



Sacramento Legislative Office

*****FLOOR ALERT*****

June 19, 2020

TO: Members of the California State Senate

FR: Kathy Viatella
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

RE: SB 1099 (Dodd): Emergency backup generators: critical facilities: exemption
SUPPORT and AMEND

Senate Third Reading

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan), I am pleased to support and seek amendments to SB 1099 as amended on June 2, 2020 regarding emergency backup generators for critical facilities. As a regional water wholesaler, Metropolitan delivers water to 26 member agencies which in turn provide water to approximately 19 million people in southern California.

Last year, the investor-owned utilities started implementing planned power outages, or Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, to minimize the risk of catastrophic wildfires. In order to prepare for these PSPS events, and other natural disasters, water agencies are challenged with balancing regulatory requirements for annual run times and maintenance and testing of their emergency backup generators with the need to provide safe and reliable water supplies. This is especially true now, as the fire season extends almost throughout the entire year due to climate change. If water agencies do not have access to reliable electricity, then communities can experience public health and safety risks, and water used to support firefighting efforts may be unavailable when it is needed most.

Senate Bill 1099 would benefit water agencies throughout California by seeking creative ways to address emergency generator operational issues in this new wildfire paradigm. Metropolitan acknowledges the need to attain California air quality standards to protect public health, but we hope that any new process for critical infrastructure facilities to enter into a stipulated order of abatement (SOA) is voluntary and maintains flexibility for individual water agencies to negotiate the terms of a SOA based on cost and technical feasibility. We understand the legislation is a work in progress, and we have shared suggested amendments with the bill's co-sponsors that meet the industry's needs, while recognizing the importance of protecting public health and improving air quality.

For these reasons, Metropolitan supports SB 1099 and appreciates the opportunity to provide suggested amendments and input on this important bill. If you should have any questions regarding our position, please contact me at kviatella@mwdh2o.com or at (916) 650-2614.