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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
ORANGE COUNTY'S GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

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April 20, 2020

The Honorable Marc Levine
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Room 5135
Sacramento, CA 94249

RE: AB 2178 (Levine) Emergency Services: De-Energization Definition – Support

Dear Assemblymember Levine:

The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) writes in support of your bill, AB 2178, which would expand the definition of energy shortage constituting a state of emergency and a local emergency, to include a planned de-energization event. AB 2178 would uniformly clarify that Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events constitute a state of emergency and a local emergency.

In previous years, a number of challenges related to the use of backup generators during a PSPS event have arisen, including whether this use of emergency backup power is considered “emergency use” under state and local rules. While the California Air Resource’s Board issued guidance that PSPS events should be considered emergency use for generators, this is not being uniformly applied at the local level.

Also, AB 2178 could potentially provide an avenue for OCWD’s water producers to receive disaster funding reimbursement for PSPS events. AB 2178 would additionally include a de-energization, defined as a planned public safety power shutoff, as specified, within those conditions constituting a state of emergency and a local emergency. For these reasons we support AB 2178. Thank you for your leadership on this issue. If we can provide any assistance to you or your staff in any way, please do not hesitate to contact OCWD’s Legislative Liaison, Alicia Dunkin, at adunkin@ocwd.com or (714) 477-3750.

Sincerely,

Vicente Sarmiento, Esq.
Board President