



Government Affairs and Community Outreach
Committee Meeting and Special Meeting of
the Board of Directors

Wednesday, October 7, 2026
4:30 PM

Committee Members:

Anthony R. Fellow, Chair

Edward Chavez, Vice-Chair

*The Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee meeting is noticed as a joint committee meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of compliance with the Brown Act. Members of the Board who are not assigned to the Water Resources and Facility Management Committee may attend and participate as members of the Board, whether or not a quorum of the Board is present. In order to preserve the function of the Committee as advisory to the Board, members of the Board who are not assigned to the Water Resources and Facility Management Committee will not vote on matters before the Committee.

Communications

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment

Discussion/Action

3. Legislative Update
 - a. Washington D.C.
 - b. Sacramento (End-of-Session Summary)
4. Federal Bill Summaries and Positions
5. Proposed Policy Amendments to Section 2.8 – Bottled Water Program

Other Matters

Adjournment

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.



American Disabilities Act Compliance (Government Code Section 54954.2(a))



To request special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the [District](#) office at (626) 443-2297.

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

September 28, 2026

Ana Schwab, Lowry Crook, Michael Brain, Madeline Voitier, Chris Keosian, and Alex Dunn

Congress

Congress returned to Washington, D.C. this month following its August recess. Upon its return, the U.S. House of Representatives promptly addressed its most immediate legislative priority—averting a possible government shutdown at the end of September—before adjourning again until after the November midterm elections. The Senate is scheduled to remain in session through early October.

On September 1, 2026, the House passed a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government through December 11, 2026, by a vote of 370-48. The CR was passed by the Senate prior to the August recess and it was signed by the President on September 2, 2026. The CR averts a pre-election government shutdown and postpones the next funding deadline until after the midterm elections.

While in session during the week of September 14, the House approved two Congressional Review Act resolutions targeting California maritime emissions regulations: H.J. Res. 210, concerning California’s Ocean-Going Vessels At-Berth Regulation, which passed by a vote of 216-211 on September 15, and H.J. Res. 213, addressing the state’s Commercial Harbor Craft regulations, which passed by a vote of 214-208 on September 16. Both resolutions now move to the Senate for possible consideration. These resolutions are part of a broader legal and procedural dispute over whether EPA decisions authorizing California-specific emissions standards constitute “rules” subject to disapproval under the Congressional Review Act.

The compressed legislative schedule for the rest of the year leaves Congress little time to address its remaining spending, authorization, confirmation, and broader policy priorities before the midterms. Although the Senate may advance some of these priorities while the House is in recess before the November elections, much of Congress’ unfinished business will likely be deferred until the post-election lame duck session.

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee Examines Drinking Water and Data Center Legislation

On September 3, 2026, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing titled “Reliable Water in the Digital Age: Examining Legislation to Strengthen Drinking Water Systems and Protect Ratepayers”. The hearing examined two draft proposals: the *Safe Drinking Water Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2026*, which would reauthorize and modify several Safe Drinking Water Act programs, and the *Water Cost Accountability Act*, which is intended to prevent residential and other ratepayers from bearing infrastructure costs associated with large data centers. The hearing comes as Congress considers the future of federal drinking water assistance ahead of the September 30, 2026 expiration of supplemental Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding, and as communities face growing questions about the water and infrastructure demands associated with data center development.

The witness panel for the hearing reflected business, environmental, and state regulatory perspectives. Neil Bradley of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce emphasized the importance of reliable water infrastructure to economic growth and data center development, while supporting protections for existing ratepayers and greater investment in water efficiency and reuse. Mae Wu of Health and Environmental Advising, LLC focused on the need for sustained federal investment in drinking water infrastructure, particularly for small and disadvantaged communities. Julie Moore of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, testifying on behalf of the Environmental Council of the States, emphasized the importance of flexible federal funding and technical assistance for states and small water systems facing aging infrastructure, PFAS, cybersecurity, and workforce challenges.

Much of the hearing centered on the proposed \$1.126 billion annual authorization for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and whether that level would be sufficient to meet ongoing infrastructure needs once IIJA supplemental funding expires. California members emphasized concerns relevant to drought-prone and water-constrained communities. Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-CA-25) raised questions about water scarcity, affordability, contamination, and transparency surrounding data center water use, while Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA-44) highlighted the potential effect of lower federal drinking water funding on communities already facing PFAS and other water quality challenges. The discussion reflected broad interest in protecting ratepayers from infrastructure costs associated with large data centers, while members differed over the appropriate federal role in funding and oversight.

House Natural Resources Subcommittee Examines Golden Mussel Legislation

On September 16, 2026, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a legislative hearing on eight bills addressing water rights, invasive species, public access, and wildlife management, including Rep. Josh Harder's (D-CA-9) H.R. 3717, the *Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2025*. The bill would direct the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force to establish a demonstration program and grant program focused on preventing, monitoring, controlling, and eradicating golden mussels, with initial work centered on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and other waters at risk of infestation. H.R. 3717 would authorize \$15 million annually through FY2030 for research, containment, control technologies, and related activities.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Acting Deputy Director Dave Miko testified that the Department of the Interior recognizes the importance of the golden mussel threat and supports the goals of H.R. 3717, although the Department does not support creating a new grant program. Miko noted that the Service, through the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, convened a Golden Mussel Work Group in 2025 that now includes more than 50 participants working on containment, monitoring, pathway management, research, outreach, and development of a National Golden Mussel Control and Management Plan.

The hearing represents the first step in moving H.R. 3717 through the House Natural Resources Committee. The bill now requires approval through a Committee markup before it can advance to the House floor. Its Senate companion, S. 4603, introduced by Sen. Adam Schiff (D-CA), has been referred to the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and is similarly awaiting committee action before consideration by the full Senate.

House Passes Water Resources Development Act

On September 16, 2026, the House passed the *Water Resources Development Act of 2026* under suspension of the rules by a 415-9 vote. The bipartisan legislation authorizes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' projects and studies related to ports and harbors, inland waterways, flood and coastal storm risk management, ecosystem restoration, water supply, and other water resources infrastructure. Since 2014, Congress has successfully enacted a WRDA bill on a consistent two-year basis.

As passed by the House, WRDA 2026 authorizes 133 new feasibility studies and 14 projects that have completed Corps review and are ready for congressional construction authorization. The bill also includes policy changes intended to improve project delivery and coordination with non-federal sponsors, including expanded technical assistance,

alternative project delivery authorities, and changes affecting flood protection, navigation, dam safety, and water-supply projects.

The House bill would also establish a new Office of Water Supply, Water Conservation, and Drought Resiliency within the Army Corps' Directorate of Civil Works. The Office would serve as a central point for identifying opportunities to use Corps' authorities to improve water supply and drought resilience, assist states and local project sponsors in accessing Corps programs and technical assistance, and address backlogs in water-supply reallocation studies. It would also provide guidance on reservoir storage reallocations, surplus water agreements, and operational changes that could provide additional water-supply benefits. The provision is not included in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee's current WRDA 2026 bill, although Sens. Raphael Warnock (D-GA) and Jerry Moran (R-KS) introduced substantially similar language separately in S.4962, the *Securing America's Water Supply Act* (S. 4962).

Eyes now turn to the Senate, where their version of the Water Resources Development Act, S. 4949, has already cleared the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee but still awaits full Senate consideration. If the Senate passes their own version of WRDA, lawmakers will need to reconcile differences between the two measures before a final WRDA package can be enacted.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Considers Desalination Reauthorization

On September 16, 2026, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a legislative hearing on a broad package of pending energy, water, wildfire, and public lands bills, including Sen. Alex Padilla's (D-CA) S. 5352, the *Desalination Reauthorization Act*. The bill would extend federal desalination authorities under the WIIN Act and Water Desalination Act for 15 years, establish a federal cost share of up to 25 percent without a per-project funding cap, make both ocean and brackish-water projects eligible, and authorize pilot grants for new desalination technologies. The Department of the Interior stated that it supports desalination as a tool for addressing drought and strengthening water-supply resilience in the West.

Discussion of the bill was limited, however. Padilla asked USGS Associate Director Sarah Ryker about S. 5352, but Ryker said the legislation fell outside her area of responsibility and was unable to provide additional detail beyond reading Interior's brief written statement supporting desalination.

Senate Agriculture Committee Advances Farm Bill in Second Markup

On September 16, 2026, the Senate Agriculture Committee advanced the *Agricultural Act of 2026* on a 12-11 party-line vote, reviving the farm bill after an earlier August markup ended in a 10-11 failed vote. Chairman John Boozman (R-AR) said Sen. Mitch McConnell's (R-KY) return to Washington was critical to securing the votes needed to move the legislation out of Committee. No Democrats supported the bill.

The markup also featured disagreement over California's Proposition 12. Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA) sought a vote on an amendment aimed at addressing the law's livestock production requirements, but Boozman ruled that the Committee had already closed the bill's titles and that the amendment could not be offered. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) also supported allowing a vote, while Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND) noted that the issue could still be raised on the Senate floor.

The Senate bill now moves to the full Senate for consideration. If approved, it would then need to be reconciled with the House-passed *Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026*, which cleared the House on April 30 by a 224-200 vote. Significant differences remain between the two chambers' approaches, particularly over SNAP policy and other program details, meaning further negotiations would be required before a final five-year farm bill could be enacted. Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) has said Democrats continue to seek a two-year delay of new SNAP requirements enacted earlier this year, while the Senate bill provides a one-year delay. House Agriculture Chairman Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA-15) welcomed the Senate committee action and said he intends to work toward a final five-year farm bill before the end of the year.

Federal Budget/Appropriations

Congress Extends Government Funding Through Mid-December, House Adjourns Early

Upon its return to Washington, the House passed H.R. 6500, *Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2027*, extending government funding through December 11, 2026. The measure, which was passed by the Senate prior to the August recess, averts a pre-election shutdown and also temporarily blocks the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) from finalizing its controversial rule to alter the federal grantmaking approval process. President Trump signed the CR into law on September 2, 2026. The CR also extends EPA's authority

to collect user fees under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) through December 11, 2026. Those fees help fund EPA's chemical review program, including pre-market reviews of new chemicals, and the short-term extension gives Congress additional time to consider a longer-term reauthorization or broader TSCA reforms.

Although the House was scheduled to be in session through early October, Republican leadership adjourned the chamber two weeks early to give Members more time to campaign before the November midterm elections. Limited prospects for additional legislative action may have accelerated an early departure since internal divisions have repeatedly disrupted floor action and the House's potential third reconciliation package remains stalled in the Senate.

With little legislative time remaining before the elections, Congress still faces a crowded fall agenda that includes annual appropriations, Highway Bill reauthorization, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), international trade measures, and foreign policy legislation. Although Congress may advance some of these priorities, lawmakers may defer most legislation requiring action by both chambers to the post-election lame duck session.

Administration/Agency

The following is a legal alert [published](#) by BBK on September 10, 2026:

Trump Administration Releases Supplemental Proposal to Further Amend Waters of the United States Subject to Federal Jurisdiction

On September 9, 2026, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("the agencies") published a [supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking](#) to provide additional regulatory options for narrowing the definition of "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act (CWA). The agencies developed the supplemental proposal options after reviewing approximately 220,000 comments submitted on their previous November 2025 WOTUS proposal, which was developed in response to *Sackett v. EPA* (2023). The agencies have opened a 30-day comment period on the proposal, with comments due **October 9, 2026**.

The supplemental proposal does not replace, withdraw or reopen every element of the November 2025 WOTUS proposal. Instead, it proposes new additional alternative



definitions for several key WOTUS-related terms including “relatively permanent,” “continuous surface connection” and “perennial.” It also proposes changes to covered wetlands.

The agencies issued the supplemental proposal partly in response to comments raising concerns about whether the November 2025 proposal’s undefined “wet season” approach could apply consistently across different regions and support a legally durable final rule. The agencies now seek comment on the newly proposed supplemental options. The agencies are seeking comment on the following elements:

- **Relatively permanent:** the supplemental proposal would generally limit this category to perennial bodies of water that ordinarily contain standing or continuously flowing water year-round. The proposal provides exceptions for temporary interruptions in two circumstances: (1) “anomalous events resulting in extraordinary circumstances,” or unexpected events, such as extreme or exceptional droughts or (2) “non-anomalous events” resulting in more than one normal, temporary interruption of no more than 30 consecutive days in any given year, such as low tide or a regularly occurring dry spell.
- **Perennial:** the agencies propose defining perennial as “having standing or continuously flowing water every day of the year during ordinary conditions.” The agencies also alternatively propose “surface water flowing continuously year-round” consistent with the 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule.
- **Continuous surface connection:** the supplemental proposal would define “continuous surface connection” to mean “perennial surface water in a wetland that is continuously connected with the surface water in the jurisdictional water such that it is difficult to determine where the jurisdictional water ends and the wetland begins.” This would require a wetland to contain perennial surface water that is continuously connected with an otherwise jurisdictional water, making the boundary between the wetland and jurisdictional water indistinguishable. The definition would allow interruptions caused by unusual events, such as drought, or one predictable interruption lasting no more than 30 consecutive days per year. Only the portion of the wetland that is indistinguishably part of the jurisdictional water would be considered jurisdictional under this approach.
- **Wetlands:** the agencies proposal to revise the current category of adjacent wetlands to include only perennial wetlands that are indistinguishably connected to a jurisdictional water (e.g., traditional navigable water, territorial seas, jurisdictional impoundment or a jurisdictional tributary). The agencies are also seeking

comments on whether the terms “adjacent” or “abutting” should be removed from the definition of “continuous surface connection” entirely.

Implications

As proposed, the supplemental proposal would significantly narrow waters subject to federal CWA jurisdiction. The agencies expect that most intermittent streams would not satisfy the proposed perennial standard. They also identify the arid West as the region where the change could have the greatest effect since intermittent and ephemeral streams account for much of the regional hydrology. The agencies also note that the dredge and fill permitting program in section 404 of the CWA would likely see the most programmatic changes under these proposed changes, anticipating reductions in permits and required mitigation.

Background

WOTUS is a threshold term under the CWA used to establish the scope of federal jurisdiction for protecting specific waters and wetlands. The CWA defines “navigable waters” as “the waters of the United States, including the territorial seas” but does not specifically define WOTUS itself. As a result, the agencies have defined the term by regulation since the 1970s. The scope of WOTUS has since been debated and litigated for decades, resulting in numerous rulemakings.

In its 2023 *Sackett v. EPA* opinion, the U.S. Supreme Court overruled its 2006 significant nexus test and held that the CWA covers wetlands only when they are indistinguishable from jurisdictional waters through a continuous surface connection. The agencies amended the 2023 WOTUS rule after the decision and proposed further regulatory revisions in November 2025. The supplemental rule adds alternatives to that pending rulemaking that would further narrow the scope of the nation’s waters and wetlands that receive federal protections.

EPA Launches Study of Emerging Drinking Water Contaminants

On September 9, 2026, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a new scientific study using non-targeted analysis to screen drinking water for a broad range of potential contaminants, including pharmaceuticals, PFAS, pesticides, personal care products, and other emerging compounds. Unlike conventional monitoring methods that test for a predefined list of chemicals, non-targeted analysis uses high-resolution analytical techniques to identify compounds that may not have been specifically selected for testing

in advance. EPA has developed a screening library containing more than 1,400 chemicals for use in the study.

The study is intended to supplement EPA's existing Safe Drinking Water Act processes for evaluating unregulated contaminants, including the Contaminant Candidate List and the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR). EPA proposed UCMR 6 earlier this year to require monitoring for 30 unregulated contaminants, including several PFAS, while the new non-targeted study is designed to identify additional chemicals that may fall outside those established monitoring programs. EPA said the resulting data could help the agency prioritize future research, monitoring, and potential regulatory actions.

EPA has not yet provided detailed information on the study's sampling design, participating water systems, implementation timeline, or how identified contaminants would be evaluated for potential health significance.

EPA Rescinds Biden-Era Water Guidance

On September 15, 2026, it was reported that EPA rescinded five Biden-era Office of Water guidance documents through an internal memorandum dated August 11, 2026. The document addresses PFAS discharges under the Clean Water Act, application of the Supreme Court's *County of Maui v. Hawaii Wildlife Fund* decision concerning groundwater discharges, climate considerations in total maximum daily loads, environmental justice guidance for underground injection control permitting, and technology-based limits for emerging contaminants. According to the memorandum, EPA determined that the guidance documents no longer aligned with current law, executive orders, or Administration policy, and said it would consider whether replacement guidance is needed.

Of particular relevance is the EPA plan to withdraw its 2022 PFAS permitting guidance, which encouraged states to use NPDES permits, pretreatment programs, monitoring requirements, and, where appropriate, effluent limits to address PFAS discharges. EPA said the guidance had created confusion and led to inconsistent implementation among states and permittees, while also raising concerns about some states directly incorporating Safe Drinking Water Act maximum contaminant levels into Clean Water Act permits.

The internal memorandum also withdraws EPA's 2023 draft guidance on applying the Supreme Court's *County of Maui* decision to discharges that travel through groundwater before reaching regulated surface waters. That draft was intended to help permitting authorities apply the Court's "functional equivalent" standard but was never finalized. The withdrawal removes EPA's draft interpretive framework, but it does not alter the underlying

Supreme Court decision, which continues to govern when groundwater-mediated discharges may require an NPDES permit.

EPA Launches G20 Water Reuse Initiative

On September 15, 2026, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin launched the G20 Water Reuse Initiative during the G20 Energy Abundance Ministerial in Houston, TX. G20 members at the meeting agreed to an EPA-led Water Reuse Outcome Document that established a shared framework for expanding the safe reuse of treated water across industrial, agricultural, energy, municipal, and data center applications. The initiative promotes a “fit-for-purpose” approach, under which water is treated to a level appropriate for its intended use rather than applying a single standard across all reuse applications.

The initiative supports technology-neutral reuse standards, streamlined permitting, environmental and public health safeguards, voluntary information sharing, technical exchanges, pilot projects, and capacity building. EPA also emphasized increased flexibility for national, state, and local governments to tailor reuse approaches to local conditions and highlighted the role of private-sector investment and innovation in expanding water recycling infrastructure.

The G20 initiative builds on EPA’s Water Reuse Action Plan 2.0, released in April 2026, which renewed the agency’s national water reuse framework with an increased focus on industrial, technology-sector, and energy uses.

EPA Withdraws Claims that United States Phased out PFOA Production and Imports

On September 18, 2026 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) withdrew claims that the United States had phased out the manufacture and import of the legacy PFAS perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), after reviewing a data-quality petition from Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). EPA revised two agency webpages to clarify that only companies participating in its voluntary 2010/2015 PFOA Stewardship Program phased out domestic production and imports. The updated language acknowledges that nonparticipating companies may still manufacture, import and use PFOA and no longer characterizes those quantities as small.

The website revisions does not amend existing regulations, impose new restrictions or initiate enforcement action, although the acknowledgement could inform future regulatory or enforcement decisions.

Judicial/Courts

Federal Court Blocks EPA Reclassification of California Clean Air Act Waivers

On September 2, 2026, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granted California's motion for preliminary injunction requiring the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to withdraw or correct its reclassification of several Clean Air Act (CAA) preemption waivers as rules subject to the Congressional Review Act (CRA) and prohibiting EPA from giving effect to those reclassifications. The CRA allows Congress to overturn an agency rule through a joint resolution enacted into law.

The Court determined that the CRA does not bar judicial review of EPA's decisions to reclassify the waivers and that the reclassification constitutes final agency action subject to review under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The judge also denied motions to dismiss filed by EPA and two industry intervenors.

The case stems from EPA's June 2026 decision to reclassify four California waivers covering vehicle and small off-road engine emissions programs as rules. The court decision gives California an early victory in its effort to preserve its authority to enforce stricter state emissions standards. The preliminary injunction may be appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

In evaluating California's likelihood of success on the merits, Senior Judge Beryl Howell wrote that "California establishes a likelihood that EPA's action in reclassifying the CAA Section 209(b) waiver orders as 'final rules' was arbitrary and capricious because EPA not only supplies no explanation for this abrupt change in long-standing policy but also denies the fact that a change in the classification of the waivers occurred at all." The Court also found that California would likely establish that EPA exceeded its statutory authority in reclassifying the waivers.

The preliminary injunction requires EPA to withdraw or correct its reclassification of the four waivers while the litigation continues. It does not resolve separate litigation challenging three CRA resolutions enacted into law in 2025 that disapproved other California vehicle-emission waivers. The ruling's reasoning also bears on EPA's treatment of California's Commercial Harbor Craft authorization, although the order does not prevent Congress from considering a resolution of disapproval. Nevertheless, the House of



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ATTORNEYS AT LAW



FEDERAL REPORT

Representatives, on September 16, 2026, passed H.J. Res. 213, to disapprove EPA's partial authorization of California's Commercial Harbor Craft regulations. The resolution would need to be passed by the Senate and signed by the President to take effect.



PARTNER AND DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Ana D. Schwab

☎ (202) 370-5311

✉ ana.schwab@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.



PARTNER

Lowry A. Crook

☎ (202) 370-5328

✉ lowry.crook@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.



PARTNER AND DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Michael B. Brain

☎ (202) 916-1295

✉ michael.brain@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Madeline Voitier

☎ (202) 923-1563

✉ madeline.voitier@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS*

Christopher Keosian

☎ (202) 370-5297

✉ christopher.keosian@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.

**Not admitted to the practice of law*



LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR*

Alex Dunn

☎ (202) 370-5308

✉ alex.dunn@bbklaw.com

📍 Washington, D.C.

**Not admitted to the practice of law*



Aaron Read & Associates, LLC

ITEM 3.b.

LEGISLATIVE AND

GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATION

Date: August 31, 2026
Fr: Terry McHale
Re: End-of-Session Budget and Trailer Bill Update

2026 LEGISLATIVE YEAR-END OF SESSION

Overview

As the California Legislature enters the final days of the 2026 legislative session, lawmakers are working through hundreds of remaining policy bills while also considering a significant package of end-of-session budget and trailer bills. In addition to regular bills facing the August 31 deadline, the Legislature is revisiting portions of the 2026–27 State Budget to address issues left unresolved when the budget was enacted in June and to make additional fiscal and policy changes.



The Legislature and Governor enacted the principal 2026–27 state budget package in late June. A significant number of fiscal and policy issues were intentionally left unresolved for consideration during the final weeks of Session. The resulting end-of-session package, consisting of Budget Bill Juniors and numerous trailer bills, makes additional appropriations, adjusts prior appropriations, implements portions of the June agreement, responds to post-enactment developments, and makes a

number of substantive statutory changes. Approximately \$1 billion in General Fund resources was reserved in June for potential end-of-session allocations, alongside additional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Proposition 4 climate bond, and other special-fund decisions. The package is moving immediately ahead of the August 31 adjournment deadline (pushed to September 1).

2026–27 Budget Background

The 2026–27 budget was enacted following months of negotiation over Medi-Cal spending, tax revenues, reserves, and competing legislative priorities. The Governor's January budget estimated a relatively modest shortfall compared with earlier projections, driven largely by stronger income tax revenues tied to stock market gains. The May Revision proposed roughly \$14 billion in solutions, including spending reductions, fund shifts, and revenue-related actions. The Legislature adopted its own budget on June 15 and reached final agreement with the Governor at the end of June.

Major components of the final June agreement:

- Maintaining approximately \$15 billion in the Budget Stabilization Account
- Significant General Fund spending on health and human services
- Modifications to proposed Medi-Cal reductions
- Continued funding for housing and homelessness programs
- Child care investments and reimbursement changes
- Transportation and infrastructure funding
- Climate and natural resources expenditures
- Changes involving business tax credits and other revenue measures
- Numerous state workforce and administrative provisions

End-of-Session Budget Package

The package spans Budget Bill Juniors and eighteen subject-area trailer bills. Key measures are summarized below.

Bill	Subject Area	Key Provisions	Significance
AB/SB 113	Budget Bill Junior	Principal fiscal vehicle for additional end-of-session appropriations and budget adjustments; addresses reserved and newly identified funding needs.	Primary bill to watch for changes in actual state spending.
AB/SB 114	Prior-Year Budget Bill Junior	Adjusts appropriations from the 2022–23 through 2025–26 budgets, incl. broadband, Aliso Canyon, and DMV funding.	Primarily fiscal cleanup; review individual reappropriations.
AB/SB 133	Education Finance	Implements K–12 provisions: TK/preschool, community schools, school meals, dual enrollment, bilingual teacher programs, Dream Resource Centers.	Implementation/cleanup measure; watch program-specific provisions.
AB/SB 167	Higher Education	Cal Grant corrections, community college enrollment funding, another round of CC student housing, UC program extensions.	Housing and funding provisions are among the more substantive components.
AB/SB 173	Health	Medi-Cal provider enrollment/suspension authority, hospital and dialysis provisions, 988 crisis services, federal Medicaid conformity, opioid/substance abuse funding.	One of the broader, more substantive trailer bills given federal Medicaid uncertainty.
AB/SB 175	Developmental Services	Consolidates Community Placement Plan and Community Resource Development Plan (~\$78M already budgeted).	Primarily restructures already-funded programs.
AB/SB 178	Public Resources	Creates the Farmland Access and Conservation for Thriving Communities Program (~\$60M).	Warrants review by landowners, agricultural interests, and tribes.
AB/SB 184	State Government	VLF revenue shortfalls, local government financing, winding down the Victims of Corporate Fraud Compensation Fund, older bond-act cleanup.	Broad vehicle; review for late amendments.
AB/SB 186	Film Tax Credits	Independent film credit treatment, general business credit limitation, extends Film Tax Credit 2.0/3.0 carryforward from 9 to 15 years.	Preserves value of previously awarded credits.
AB/SB 187	Employment	Makes remote new-employee orientation release time permanent; CalHR fund administration; CalPERS eligibility for part-time board members; extends goatherder minimum-wage provisions through 2028.	Principal bill to monitor for state employee/labor issues.
AB/SB 190	Early Care and Education	Child care eligibility, provider reimbursement, family fees, paid training days, new reimbursement methodology and single-rate transition.	Implements prior budget/bargaining decisions; reimbursement changes carry long-term fiscal implications.

Bill	Subject Area	Key Provisions	Significance
AB/SB 191	2028 Olympic & Paralympic Games	Soundstage tax credit treatment, temporary building/fire standards, Athletic Commission treatment of combat sports, temporary firearms provisions for competitors.	Unusually substantive; creates targeted statutory exemptions for the Games.
AB/SB 192	Transmission Infrastructure Accelerator	Shifts financing authority to IBank, restructures financing mechanism, strengthens labor requirements, extends program through 2036.	One of the most consequential measures; close review warranted for infrastructure/labor stakeholders.
AB/SB 193	GGRF Programs	State operations treatment within GGRF, AHSC funding, wildfire expenditures, administrative costs, tiered allocation adjustments, school energy efficiency deadlines.	One of the most important fiscal/policy bills — sets allocation priority among climate, transportation, housing and wildfire programs.
AB/SB 194	Transportation	ZEV incentive language correction, expanded CHP protective security authority, Forest Lawn Drive hearing requirements, CHP communications tower funding.	Narrower than June's transportation bill; related spending also appears in AB/SB 113 and 193.
AB/SB 195	Wildfire Loss Mitigation Payments	Extends state income tax exclusion for wildfire mitigation/home-hardening payments through tax years beginning before 2031.	Beneficial to property owners receiving qualifying grants.
AB 196	School Energy Efficiency Stimulus	Extends program and expenditure deadlines, generally through 2031.	Prevents existing funds from expiring before projects complete.

Overall Assessment

The August 2026 package is considerably more substantial than a routine Budget Bill Junior or technical cleanup package. The June budget remains the foundation of the state's 2026–27 spending plan, but the Legislature intentionally deferred a meaningful number of decisions until the end of session. The resulting package now combines additional appropriations, prior-year funding adjustments, implementation of June budget agreements, responses to federal funding changes, GGRF and climate spending decisions, natural resources policy, state employee provisions, major transmission infrastructure policy, health and Medi-Cal changes, education and child care implementation, transportation provisions, and special statutory treatment for the 2028 Olympics.



Aaron Read & Associates, LLC

LEGISLATIVE AND
GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATION

Date: September 11, 2026

Fr: Terry McHale

Re: November 2026 Statewide Ballot Propositions

2026 STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

On November 3, California voters will decide 14 statewide propositions. The propositions are split into two groups:

1. Props 1, 2, 4, 5, & 43 are measures referred by the Legislature.
2. Props 3, 37–42, 44, & 45 are citizen initiatives.

The Legislature can place a measure on the ballot by a two-thirds vote of each house and does not require a signature from the Governor. A petition for a constitutional amendment requires 8% of voter signatures (874,000) and 5% for a statute (546,000). All propositions become law by simple majority.

This is a consequential proposition slate. Consider that it combines the two largest bond authorizations ever proposed on a California ballot (Props 1 and 37), a permanent extension of high-income tax rates (Prop 3), a first-in-the-nation billionaire wealth tax (Prop 40) alongside two measures widely seen as engineered to defeat it (Props 41 and 42), a high-profile voter ID initiative (Prop 39), a major CEQA overhaul (Prop 45), and a cluster of health-sector and local-tax measures.

Below is a quick background on each proposition and what the campaigns and stakeholders are saying.

The Measures



Prop 1 — Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond (\$11.25B).

A legislatively referred bond that would authorize \$11.25 billion in general obligation bonds — \$10 billion for affordable rental and homeownership programs and \$1.25 billion for CalVet veteran home loans repaid by borrowers. Supporters argue the state's flagship housing programs have exhausted the 2018 bond and that the 2026 budget left them without ongoing funding, with the Multifamily Housing Program oversubscribed roughly nine-to-one. Opponents focus on the cost: the LAO estimates roughly \$500–600 million a year in debt service for 25 years. Debate has been relatively muted compared to the tax measures; the main tension is whether bond borrowing is the right tool given the state's fiscal position. The veterans were miffed because they had specific legislation that dealt with their housing concerns and it was shelved to accommodate Prop 1.

- **Sponsor:** California Legislature (SB 417 by Senate Pro tem Monique Limón).
- **Supporters:** Affordable-housing advocates; League of Women Voters of California.
- **Opposition:** No organized campaign; fiscal-conservative critics.



Prop 2 — Rainy Day Fund / "Save for California's Future Act" (ACA 20). A legislative constitutional amendment that would raise the cap on the Budget Stabilization Account from 10% to 20% of General Fund tax proceeds, change required deposit rules, and exclude reserve deposits from the state spending limit. It has drawn little organized opposition and is framed as prudent fiscal management after several volatile budget years. The main critique is that excluding reserve deposits from the Gann spending limit is a quiet loosening of a constitutional guardrail.

- **Sponsor:** California Legislature (ACA 20 by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel).
- **Supporters:** League of Women Voters of California; most establishment fiscal voices.
- **Opposition:** No organized campaign; spending-limit critics.



Prop 3 — Permanent High-Income Tax Extension. Hey, the “tax the rich” say let’s make permanent the 2012 voter-approved top income-tax rates (10.3%–12.3% on the highest earners, currently set to expire in 2031). They would earmark 89% to K–12 schools and 11% to community colleges. Prop 3 removes the sunset, but does not increase the rates. Supporters warn that letting the rates lapse would cost schools \$15 billion a year. Can we afford a cut, “our schools struggle now”, becomes the

mantra. California already has the nation's highest top rates and high earners are fleeing. It affects only the top ~2% of filers.

- **Sponsor:** Education and school-funding coalition (qualified by petition).
- **Supporters:** California Teachers Association; California Federation of Teachers; California School Employees Association; California Budget & Policy Center.
- **Opposition:** California Taxpayers Association; Reform California.



Prop 4 — Public Campaign Financing / "Fair Elections Act" (SB 42). In an effort to democratize political campaigns, Prop 4 allows public funding of campaigns. Supporters say it will reduce reliance on large private donors. Not much being said about Prop 4.

- **Sponsor:** California Legislature (SB 42 by Senator Tom Umberg).
- **Supporters:** League of Women Voters of California; campaign-finance-reform advocates.
- **Opposition:** No major organized campaign.



Prop 5 — Recall Reform (SCA 1). A constitutional amendment that would eliminate the simultaneous "successor" election when a state officer is recalled, leaving the office vacant to be filled under existing law and, if a Governor is recalled, elevating the Lieutenant Governor for the remainder of the term. It responds directly to the structure of the 2021 Newsom recall, where a replacement could theoretically have won with a small plurality. Supporters call it a good-government fix; opponents argue it reduces voter choice. Very little attention and money being spent on Prop 5.

- **Sponsor:** California Legislature (SCA 1 in 2024 by former Senator Josh Newman).

- **Supporters:** League of Women Voters of California; good-government advocates.

- **Opposition:** No major organized campaign.



Prop 37 — Middle-Income Homebuyer Loan Program (up to \$25B). This initiative is the brainchild of former Assembly Speaker Bob Hertzberg – he is also running the campaign. Prop 37 would allow the California Housing Finance Agency issue up to \$25 billion in revenue bonds to fund fixed-rate second mortgages of up to 17% of the purchase price for middle-income buyers of qualified new homes bonds repaid by homeowners rather than the General Fund. Supporters say it covers the down-payment barrier. The very large bond figure is numbing even though the liability does not fall on the taxpayers.

- **Sponsor:** Building- and construction-trades coalition (qualified by petition).

- **Supporters:** United Nurses Associations of California; California Conference of Carpenters; State Treasurer Fiona Ma.

- **Opposition:** Reform California; League of Women Voters of California.



Prop 38 — Immunology Research Bond (\$8.4B). Such an interesting year that an \$8.4 billion in general obligation bonds for immunology and immunotherapy research gets very little notice. Supporters frame it as positioning California as a research leader. Opponents argue biomedical funding should flow through the normal budget process rather than ballot-driven bond debt.

- **Sponsor:** Immunology-research advocates (qualified by petition).

- **Supporters:** Immunology and biomedical research backers.

- **Opposition:** League of Women Voters of California; Robert M. Kaplan, Ph.D.; fiscal critics.



Prop 39 — Voter ID and Citizenship Verification. A defining battle between the Trump legacy and the key principles of the Californian Democrats. The constitutional amendment requiring government-issued ID at the polls (or the last four digits of an ID number for mail ballots), state-provided voter ID cards on request, and annual reporting of citizenship-verification rates. Opposition argue it adds costly barriers for eligible voters (particularly low-income voters, people with disabilities, and those who have recently moved) to a system they say is already secure.

- **Sponsor:** Voter-ID coalition (Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association; Reform California).
- **Supporters:** California Republican Party; Reform California; Uline CEO Richard Uihlein.
- **Opposition:** California Democratic Party; League of Women Voters of California; ACLU California Action; Common Cause; California State PTA; California Labor Federation; California Teachers Association; California Nurses Association; SEIU California.



Prop 40 — Billionaire Tax. The billionaires are spending like billionaires to defeat this measure. The narrative they are using is that poor people get hurt if this passes. This combined constitutional amendment and statute would impose a one-time 5% tax (paid over five years) on Californians with net worth over \$1 billion — roughly 200 people — directing about 90% to health care. Opposition includes both gubernatorial candidates. Crosses party lines. Newsom opposes it because billionaires can move somewhere else and take their windfalls with them. An ugly LA Times article claims the sponsor bullied women in labor leadership to support.

- **Sponsor:** SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW).
- **Supporters:** California Nurses Association; California Democratic Party; Sen. Bernie Sanders; much of organized labor.
- **Opposition:** Gov. Gavin Newsom; Xavier Becerra; California Medical Association; California Professional Firefighters; Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California; Sergey Brin and Silicon Valley business leaders.

Prop 41 — Audits of New Special Taxes / Spending-Limit Conformity. Prop 41 requires pre-election and recurring State Auditor reviews of programs funded by new statewide special taxes and prohibiting new state taxes that exclude their revenues from the voter-approved (Gann) spending limit. It is seen as one of two measures backed by billionaire-tax opponents structured to neutralize Prop 40.

- **Sponsor:** Building a Better California.
- **Supporters:** California Taxpayers Association; California Society of CPAs; CalAsian Chamber of Commerce; California Chamber of Commerce; Reform California.
- **Opposition:** SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West; League of Women Voters of California.



Prop 42 — Ban on New Personal-Property Taxes. The less cynical say that Prop 42 banning new state tax on personal property and barring retroactive state taxes from 2026 onward is written to help the middle-class retirees keep their retirement intact. Others say millionaires and billionaires win by protecting their rich cache of assets.

- **Sponsor:** Building a Better California.
- **Supporters:** California Professional Firefighters; State Building & Construction Trades Council of California; AMVETS Department of California.
- **Opposition:** SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West; Sen. Bernie Sanders; League of Women Voters of California.



Prop 43 — Two-Thirds Vote for Local Special Taxes (ACA 22).

Prop 43 would require two-thirds voter approval for local special taxes and prohibit local ad valorem property taxes except as already allowed. The starting date is 2027. The arguments are easy to write: is it making it too difficult for local governments to fund necessary services or is it saving taxpayers from being fleeced.

• **Sponsor:** California Legislature (ACA 22 by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks).

- **Supporters:** Taxpayer groups.
- **Opposition:** California Democratic Party; SEIU Local 1000; League of Women Voters of California; California Federation of Labor Unions; local-government and school advocates.



Prop 44 — Community Clinic 90% Spending Requirement.

Nothing simple is simple – Prop 44 requires nonprofit Federally Qualified Health Centers to spend at least 90% of revenue on program services rather than management and overhead. Health-sector opposition call it redundant given existing regulation and warn it could trigger more than \$1.7 billion in first-year noncompliance fees, forcing clinics to cut services or close.

- **Sponsor:** SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW).
- **Supporters:** SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West.
- **Opposition:** California Primary Care Association; California Medical Association; California Hospital Association; Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California; California Democratic Party.



Prop 45 — CEQA Reform for "Essential Projects." Places deadlines (roughly a one-year cap) on environmental review for specified project categories (most housing, transportation, water, clean energy, health, and public-safety facilities) and limit court challenges to approvals. Business and building groups and pro-housing advocates support it. Opposition warn it weakens public and judicial oversight. A July PPIC poll found 73% support across party lines, with the strongest backing among renters, younger, and lower-income voters — giving it the healthiest polling of all the measures.

- **Sponsor:** Business, hospital, water, and housing coalition (qualified by petition).
- **Supporters:** California Chamber of Commerce; California Children's Hospital Association; California Water Association; California Council for Affordable Housing; California YIMBY.
- **Opposition:** Sierra Club; environmental-justice groups; California Federation of Labor Unions; Jane Fonda.

MEMORANDUM

ITEM 4. Action Item

DATE: October 7, 2026
TO: Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee and Board of Directors
FROM: General Manager
SUBJECT: Federal Bill Summaries and Positions

Recommendation

Approve staff recommendations for the following federal legislative positions: H.R. 10083, H.R. 9497, S. 4949 and the *San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund Reauthorization Act* bills which are consistent with Upper Water's 2025-26 Legislative Policy Principles adopted by the Board in January 2025.

Bill Analysis

H.R. ____ – San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund Reauthorization Act

Introduced: Bill proposal, Rep. Gil Cisneros [D-CA-31] and Rep. Judy Chu [D-CA-28]

Summary: The bill would remove the funding cap for the ongoing groundwater treatment by the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority, reauthorize funding at \$250 million, and support the completion of the ongoing water restoration project.

Analysis: The bill removes funding barriers and advances a decades-long project that will improve groundwater, water supply reliability and directly benefit the 1.5 million residents in the San Gabriel Valley.

Staff Recommendation: Support

H.R. 10083 – Water Technology and Resilience Reauthorization Act

Introduced: August 13, 2026, Rep. Gil Cisneros [D-CA-31]

Summary: This bill would amend the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to extend authorization of the EPA's Advanced Drinking Water Technology Grant Program through 2031. Created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the program helps eligible drinking water systems identify and implement technologies that improve cybersecurity, water treatment, monitoring, affordability, efficiency, and overall system safety. Grants are available to public water systems serving 100,000 or fewer people that lack the financial resources to complete projects needed to comply with SDWA requirements.

Analysis: The program was originally authorized at \$10 million annually from FY2022 through FY2026 and generally requires a 10% non-federal cost share, which EPA may waive in cases of significant financial hardship. However, Congress has not yet appropriated funding for the program.

This bill would extend the authorization and continue supporting small and disadvantaged

communities. ACWA supports the bill.

Staff Recommendation: Support

Water Resources Development Act of 2026 (H.R. 9497 / S. 4949)

Introduced: in the House June 29 by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; and introduced in the Senate

Summary: The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is the primary authorization legislation governing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Civil Works program. WRDA authorizes new water resources studies and construction projects, modifies existing Corps authorities, and establishes policies that guide the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of the nation's water infrastructure. The bill includes various priorities such as dam safety reauthorizations, disaster debris removal, forecast-informed reservoir operations, environmental infrastructure funding, and includes language to establish an Office of Water Supply, Water Conservation, and Drought Resilience within the Corps of Engineers. They also include key reauthorizations for key EPA water infrastructure funding programs, like the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs.

Analysis: WRDA, typically enacted on a biennial basis, could advance key priorities related to water supply reliability, water storage optimization, and groundwater recharge. Both the House and Senate Water Resources Development Act passed favorably out of Committee and will enter the conferencing process to reconcile differences between both WRDA bills. Upper Water through BBK have advocated for language in WRDA that would expand ACOE operations to include water conservation activities that could help with basin recharge. ACWA supports H.R. 9497 and is working to have amendments included to address their specific concerns.

Staff Recommendation: Support

Attachments

None

MEMORANDUM

ITEM 5. Action Item

DATE: October 7, 2026

TO: Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee and Board of Directors

FROM: General Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed Policy Amendments to Section 2.8 – Bottled Water Program

Recommendation

Staff recommends the committee approve the proposed amendments to Section 2.8 - Bottled Water Donation Program policy.

Background

The District's Bottled Water Program provides bottled water donations to eligible nonprofit organizations for approved community events within the District's service area. The program is administered through the District's Community Outreach Program and is intended to support community events while promoting District awareness and public education.

Staff are proposing updates to the Bottled Water Program policy to clarify program requirements, update donation limits, and establish a required acknowledgment form for organizations receiving donated water. The proposed changes include limiting donations to 15 cases per event, and requiring recipients to sign a Bottled Water Donation Acknowledgment and Use Form.

These changes are intended to provide clearer guidelines for organizations requesting bottled water, establish a consistent approach for determining donation quantities, and ensure that donated water is used for its intended community event purpose. The required acknowledgment form will provide the District with confirmation that recipients understand and accept the conditions associated with receiving donated water.

Attachments

1. Policy Manual Section 2.8 - Bottled Water Program
2. Bottled Water Donation Acknowledgment and Use Form

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District MANUAL OF POLICIES			
Subject	Policy Number	Date Adopted	Date Revised
BOTTLED WATER PROGRAM	2.8	05-03-11	11-01-11
			09-04-19
			<u>10-1-26</u>

Purpose

2.8.1 As part of the District's Community Outreach Program, this program promotes District awareness, conservation, and education at community events.

Background

2.8.2 This program is developed to promote the public's understanding of the safety and quality of the District's water in an ongoing effort to provide public education to its customers.

Policy

2.8.3 To accommodate requests for donations of water, the following policy will apply:

- (a) Each fiscal year, the District will set the budget for its Bottled Water Program. The budgeted amount will be allocated equally to the five Director divisions. All external bottled water requests considered by the District must be submitted by a non-profit organization and for events within the District's service area (the cities of Arcadia, Baldwin Park, Bassett, Bradbury, Duarte, El Monte, Irwindale, La Puente, Monrovia, Rosemead, San Gabriel, South Pasadena, Temple City, Valinda, portions of Azusa, Covina, Glendora, Hacienda Heights, Industry, **Montebello**, and West Covina).
- (b) Quantities are limited and requests are granted on a first-come, first-serve basis. A formal request must be made by ~~submitting a letter of request on the organization's letterhead to the District. The letter of request may be faxed to (626) 443-0617 or emailed~~ mailing to the designated staff member. Requests must be received a minimum of two weeks in advance of the event.
- (c) Water is donated at no cost to non-profit organizations and must not be sold or used for any events other than the event specified ~~on the letter of in the~~ request. The requesting organization must complete and sign the District's Bottled Water Donation Acknowledgment and Use Form, confirming its understanding and acceptance of the requirements of this policy. If it is determined that the donated water has either been sold or used for other events, the organization may be disqualified from consideration of any future requests.
- (d) Water is available in 168 fluid ounce aluminum bottles packaged in cases of 24. Water will be distributed in full case quantities only.
- (e) With the approval of the Board member of the Division in which the event or activity is scheduled, the District will determine the number of cases provided based on expected attendance with a maximum of 1520 cases being available per event.
- (f) All water is provided at room temperature and should be stored indoors before use.
- (g) Upon approval of the request, the District will contact the organization and arrange a date and time for the organization to pick up the water.
- (h) The pickup and transportation of the bottled water are the responsibility of the requesting organization. Each case weighs approximately 30 lbs. It is the responsibility of the requesting organization to bring appropriate transportation, staff and necessary equipment to safely

transport the water. The District is not responsible for any damage to vehicles, persons or otherwise during the transportation and pick up of water. Scheduled water pickups will be arranged on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 3:~~00~~³⁰ p.m. The District is not responsible for a missed scheduled pick up.

- (i) Please contact the District to return any unopened cases of water at (626) 443-2297.
- (j) In the best interest of the environment, organizations requesting bottled water should provide appropriate waste storage containers at the event and are strongly encouraged to recycle the ~~plastic~~aluminum bottles.



BOTTLED WATER DONATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND USE FORM

The Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District ("District") provides bottled water donations to eligible non-profit organizations for approved community events within the District's service area. By signing this form, the requesting organization acknowledges and agrees to the following requirements for the use of donated water.

Organization Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____

Event Name: _____

Event Date: _____

Event Location: _____

Number of Cases Approved: _____

The requesting organization acknowledges that:

1. The donated water is provided at no cost and may not be sold, resold, exchanged, or otherwise distributed for compensation.
2. The donated water may only be used for the event identified above and may not be used for another event, activity, or purpose without prior approval from the District.
3. The organization is responsible for the pickup and transportation of the donated water. The organization will provide appropriate transportation, staff, and necessary equipment to safely transport the water.
4. The donated water will be provided in full cases of 24, 16 fluid ounce aluminum bottles, and each case weighs approximately 30 pounds.
5. The organization understands that quantities are limited and that the District determines the number of cases provided based on the approved request and applicable program limits.
6. Any unopened cases of water may be returned by contacting the District at (626) 443-2297.
7. The organization understands that failure to comply with these requirements, including selling donated water or using it for an event other than the approved event, may result in the organization being disqualified from consideration for future water donations.

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I certify that I am authorized to represent the requesting organization and acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements above. I understand that the donated water is provided specifically for the approved event and will not be sold or used for any other event or purpose.

Organization Name: _____

Authorized Representative Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____