water Trust (Trust) at the state Treasury. The purpose of the Trust would be to provide a durable funding source to help community water systems in disadvantaged communities provide their customers with access to safe drinking water. **The Trust is a better approach than a statewide water tax.** **7**

There currently exists a funding gap for operation and maintenance (O&M) costs for the treatment of drinking water by community water systems in disadvantaged communities. O&M costs generally cannot be financed with existing federal and state safe drinking water funding sources that are available for capital costs. In some situations, the consolidation of a failing community water system with one or more systems may be the most effective solution. The Safe Drinking Water Trust proposed in SB 669 would provide a durable funding source to provide financial assistance for replacement water as a short term solution, consolidation and ongoing O&M costs. **9**

The Trust would be funded with an infusion of General Fund dollars during a budget surplus year. With the record budget surplus for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year, this is the perfect year to create and fund the Trust. The state would invest the Trust's principal, and the net income from the Trust would be transferred on an ongoing basis to a Safe Drinking Water Fund that would be administered by the State Water Resources Control Board.

The Trust is a better approach than a statewide water tax because it is not sound policy to tax a resource that is essential to life. Unlike a regressive water tax, the Trust would not drive up water costs and work against the state's Human Right to Water policy of affordable water.

For the above reasons, [AGENCY NAME] respectfully asks you to vote "Aye" for SB 669. **10**

Sincerely, **11**

[NAME, TITLE] **12**

cc: The Honorable Anna Caballero  
Honorable Members, Senate Governmental Organization Committee  
Mr. Brian Duke, Committee Consultant  
Mr. Richard Paul, Senate Republican Caucus Consultant

## MORE WRITING TIPS

- Act quickly - ACWA Alerts are time sensitive
- Be sure to thank the elected official if they do what you ask as this helps build a positive relationship with legislator

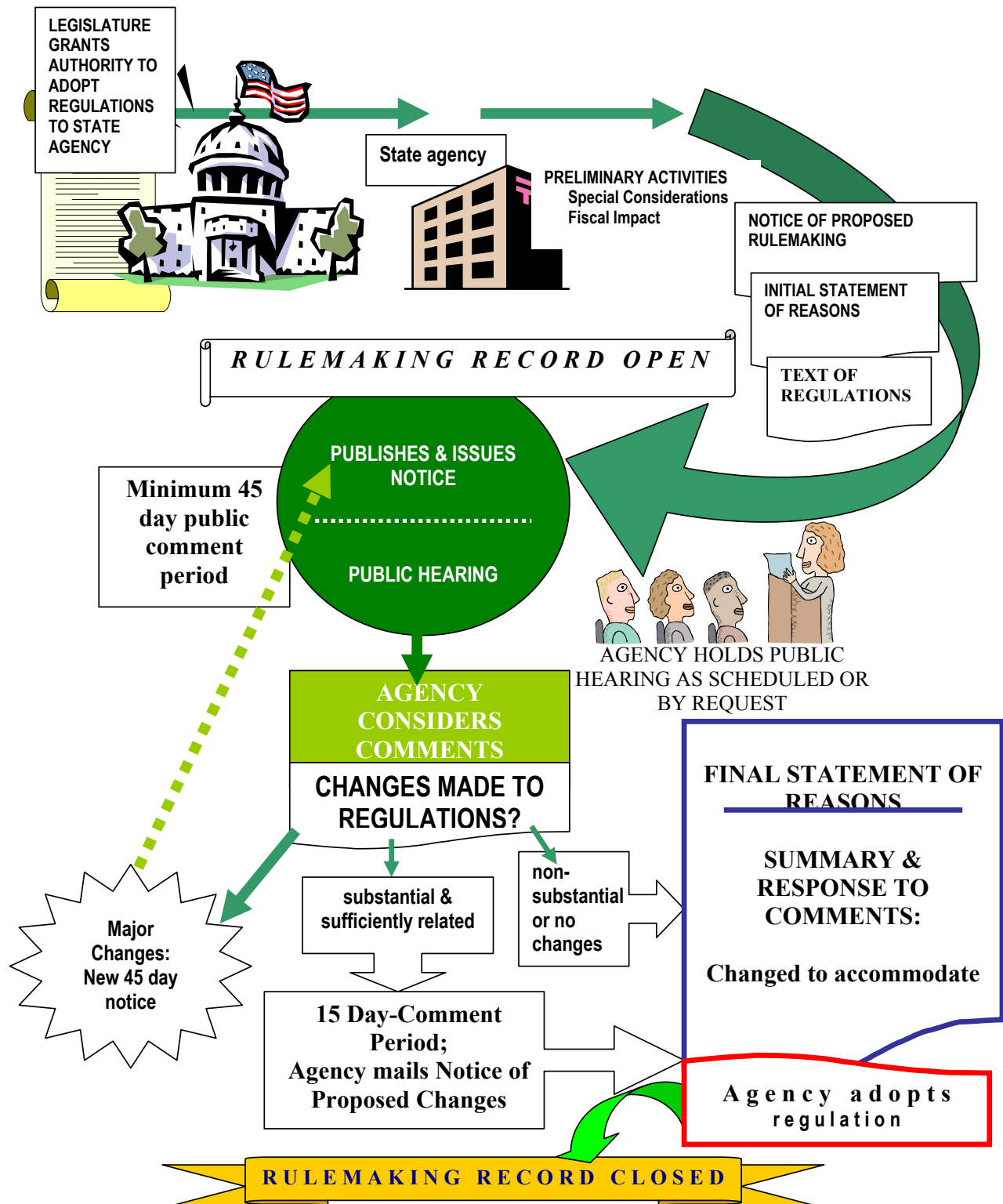
## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE ONLINE SUBMISSION

The California Legislature is using an online portal to streamline submission of support/opposition letters about bills to committees. To submit a letter on behalf of your agency:

- 1 Create an account on the **CA Legislature Advocates Portal**
- 2 Create a PDF of your support/oppose letter
- 3 Submit your letter using the online portal and be sure to also email a copy to **outreach@acwa.com** for tracking and Outreach Awards purposes

# Understanding the Regulatory Rulemaking Process

Source: [State Water Resources Control Board](#)



# How to Read a Regulatory Notice

## 1 Type of rulemaking process

## 2 Public hearing: If and when a public hearing will be held

## 3 Comment letter deadline: The date and time in which comment letters must be submitted

## 4 Submission: The process for how to submit a comment letter

## 5 Subject line: The specific subject line for providing comments



State Water Resources Control Board

### NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

1

#### TITLE 22. SOCIAL SECURITY DIVISION 4. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CHAPTER 19 (Certification of Environmental Laboratories)

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) proposes to amend, adopt, or repeal the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) regulations described below after considering all comments, objections, and recommendations regarding the proposed action.

#### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REGULATORY ACTION

The State Water Board proposes to amend California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 2, Chapter 19, to update requirements and standards for accreditation of environmental testing laboratories. These proposed amendments are administrative and technical in nature and make the necessary improvements needed to operate a fully functional and effective Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program.

#### PUBLIC HEARING

The State Water Board will hold an Administrative Procedure Act (APA) public hearing during a Board workshop to receive written and oral comments regarding the proposed regulations. The hearing will include a presentation by State Water Board staff on the proposed regulations. During the comment period, the public will be allowed three minutes to provide oral comments, unless additional time is approved. While a quorum of the State Water Board may be present, this hearing is for the public to provide comments in accordance with the APA, and the State Water Board will take no formal action.

The public hearing will be held as detailed below.

**Wednesday, December 18, 2019 – 9:30 a.m.**  
Joe Serna Jr. CalEPA Headquarters Building  
1001 I Street, Second Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBIECH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100 | [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov)



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#### WRITTEN COMMENT PERIOD

Any interested person, or their authorized representative, may submit written comments relevant to the proposed regulatory action to the Clerk of the State Water Board. Any written comments pertaining to these regulations, regardless of the method of transmittal, must be received by the Clerk to the State Water Board by **12:00 noon on Friday, December 20, 2019**, which is hereby designated as the close of the written comment period. Comments received after this date will not be considered timely. Note that comments previously submitted about the preliminary drafts of the proposed regulatory action will not be part of the rulemaking record. Outstanding comments about the proposed regulatory action must be resubmitted during the written comment period to be included in the rulemaking record.

You may submit written comments via any of the following:

- Electronic mail (email): [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov)
- U.S. Postal Service:  
Ms. Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

- Hand Delivery:  
Ms. Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Persons delivering comments must check in with lobby security and have them contact Ms. Jeanine Townsend at (916) 341-5600

Also, please indicate in the subject line and/or on the cover page of submittals: **"Comments – Proposed Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program Regulations."**

All comments should include the author's name and U.S. Postal Service mailing address or email in order for the State Water Board to provide any notices that may be required in the future.

Due to limitations of the email system, emails larger than 15 megabytes (MB) may be rejected and will not be delivered and received by the State Water Board. Therefore, emails larger than 15 MB should be submitted in several separate emails or another form of delivery should be used.

The State Water Board requests but does not require that written comments sent by mail or hand-delivered be submitted in triplicate.

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# Regulatory Comment Letter Writing Tips

- 1 **Transmitted method:** Include the method of how the comment letter was transmitted
- 2 **Address block & subject:** Include the date, address, and subject line as specified in the notice
- 3 **Introduction:** Include an introduction paragraph with information about your agency
- 4 **Comments:** Bold and number comments to provide the key advocacy messages for decision-makers to follow



Bringing  
Water  
Together

Sent via ELECTRONIC MAIL to Mary.Yang@waterboards.ca.gov

August 25, 2017

Ms. Mary Yang  
Environmental Scientist  
Division of Drinking Water  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Program Scenarios: Association of California Water Agencies' Comments regarding the Development of a Plan for a Low-Income Water Rate Assistance Program [AB 401, Dodd, 2015 Implementation]**

Dear Ms. Yang:

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board's or SWRCB's) development of a plan for the funding and implementation of a Low-Income Water Rate Assistance (LIWRA) Program (the Plan), as required by AB 401 (Dodd, 2015). ACWA represents over 440 public water agencies that collectively supply over 90% of the water delivered in California for domestic, agricultural, and business uses.

ACWA recognizes the importance of water affordability. At the same time, our members must make water management work on the ground. As recognized by now Senator Dodd, the development of the Plan requires collaboration with stakeholders to make sure it will work and not result in unintended consequences.

**1. Governor Brown's Signing Message:** Governor Brown wrote that the AB 401 Plan will provide a path for "modest, additional steps." The plan scenarios currently being analyzed by State Water Board staff would not be "modest, additional steps."

In his signing message for AB 401 dated October 9, 2015, Governor Brown wrote the following:

While the plan called for in this bill will provide for modest, additional steps, we already know that Proposition 218 serves as the biggest impediment to public water systems being able to establish low-income rate assistance programs. Proposition 218 similarly serves as an obstacle to thoughtful, sustainable water conservation pricing and necessary flood and stormwater system improvements. My administration will work with the Legislature and stakeholders next year to address these problems, while maintaining rate payer protections. [Emphasis added.]

SACRAMENTO 910 K Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95814 • (916) 441-4545  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 400 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 357, Washington, DC 20001 • (202) 434-4760  
[www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com)

Ms. Mary Yang  
August 25, 2017 • Page 6

**15. Existing Programs:** ACWA recommends that the Plan build on the experience of existing programs.

ACWA recommends that the State Water Board research the experience and practices social service programs at the local, state, federal and nonprofit level to ensure that the LIWRA program is used in the most efficient manner. We note that the CalFresh program currently enrolls only 11% of the State's population, reinforcing both our concerns that proposed LIWRA program scope may overreach at the outset and our recommendation proceed with LIWRA incrementally at a more limited pilot scale to learn by experience.

Existing LIWRA programs implemented by water retailers should be allowed to continue this phased approach, while the State focuses initially on the lowest income household being served by an existing program. We would also ask the State Water Board to recognize there are numerous barriers to enrollment for eligible households. Finally, self-certification eligibility without verification should not be allowed as that would inflate program costs with non-eligible participants.

ACWA appreciates the State Water Board's consideration of these comments. I am available to answer questions at (916) 441-4545 or [cindy@acwa.com](mailto:cindy@acwa.com).

Sincerely,

*Cindy Tuck*

Cindy Tuck  
Deputy Executive Director for Government Relations

cc: The Honorable Felicia Marcus, Chair, SWRCB  
The Honorable Steven Moore, Vice Chair, SWRCB  
The Honorable Tam M. Doduc, Member, SWRCB  
The Honorable Dorene D'Adamo, Member, SWRCB  
The Honorable E. Joaquin Esquivel, Member, SWRCB  
Mr. Gordon Burns, Undersecretary, CalEPA  
Ms. Eileen Sobeck, Executive Director, SWRCB  
Mr. Michael Lauffer, Chief Counsel, SWRCB  
Mr. Eric Oppenheimer, Chief Deputy Director, SWRCB  
Mr. Erik Ekdahl, Director, Office of Research, Planning & Performance, SWRCB  
Mr. Max Gombert, Climate and Conservation Manager, SWRCB

- 5 **Multiple pages:** Include the addressee, date and page numbers for comment letters that are multiple pages
- 6 **Closing:** Include a closing and how the state regulatory agency can contact you

# Role of Outreach Captains and Ambassadors

## Ambassadors

- Share ACWA Alerts and Advisories with appropriate staff and board members at your agency.
- Determine if your agency will take action in response to an ACWA Alert.
- Coordinate with your region outreach captain(s) to share ACWA's Alerts and Advisories within your ACWA region.

## Outreach Captains

- Serve by appointment of the ACWA region boards for a two-year term.
- Serve on the Outreach Task Force.
- Participate in Outreach Task Force meetings.
- Provide outreach updates during region membership meetings at ACWA Spring and Fall Conference.
- Coordinate with your ACWA region board on outreach to your region.
- Develop a broad outreach list of your region's State and Federal elected and appointed officials to extend ACWA's reach and message.
- Recruit more ambassadors within your region and offer to serve as a resource for them.
- Participate in and promote ACWA Outreach Awards.



# Online Resources



**ACWA Member Toolkits**

**California Air Resources Board**

**California Department of Fish & Wildlife**

**California Department of Water Resources**

**California Energy Commission**

**California Environmental Protection Agency**

**California Natural Resources Agency**

**California Public Utilities Commission**

**California State Assembly**

**California State Senate**

**California State Water Resources Control Board**

**California Water Commission**

**Delta Protection Commission**

**Delta Stewardship Council**

**Governor Newsom**

**Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment**

**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**U.S. Senate**

**U.S. Senator Alex Padilla**

**U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein**