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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
ORANGE COUNTY'S GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

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April 16, 2019

The Honorable Cristina Garcia
California State Assembly
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0058

RE: Assembly Bill 756 (C. Garcia) Public water systems: contaminants - Oppose

Dear Assemblymember Garcia:

The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) respectfully opposes Assembly Bill 756 public water systems: contaminants. AB 756 would require all public water systems to monitor for potentially thousands of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Furthermore, AB 756 would require public water systems (PWS) to publish and keep current on its website water quality information relating to regulated contaminants, notify each customer on the customer's next water bill and through email, as prescribed, of confirmed detections of specified excess contaminants.

The Orange County Water District believes the current phased PFAS Investigation Plan being implemented by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is a thoughtful, comprehensive, and appropriately targeted approach to assessing PFAS occurrence throughout California.

In July 2018, the SWRCB Division of Drinking Water (DDW) established health-based Notification and Response Levels for two PFAS chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). As part of the statewide PFAS investigation plan, PFAS testing orders issued were statewide by the DDW in March 2019 to 209 PWS for the testing of 660 total drinking water supply wells. Should the required testing reveal PFOA or PFOS is above their Notification Levels, the PWS will then be required under existing law to notify its local governing body within 30 days; DDW also recommends public notification in these cases via impacted PWS' websites, bill inserts, or annual consumer confidence reports (CCR). As such, the ongoing PFAS Action Plan will result in the type of public dissemination of PFAS testing results that are sought in AB 756. Furthermore, these efforts have been targeted at the communities most likely to be affected by PFAS instead of a statewide unfunded testing mandate for all PWS.

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Furthermore, AB 756 does not state which PFAS chemicals are required for testing, nor does it specify which analytical method should be used. The recent DDW testing orders require the use of either EPA Method 537 Rev 1.1 (14 PFAS compound) or EPA Method 537.1 (18 PFAS compounds), the only two methods available for certification by the SWRCB's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP).

Providing safe drinking water is a high priority for OCWD, and the District is supportive of the current SWRCB PFAS Action Plan, which will generate the information necessary to guide the development of future Maximum Contaminant Levels for PFAS chemicals.

For these reasons, OCWD respectfully opposes AB 756. Please contact OCWD Legislative Affairs Liaison Alicia Dunkin at (714) 477-3750 or adunkin@ocwd.com, or me, if you have any questions and/or if you would like to tour our Philip L. Anthony Water Quality Laboratory which is the first public agency lab to have received certification to test for PFAS.

Sincerely,



Vicente Sarmiento, Esq.
President