



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the General Manager

September 11, 2020

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S.4188, Water for Tomorrow Act - SUPPORT if AMENDED

Dear Senator Harris:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) supports S.4188, the Water for Tomorrow Act, and request an amendment to better serve the needs of the California water community. Metropolitan is a regional wholesaler that provides water for 26 member agencies to deliver - either directly or through their sub-agencies - to nearly 19 million people living in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties.

There are many provisions in S.4188, the Water for Tomorrow Act, that are consistent with our mission to provide adequate and reliable supplies of safe drinking water. For example, expanding funding for the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI water recycling program by 10-fold, to \$500 million, would significantly accelerate regional water supply projects that once completed would reduce or offset the need for new imported water supplies. Additionally, the assistance provided for disadvantage communities would supplement California's efforts to providing reliable funding to help all communities have access to safe drinking water.

S. 4188 also creates a Reclamation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program. This program could be a valuable tool to help finance western water infrastructure projects. However, the language as written is quite prescriptive and adds additional layers of review to the project development process above and beyond what is required under current law. As a result, the utility of this program will be very limited. Metropolitan urges you to replace this authorizing language with the Reclamation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Pilot Program authorizing language in S. 1932, the Drought Resiliency and Water Supply Infrastructure Act, by Senators Gardner, Feinstein, McSally and Sinema. The language in S. 1932 could be more readily utilized by the Western water community to finance water infrastructure projects while still protecting the environment.

The Honorable Kamala Harris

September 11, 2020

Page 2

Metropolitan appreciates your work on these important issues. Please feel free to contact me if Metropolitan can be a resource to you and your staff as this legislation advances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Kightlinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" and last name "Kightlinger" clearly distinguishable.

Jeffrey Kightlinger

General Manager

cc: Senators Gardner, Feinstein, McSally, and Sinema