



June 18, 2026

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94209

RE: AB 2026: Water diversion: groundwater recharge: permit – requested amendments

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of Orange County Water District (OCWD), I write regarding AB 2026, which would make numerous changes to existing authority and permitting processes for groundwater recharge projects. We wanted to reach out and request a few simple amendments to AB 2026. OCWD does not oppose the bill and understands what it is intended to accomplish. The amendments we are suggesting are intended to ensure that our operations are not inadvertently impacted by the bill.

OCWD is one of the world's best-managed groundwater basins that can store 500,000 acre-feet of usable water. Because of investments and exceptional management, OCWD has sustainably doubled the basin's annual water production which supplies 85% of the drinking water supply for 2.5 million people in Orange County.

OCWD operates 30 recharge basins in Anaheim and Orange on 1,600 acres and recharges an average of 250,000 acre-feet per year using Santa Ana River flows, recycled water, and imported supplies. These facilities ensure the groundwater basin can be sustainably managed.

The reasons for the attached amendments include, (1) provide technical clarity to confirm the intent of AB 2026; (2) exempt the Santa Ana River from AB 2026 as it is a fully appropriated river and utilized for groundwater recharge by OCWD; and (3) preserve the priority of existing water rights for the Santa Ana River.

For the above reasons, we respectfully request amendments to AB 2026. If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Harasty, Legislative Affairs Liaison, at (714) 477-3750 or aharasty@ocwd.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Kennedy".

John C. Kennedy
General Manager

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
June 18, 2026
Page 2 of 2

Attachment: Amendments to AB 2026

cc:

Senator Kelly Seyarto (D-32)
Senator Tom Umberg (D-34)
Senator Tony Strickland (D-36)
Senator Steven Choi (D-37)
Assembly Member Phillip Chen (D-59)
Assembly Member Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-67)
Assembly Member Avelino Valencia (D-68)
Assembly Member Tri Ta (D-70)
Assembly Member Katie Sanchez (D-71)
Assembly Member Diane Dixon (D-72)
Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-73)