



Sacramento Legislative Office

March 18, 2019

The Honorable Blanca Rubio
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814

AB 654: Public records: utility customers: disclosure of personal information – Support

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, I am pleased to relay our support for your AB 654.

Metropolitan is the primary wholesale water supplier for the Southern California region, and our water supplies help our 26 member agencies support nearly 19 million residents throughout a six-county service territory.

Over the past 20 years, conservation has played a pivotal role in Metropolitan's water management practices to ensure water supply reliability for the region and responsible stewardship of available supplies.

The past decade, in particular, has proven a unique challenge for all of California, as we have adapted to warmer climates and reduced water supplies while responding to a growing population. In 2015, Metropolitan sponsored a turf removal program to incentivize Southern California residents to use climate-appropriate vegetation for yard design that would result in water savings. On average, residential outdoor irrigation can exhaust up to 40-60 percent of a residential water budget. The program was widely received and supported by our member agencies and their respective customers, resulting in beneficial landscape transformation within our service area and maximizing our supplies.

To assess the effectiveness of the program, our staff worked interactively with our member agencies to help determine water usage and comprehensive water savings. Water usage is considered part of confidential customer data, and we recognize and respect that our retail water agencies have an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the information. Your AB 654 will

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ensure that such information is protected if a utility agency voluntarily provides the information to another public agency for specified purposes. In essence, AB 654 will help facilitate data sharing, which is consistent with state policies to develop better resource management decisions.

Thank you for introducing AB 654, which Metropolitan believes will provide an overarching benefit for all public agencies. If you should have any questions or concerns regarding Metropolitan's position, please contact me at (916) 650-2614 or by email at kviatella@mwdh2o.com.

Sincerely,



Kathy Viatella
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Assembly Judiciary Committee
Alison Merrilees, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Paul Dress, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus