



March 25, 2022

The Honorable Blanca Rubio
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5140
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2449 (B. Rubio): Open meetings: local agencies: teleconferences – **SUPPORT**

Assembly Local Government Committee

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

On behalf of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan), I am pleased to relay our support for your AB 2449, which authorizes a local agency to voluntarily use teleconferencing during public meetings without having to comply with certain teleconferencing requirements so long as certain pre-requisites are observed.

When Governor Newsom signed N-29-20 in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local agencies throughout the state quickly transitioned to using teleconferencing during public meetings. These provisions have been helpful during the COVID-19 emergency as local agencies have been able to carry out their responsibilities and duties without interruption, and public participation has continued openly and successfully. In addition, the past two years have been instructive and shed light on opportunities to modernize the Brown Act's remote meeting requirements.

Assembly Bill 2449 provides an alternative to the existing concept of teleconference locations while ensuring transparency and the opportunity for the public to participate remotely beyond emergency situations. Consistent with the intent of the Brown Act, members of the public will still be allowed to address the legislative body directly at the meeting location, but they will also have access to a call-in or internet-based service option which allows more members of the public wider access to provide input on matters they care about.

For these reasons, Metropolitan is pleased to support your AB 2449 and wishes to thank you for your leadership on this issue. If you should have any further questions or comments regarding Metropolitan's position, please do not hesitate to contact me at kviatella@mwdh2o.com.

Sincerely,

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

Kathryn C. Viatella
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Members of the Assembly Local Government Committee
Angela Mapp, Chief Consultant, Assembly Local Government Committee
William Weber, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus