

May 16, 2019



Paul Schubert, Chair
Kerry Schmitz, Vice
Chair

The Honorable Ken Cooley
State Capitol, Room 3013
Sacramento, CA 95814

Members

Re: AB 296 Climate Change: Climate Innovation Grant Program.

Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Cooley:

On behalf of the Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), I am writing to express RWA’s position of Support on AB 296, as amended on May 1, 2019, your measure to establish the Climate Innovation Grant Program to be administered by the Strategic Growth Council. RWA is a joint powers agency representing 21 water suppliers in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, Yolo, and Sutter counties.

AB 296 will establish a framework for the state to provide competitive grants used as matching funds to support the development of new innovations that, among other things, address water quality and reliability issues that reduce environmental impacts in an affordable manner, including, but not limited to, promoting improved water quality, improved water supply reliability, or reduced flood risk and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat in an affordable manner.

Unaddressed impacts from climate change would have substantial effects on water supply reliability in the Sacramento region and California. RWA and RWA’s member agencies are actively engaged in preparing for the impacts of climate change on the Sacramento region. Signed in 2000 by more than 40 water providers, environmentalists, agricultural interests, and other stakeholders, the voluntary Water Forum Agreement serves as a foundation for sustainable planning that will also help prepare for climate change in the region. The Water Forum Agreement balances co-equal objectives to provide a reliable water supply and to preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the lower American River. A project to develop a Sacramento Regional Water Bank to sustainably store and recover water through regional conjunctive use is complementary to the Water Forum agreement and will further allow for the region to manage the effects of climate change. The Sacramento Regional Water Bank could also make more water available for use statewide. AB 296 holds the potential to support these activities in the Sacramento region as well as reduce current and future pressures that will result from climate change.

Associates

County of Placer
El Dorado County Water
Agency
Sacramento Area Flood
Control Agency
Sacramento Municipal Utility
District
Sacramento Regional County
Sanitation District

Letter to the Honorable Ken Cooley
Re: AB 296 Support Position
May 16, 2019
Page two of two

For these reasons, RWA is pleased to support AB 296. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Ryan Ojakian of RWA's staff at (916) 967-7692 or rojakian@rwah2o.org.

Sincerely,



Rob Swartz
Interim Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Ms. Jennifer Galehouse, Deputy Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Ms. Emily Berry, Legislative Aide, Assemblymember Ken Cooley's Office
Ms. Katie Sperla, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus