



Sacramento Legislative Office

April 21, 2021

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5158
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 361 (R. Rivas): Open meetings: local agencies: teleconferences
As amended on April 6, 2021

Assembly Local Government Committee - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Rivas:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, I am pleased to relay support for your AB 361 which is intended to codify Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 (EO) that provides reasonable changes to the Ralph M. Brown Act as to how local legislative bodies may conduct teleconferencing meetings during state and local emergencies.

Metropolitan is a regional wholesaler that delivers water to 26 member agencies (including 14 cities, 11 municipal water districts, and one county water authority) which in turn, directly or through their sub-agencies, provide water to approximately 19 million people in southern California. Since the Governor's EO was signed on March 17, 2020, Metropolitan has conducted its board and committee meetings by teleconference in accordance with the EO.

AB 361, sponsored by the California Special Districts Association, adds a new section to the Brown Act to allow teleconferencing in certain defined emergency situations without needing to comply with quorum requirements or provide teleconference locations as specified. AB 361 also requires local legislative bodies to provide a direct way for the public to comment during meetings thus ensuring public access and public input.

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Metropolitan supports AB 361 because it will provide clarity for local agencies as to what is and is not permitted under the Brown Act during future state and local emergencies or when social distancing practices are recommended. If you should have any question or need additional information regarding Metropolitan's position, please contact Rosalie Thompson at rthompson@mwdh2o.com or (916)712-2504.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn C Viatella".

Kathryn Viatella
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Assembly Local Government Committee
Angela Mapp, Principal Consultant, Assembly Local Government Committee
William Weber, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus