



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

August 31, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan), I respectfully request your signature on AB 2449, by Assembly Member Blanca Rubio, which allows a local agency to use an alternative and voluntary teleconferencing option during public meetings without having to comply with certain teleconferencing requirements under specified conditions.

When Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-29-20 (E.O.) in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local agencies throughout the state, including Metropolitan, quickly transitioned to using teleconferencing during public meetings. These provisions in the E.O. 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. The bill allows for remote participation in conducting important and timely business, in limited and defined circumstances, when a member of a local legislative body cannot attend in person. 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, we respectfully request your signature on AB 2449. If you should have any further questions or comments regarding Metropolitan's position, please do not hesitate to contact Kathy Viatella in our Sacramento office at kviatella@mwdh2o.com or (916) 650-2614.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adel Hagekhalil".

Adel Hagekhalil
General Manager

cc: Assembly Member Blanca Rubio