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# SAN GABRIEL VALLEY WATER ASSOCIATION

March 9, 2018

The Honorable Bill Quirk, Chair  
 Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee  
 1020 North Street, Room 171  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Quirk:

## **Oppose Drinking Water Fund / SB623 (Monning)**

We are respectfully writing to communicate our opposition to provisions being circulated by the Department of Finance for a proposed budget trailer bill establishing a Safe Drinking Water Fund, patterned after SB623 (Monning). The San Gabriel Valley Water Association represents municipal, special district, CPUC regulated and mutual water company suppliers that provide safe drinking water to over 2 million residents of the San Gabriel Valley. The U.S. EPA listed several sections of the San Gabriel Valley as Superfund sites in 1984. More than 30 square miles of contaminated groundwater affects the cost of providing water to significant portions of Alhambra, Irwindale, La Puente, Rosemead, Azusa, Baldwin Park, City of Industry, El Monte, South El Monte, West Covina, and other areas of the San Gabriel Valley.

For over 30 years, San Gabriel Valley communities have rallied together to build state-of-the-art treatment plants in the communities of El Monte, La Puente and Baldwin Park, all disadvantaged communities. We have done so out of common concern because we know that if the least financially able among our communities have safe drinking water. We have shared the costs of litigation against the parties responsible for the local contamination, applied for state and federal grants, created a joint Water Quality Authority, and the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster's establishment a local resource development assessment to bank water in preparation for future droughts.

By assessing water meters in the San Gabriel Valley, the safe drinking water fund as proposed by the Department of Finance and Senator Monning, will reduce our capacity in the San Gabriel Valley, to help ourselves and our own disadvantaged communities. There is nothing in the proposed law that would assure that San Gabriel Valley community needs will receive any priority, or that the SWRCB will be in a position to efficiently manage the fund.

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Alhambra	La Verne
Arcadia	Monrovia
Azusa	Monterey Park
Baldwin Park	Pasadena
Covina	Rosemead
El Monte	Sierra Madre
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Irwindale	
Industry Urban-Development Agency	

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Foothill MWD  
 La Puente Valley County Water District  
 Rowland WD  
 San Gabriel CWD  
 San Gabriel Valley MWD  
 Three Valleys MWD  
 Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD  
 Valley CWD  
 Walnut Valley WD

*Public Utilities:*

Azusa Valley Water Co.  
 California American Water Co.  
 Golden State Water Co.  
 San Gabriel Valley Water Co.  
 Suburban Water Systems

*Mutual Water Companies:*

Amarillo Mutual Water Co.  
 California Domestic Water Co.  
 Covina Irrigating Co.  
 Hemlock Mutual Water Co.  
 Rurban Homes Mutual Water Co.  
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 Sunny Slope Water Co.  
 Valencia Heights Water Co.  
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 Los Angeles County  
 MillerCoors  
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Aqua Capital Management LP  
 The B.E.S.T. Meter Co., Inc.  
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 Integrated Resources Management, Inc.  
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Henri F. Pellissier

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Disadvantaged communities and small water suppliers in our area are already subjected to costly, complicated and time-consuming state grant and loan programs that can take more than two (2) years to complete. We have managed to fill those gaps through local cooperation and mutual assistance.

As proposed, the Safe Drinking Water Fund would penalize residents of disadvantaged communities in the San Gabriel Valley by diverting their hard-earned dollars to other parts of the state. The proposed water user assessment would also reduce the incentive for communities around the state to reach the type of consensus and cooperation and funding we have accomplished in the San Gabriel Valley.

We believe that before your administration further considers a state-wide assessment on water, that the SWRCB's financial and technical assistance programs must be audited; and that the SWRCB should be ordered to provide you and the legislature a report about how they have exercised powers already granted to them to order physical and management consolidations of failing water systems around the state. Creating a new fund and programs to help disadvantaged communities could prove to be wasteful if current powers and resources are not already being effectively utilized by the SWRCB.

We appreciate your consideration of our position in opposing creation of a drinking water fund that is modeled after SB623 (Monning).

Sincerely,



David Michalko, President  
San Gabriel Valley Water Association

cc: The Honorable Ian Calderon  
The Honorable Ed Chen  
The Honorable Phillip Chen  
The Honorable Laura Friedman  
The Honorable Cristina Garcia  
The Honorable Ed Hernandez  
The Honorable Chris Holden  
The Honorable Connie Leyva  
The Honorable Bill Monning  
Senator Josh Newman  
The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
The Honorable Freddie Rodriguez  
The Honorable Blanca Rubio