



*Sacramento Legislative Office*

June 5, 2019

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, Chair  
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 160  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 62 (Dodd): Endangered species: accidental take associated with routine and ongoing agricultural activities: state safe harbor agreements: **SUPPORT**  
As Amended April 3, 2019  
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – June 18, 2019

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, I wish to convey support for Senator Dodd's SB 62. Senate Bill 62 would extend an exemption from the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) for accidental take of endangered species resulting from routine and ongoing agricultural activities on farms or ranches.

The accidental take exemption is currently set to expire January 1, 2020. Senate Bill 62 would extend the exemption another five years, require that any known instances of accidental take be reported to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and clarifies that the exemption does not apply to public agencies that may operate on farm or rangeland. Metropolitan supports these amendments. Extending the exemption another five years provides an opportunity to study the impacts of accidental take on listed species before deciding to make the exemption permanent.

In addition, the bill extends the Safe Harbor provision that authorizes take of protected species so long as the private landowner is managing their land pursuant to an agreement with DFW that results in a net increase in endangered species on the land. Safe Harbor agreements are an innovative tool to encourage habitat restoration for protected species on private lands. To the extent private landowners participate, these programs may reduce regulatory burdens on Metropolitan and other public agencies by resulting in delisting or down listing of species from endangered to threatened, or by making it easier to show that public agency actions will not result in jeopardy, a condition of both CESA and the federal Endangered Species Act.

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia  
Page 2  
June 5, 2019

We thank you for considering our support and hope that you will look favorably upon the bill when it is heard in Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee. If you have any questions regarding Metropolitan's position, 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 "Kathy Viatella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular flourish around the letter "i" in "Viatella".

Kathy Viatella  
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee Members  
Senator Bill Dodd  
Catherine Freeman, Chief Consultant, Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee  
Calvin Rusch, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus