



August 19, 2019

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 785 (Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee Omnibus Bill)
Public resources: parklands, freshwater resources and coastal resources
As amended on June 24 – **SUPPORT**

Assembly Appropriations Committee: August 21 hearing date

Dear Chairwoman Gonzalez:

On behalf of the signatories below, we are pleased to relay our “support” for the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee’s 2019 omnibus bill, Senate Bill 785. In particular, we adamantly support the provision related to the extension of the sunset date for Fish and Game Code Section 2301, regarding quagga mussel control.

Quagga mussels were initially introduced into the United States through ballast water in the Great Lakes in the 1980s, and eventually discovered in the lower Colorado River and Metropolitan’s Colorado River Aqueduct in 2007. Quagga mussels are an invasive species, and based upon prior efforts to manage the infestation, they have proven difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate.

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The legislature responded by passing legislation, that was signed into law, authorizing the Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct inspections, and also require the implementation of a mussel control plan for all entities that own and operate reservoirs where quagga mussels are detected. Invasive species legislation makes it illegal to transport quagga mussels or cause the infestation of a previously non-infested waterbody. Recognizing the difficult nature of wholly containing or eradicating quagga mussels, and the importance of delivering safe and reliable water supplies, the legislature subsequently provided qualified immunity for operators of water delivery or storage facilities, for introducing mussels as a result of the operation of those facilities, provided they are operating under an approved control plan. Currently, Fish and Game Code Section 2301, which embodies all of the aforementioned statutory elements, will sunset on January 1, 2020.

We support the extension of the current sunset date from January 1, 2020, to January 1, 2030. Without the extension of the sunset clause, California will no longer have an effective approach to require or enforce needed control plans that have been an instrumental tool in minimizing the spread of quagga mussels into non-infested water bodies in California, or for the state to monitor which water bodies have been impacted.

Thank you, again, for your consideration of our support for SB 785 when it is before your committee on August 21, as it directly assists in addressing quagga mussel control efforts in California. If you should have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please feel free to contact Kathy Viatella at (916) 650-2614 or by email at kviatella@mwdh2o.com

Sincerely,



Kathy Viatella
Executive Legislative Representative
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California



Danielle Blacet
Director for Water
California Municipal Utilities Association



Anthony Tannehill
Legislative Advocate
California Special Districts Association



Paul Kelley
Executive Director
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cc: Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Jennifer Galehouse, Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Katie Sperla, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Sydney Chamberlin, Consultant, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee