

Letter sent by Chairman Record to Southern California Elected Officials
Regarding Metropolitan's Recent Vote on California WaterFix



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the Board of Directors

April 19, 2018

Southern California water leaders recently made a historic investment decision to modernize the statewide water delivery system that brings us 30 percent of our water supply from Northern California through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The April 10 action by The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) was perhaps our most important decision since Metropolitan committed to help build the State Water Project (SWP) back in 1960.

I wanted to reach out to you to explain what this decision means for your community and for the six-county Southland region as a whole. Our goal at Metropolitan is to ensure a reliable water supply for decades to come through the most affordable and environmentally responsible means possible. I believe this investment in the water system is necessary to prevent a far more expensive, disruptive water future that would result if we lose the ability to rely on this Northern California supply due to climate change and other natural risks.

For more than a decade, Metropolitan has been working collaboratively with state and federal agencies and other stakeholders to find a lasting solution to the water system and ecosystem challenges in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The ecosystem restoration strategy is being advanced through a process known as California EcoRestore. The water system solution, known as California WaterFix, calls for building new intakes in the north Delta and a twin tunnel pipeline system to transport the supply under the Delta to the existing SWP aqueducts that carry the water south. The state has recognized since the SWP's inception that a system with northern diversions would help establish more natural flow patterns and protect the quality of public water supplies. California WaterFix would make this a reality.

Metropolitan had hoped that farmers who also import water supplies through the Delta via the federal Central Valley Project would be ready today to invest with the State Water Contractors in California WaterFix. While they are not prepared to invest at this time, when I talk to them, many say they want this project to move forward and want to continue to work with us.

The Brown Administration considered staging the project in order to lower the cost of the initial construction. But, both the Governor and the Metropolitan Board came to the same conclusion: only by moving forward with the full project will it have the best chance to succeed. So, the Metropolitan Board decided to invest in nearly 65 percent of the project to help ensure it happens and to protect the existing investment in the SWP. In the coming years, this could eventually increase the estimated cost per household in Metropolitan's service area up to an average of \$4.80 per month, via the retail water agencies and cities that serve those customers. Communities that receive little or no imported water from Metropolitan won't see much change in their current water bills as a result of this decision but will benefit from the added insurance of a more reliable regional water supply. Those that depend primarily on Metropolitan water will shoulder a higher portion of the cost. I am convinced California WaterFix is well worth the investment compared to replacing 30 percent or more of Southern California's water supply source over time, and is the most prudent means of providing rate stability.

Decisions by other water agencies in Silicon Valley and Kern County lie ahead, as well as a permit decision by the State Water Resources Control Board. But the Metropolitan vote moves California WaterFix much closer to reality. We need a reliable system to deliver our Northern California supply as our other source of imported water, the Colorado River, is fast approaching shortage conditions. And our commitment to advancing more local water projects and more conservation remains as strong as ever. We need to make all of these investments to deal with the challenge of climate change and to ensure we don't face a water supply crisis like Capetown. Furthermore, high-quality water from Northern California helps to promote cost-effective local recycled water projects and provide a supply to help replenish local groundwater basins in our region.

Our work is not done, particularly here at home with local supply and conservation efforts. I thank you for your leadership and urge you to contact me at ChairmanoftheBoard@mwdh2o.com or call me at (213) 217-7727 if you want more information on California WaterFix and its status.

Sincerely,


Randy A. Record
Chairman of the Board