



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

April 12, 2023

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sent via email

RE: AB 1572 (Friedman): Potable water: non-functional turf (as introduced) – **SUPPORT, IF AMENDED**

Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee: April 18, 2023, hearing

Dear Chair Bauer-Kahan:

On behalf of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, I am writing to express a position of “support, if amended” for AB 1572 (Friedman), which would prohibit the use of potable water for the irrigation of non-functional turf.

Metropolitan is in a partnership with its 26-member local water agencies, which in turn partner with retail suppliers that provide water to 19 million Californians – nearly half of all California residents – across Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Together, we have a longstanding commitment to water efficiency and conservation and offer a robust portfolio of demand management customer support programs to Southern California’s businesses, public agencies and households.

For nearly 30 years, Metropolitan has incentivized the removal of non-functional turf that serves no community or recreational purpose and its replacement with more sustainable California Friendly and native plants. These efforts have had a transformative effect, resulting in the removal of more than 200 million square feet of grass, saving enough water to serve 62,000 homes a year. In the fall of 2022, Metropolitan’s Board took two important steps related to non-functional turf that included the adoption of a [resolution](#) encouraging the elimination of irrigation of non-functional turf, and signing a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) that commits to reducing non-functional turf in its service area by 30 percent to help reduce demands on the Colorado River system.

AB 1572 would provide a valuable framework to support the reduction of non-functional turf in commercial, industrial, institutional, public agency and multi-family properties by prohibiting its irrigation with potable water. However, as introduced, numerous issues regarding its practical implementation warrant clarification.

Metropolitan appreciates the author’s willingness to address many of the issues raised by the water community to date and has held extensive discussions with its member agencies. The

concerns that Metropolitan would need addressed include clarification that the State Water Resources Control Board is responsible for certification, enforcement and audits associated with verifying compliance, clarity in definitions of non-functional turf to assist property owners' understanding and compliance, exclusion of any revisions to retail water service agreements and consideration of additional clarifications, funding and timing options for multi-family residential buildings.

Metropolitan supports the fundamental objective of the author to preserve available water supplies, particularly as the state is confronted with the reality of climate change. Metropolitan's staff has been in contact with the author's office and respectfully requests consideration of the aforementioned amendments which will provide for a more seamless implementation that will directly assist Metropolitan's member agencies.

We look forward to working with the author on this bill, and ask that you consider Metropolitan's "support, if amended" position when the AB 1572 is before you.

Please contact Metropolitan's Executive Legislative Representative Jay Jefferson II, at jjeffersonii@mwdh2o.com or (916) 538-4663 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Adel Hagekhalil
General Manager
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

cc: Assemblymember Devon Mathis, 33rd AD, Vice Chair
Assemblymember Laura Friedman, 44th AD
Assemblymember Juan Alanis, 22nd AD
Assemblymember Steve Bennett, 38th AD
Assemblymember Megan Dahle, 1st AD
Assemblymember Laurie Davies, 74th AD
Assemblymember Gregg Hart, 37th AD
Assemblymember Ash Kalra, 25th AD
Assemblymember Gail Pellerin, 28th AD
Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, 48th AD
Assemblymember Pilar Schaivo, 40th AD
Assemblymember Carlos Villapudua, 13th AD
Assemblymember Christopher M. Ward, 78th AD
Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D., 79th AD
Pablo Garza, Chief Consultant