



*Sacramento Legislative Office*

July 1, 2019

Senator Henry Stern, Chair  
Senate Natural Resources Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5046  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 658 (Arambula) – Water Rights: Water Management – **SUPPORT**  
As Amended on June 28, 2019

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – July 9, 2019

Dear Chairman Stern:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan), I wish to convey Metropolitan's full support for Assembly Member Arambula's AB 658. Assembly Bill 658 would allow local agencies or groundwater sustainability agencies to apply for a conditional temporary permit to divert surface water to underground storage in an expedited manner during times of high flood flows or upon demonstration of sufficient unappropriated water, and if certain conditions are met. Those important conditions include protection of other legal users of water, without unreasonable effects on fish and wildlife, or the ability of existing water right holders to meet water quality objectives.

With the additional water rights protections as noted above, AB 658 provides for a process for other legal water users that may be impacted to receive notice and file an objection in advance of the issuance of any new temporary conditional permit or temporary change. The bill would also require the State Water Resources Control Board to consider an objection and whether or not to hold a hearing before acting on the application for a permit or change.

Metropolitan supports AB 658 as a means to encourage surface water diversions to groundwater storage without amending existing water law, and in a way that will benefit water managers while protecting beneficial uses and existing water rights holders.

The Honorable Henry Stern  
July 1, 2019  
Page 2

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [kviatella@mwdh2o.com](mailto:kviatella@mwdh2o.com) or (916) 650-2614.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Viatella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "K".

Kathryn Viatella  
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Assembly Member Joaquin Arambula  
Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee  
Dennis O'Connor, Principal Consultant, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee  
Todd Moffitt, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus