



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the General Manager

June 29, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) requests your support for increasing water infrastructure funding as part of a stimulus package or other pending Congressional actions. As the nation begins to recover from the devastating effects of the coronavirus, water agencies are working tirelessly to ensure their residents continue to have safe and reliable water services. Investing in water infrastructure now will help our economy and our communities.

Metropolitan is a regional wholesaler that provides water for 26 member agencies to deliver - either directly or through their sub-agencies - to nearly 19 million people living in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties.

Metropolitan, working with our member agencies, developed a list of 446 “ready-to-go” water infrastructure projects totaling \$8.5 billion. These projects are located in every Congressional district in Southern California and could begin construction within 120 days and be completed within two years. The number and variety of projects on this list demonstrates the ability of the water sector to create jobs and help stimulate the economy. Providing federal financing for these projects will help the region’s water supply become more drought proof and economically secure.

Many of these vital projects include repair and rehabilitation of pipelines, seismic improvements, and other essential infrastructure to help the region’s water supply become more resilient and reliable. While not traditionally funded by federal water infrastructure programs, these public works projects improve efficiency and many reduce the region’s dependence on imported water. Funding these short turnaround projects provides a new path forward to generate jobs, stimulate the economy, and increase Southern California’s water portfolio resiliency.

In addition to developing a new funding mechanism for projects that improve system reliability and resiliency, Metropolitan encourages you to provide additional funding for existing federal water programs. Increased funding levels for water programs at the Bureau of Reclamation, Environmental Protection Agency, and Army Corps of Engineers will help fuel local economic activity while simultaneously strengthening America’s infrastructure and provide vital federal support for water projects throughout Southern California. In light of the pandemic’s strain on

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local government budgets, federal support should be provided in the form of grants, principal forgiveness and negative interest loans to the greatest extent possible, especially for projects in economically disadvantaged communities.

As you consider further measures to help our country recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, Metropolitan urges you to increase federal funding for water infrastructure. Whether through the FY '21 appropriations process or in a separate infrastructure bill, this is an opportunity to make a lasting impact on securing Southern California's water future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Kightlinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being particularly prominent.

Jeff Kightlinger
General Manager

cc: The Honorable John Barrasso, Chairman
The Honorable Tom Carper, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works