

# AGENDA

18700 Ward St.  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708  
(714) 378-3200

COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING  
WITH BOARD OF DIRECTORS\*  
ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
**November 6, 2025, 12:00 p.m. - Conference Room C-2**

\*The OCWD Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting is noticed as a joint meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of strict compliance with the Brown Act and it provides an opportunity for all Directors to hear presentations and participate in discussions. Directors receive no additional compensation or stipend as a result of simultaneously convening this meeting. Items recommended for approval at this meeting will be placed on the **October 15** Board meeting Agenda for approval.

This meeting will be held in person. As a convenience for the public, the meeting may also be accessed by Zoom Webinar and will be available by either computer or telephone audio as indicated below. Because this is an in-person meeting and the Zoom component is not required, but rather is being offered as a convenience, if there are any technical issues during the meeting, this meeting will continue and will not be suspended.

**Computer Audio: You can join the Zoom meeting by clicking on the following link:**  
<https://ocwd.zoom.us/j/99465334409>

**Telephone Audio: (213) 338 8477**

**Webinar ID: 994 6533 4409**

Teleconference Sites:  
10382 Bonnie Drive, Garden Grove  
303 W. Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton  
1454 Madison Steet, Tustin  
1502 North Broadway, Santa Ana  
19 Cannery, Buena Park  
6151 Baja Drive, Anaheim

\* Members of the public may attend and participate at all locations.

## ROLL CALL

## ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE AGENDIZED

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt resolution determining need to take immediate action on item(s) and that the need for action came to the attention of the District subsequent to the posting of the Agenda (requires two-thirds vote of the Board members present, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present.)

## VISITOR PARTICIPATION

Time has been reserved at this point in the agenda for persons wishing to comment for up to three minutes to the Board of Directors on any item that is not listed on the agenda, but within the subject matter jurisdiction of the District. By law, the Board of Directors is prohibited from taking action on such public comments. As appropriate, matters raised in these public comments will be referred to District staff or placed on the agenda of an upcoming Board meeting.

At this time, members of the public may also offer public comment for up to three minutes on any item on the Consent Calendar. While members of the public may not remove an item from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion, a Director may do so at the request of a member of the public.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM NO. 1)**

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved by one motion, without separate discussion on these items, unless a Board member or District staff request that specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate consideration.

1. MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING HELD OCTOBER 2, 2025

RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes as presented

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

2. STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION: Agendize for November 19 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate

3. FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION: Agendize for November 19 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL UPDATE
5. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OUTREACH REPORT
6. ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE GOALS & STRATEGY

**CHAIR DIRECTION AS TO WHICH ITEMS IF ANY TO BE AGENDIZED AS A MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NOVEMBER 19 BOARD MEETING**

**DIRECTOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS**

**GENERAL MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENT/REPORT**

**ADJOURNMENT**

## COMMUNICATION AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Van Tran – Chair  
Roger Yoh – Vice Chair  
Steve Sheldon  
Valerie Amezcua  
Erik Weigand

Cathy Green  
Fred Jung  
Dina Nguyen  
Natalie Meeks  
Denis Bilodeau

Agenda Posting: In accordance with the requirements of California Government Code Section 54954.2, this agenda is posted in the window of the guard shack at the main entrance of the Orange County Water District, 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, CA and on the OCWD website: [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com) not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting date and time above. All written materials relating to each agenda item are available for public inspection in the office of the Assistant District Secretary. Backup material for the Agenda is available at the District offices for public review and can be viewed online at the District's website: [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com).

Accommodations to the Disabled: Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with a disability who require a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, may request such modification or accommodation from the District Secretary at (714) 378-3234, by email at [cfuller@ocwd.com](mailto:cfuller@ocwd.com) by fax at (714) 378-3373. Notification 24 hours prior to the meeting will enable District staff to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting.

Availability of Agenda Material: As a general rule, agenda reports or other written documentation that has been prepared or organized with respect to each item of business listed on the agenda can be reviewed at [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com). Copies of these materials and other disclosable public records distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors in connection with an Open Session agenda item are also on file with and available for inspection at the Office of the District Secretary, 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, California, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If such writings are distributed to members of the Board of Directors on the day of a Board meeting, the writings will be available at the entrance to the Board of Directors meeting room at the Orange County Water District office.



MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
WITH COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE  
ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
October 2, 2025 12:00 p.m.

Director Weigand called the Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. in the District Conference Room C-2. Public access was also provided via Zoom webinar. The Secretary called the roll and reported a quorum as follows:

Committee Members

Van Tran  
Roger Yoh (arrived 12:03 p.m.)  
Steve Sheldon (absent)  
Valerie Amezcua  
Erik Weigand

Alternates

Cathy Green (absent)  
Fred Jung  
Dina Nguyen (absent)  
Natalie Meeks (absent)  
Denis Bilodeau

OCWD Staff

John Kennedy – General Manager  
Gina Ayala – Director of Public Affairs  
Alicia Harasty – Legislative Affairs Liaison  
Crystal Nettles – Principal Communications Specialist  
Christina Fuller – District Secretary

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar was approved upon motion by Director Weigand, seconded by Director Amezcua and carried [4-0] as follows:

***Ayes – Tran, Amezcua, Weigand, Jung***

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

**The minutes of the September 4, 2025 Communications/Legislative Liaison Committee meetings are approved as presented.**

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

2. State Legislative Update

State Consultant Jason Gonsalvez advised that the state legislative session adjourned on September 13, a day later than planned, and provided an update on SB 72 and SB 454.

3. Federal Legislative Update

Federal Consultants reported on the government shutdown and advised that the trip to Washington D.C. for President Bilodeau and OCWD staff originally scheduled for October 20 has been postponed.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. OC Water Summit Recap

Principal Communications Specialist Crystal Nettles reported that this year's OC Water Summit had 356 attendees and raised \$65,400 in sponsorships. Ms. Nettles noted that for next year's event, MWDOC staff will take the lead in planning with OCWD staff assisting.

## 5. Public Affairs Outreach Report

Director of Public Affairs Gina Ayala stated that that 181 guests toured OCWD in September. She reported on upcoming events, speakers bureau highlights and recent OCWD media.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

---

Erik Weigand, Director



## AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2025

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.  
Board of Directors

**From:** John Kennedy

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/A. Harasty

**Budgeted:** N/A

**Budgeted Amount:** N/A

**Cost Estimate:** N/A

**Funding Source:** N/A

**Program/Line-Item No.:** N/A

**General Counsel Approval:** N/A

**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A

**CEQA Compliance:** N/A

**Subject:** STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

---

### SUMMARY

Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) consultants and staff will provide an update on 2025 accomplishments and planning for the 2026 legislative session, which begins in January.

#### Attachment:

- Joe A. Gonsalves and Son – Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith November Report

### RECOMMENDATION

Agendize for November 19 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate.

### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

#### 2025 STATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In 2025, the state Legislature swore in 37 new members to the Assembly and the Senate. With such a large class of new legislators, this year there was ample opportunity for Orange County Water District to educate the new and existing legislators and their staff about who we are and the impacts of PFAS on the District. Many briefings were held with legislators, Orange County Supervisors and key staff.
- On March 11, Board President Denis Bilodeau, General Manager John Kennedy, and Legislative Affairs Liaison Alicia Harasty traveled to Sacramento to conduct briefings with key state legislators, including Assembly Members Phillip Chen, Diane Dixon, Tri Ta, and Avelino Valencia, as well as Senators Tom Umberg and Steven Choi. In addition, briefings were provided to legislative staff, including Pablo Garza, Chief Consultant, Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee; Luiz Torres, staff to Assembly Member Valencia; Christopher Aguilera, staff to Assembly Member Quirk-Silva; and Jennifer Beall, Chief of Staff to Assembly Member Sanchez.

- The year 2025 marked the first year of California’s two-year 2025–2026 legislative session. During this period, the Legislature introduced 2,397 bills in total and sent 913 measures to Governor Gavin Newsom for consideration. The Governor signed 790 bills and vetoed 123. Of the bills introduced in 2025, OCWD took formal positions on nine. All three bills supported by OCWD were signed into law, and none of the measures opposed by the District advanced through the Legislature, reflecting the effectiveness of OCWD’s legislative advocacy efforts.
- Alicia Harasty worked with the California Groundwater Coalition (CGC) to engage Sacramento legislators drafting the state climate bond, with the goal of securing eligibility for grant funding for the Sunset Gap Seawater Barrier. She also collaborated with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) and WaterReuse to gain state grant funding for groundwater contamination cleanup, including PFAS.

## **2026 Potential Legislation**

During the October Communications/Legislative Committee meeting, staff discussed pursuing new legislation to allow OCWD to continue bottling advanced purified water from the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) for demonstration and educational purposes. At that time, it was understood that state law would require OCWD to comply with direct potable reuse (DPR) regulations, which the GWRS does not satisfy. Since the October meeting, OCWD has learned that the State Water Resources Control Board’s Division of Drinking Water (DDW) has indicated that the current bill, AB 2022 (Gordon) Advanced purified demonstration water, Chapter 408, is still operational to allow OCWD to bottle GWRS water. Staff are awaiting formal written confirmation from DDW to allow continued bottling of GWRS water, however, based on current information, it is likely that new legislation in 2026 will not be required to continue bottling.

### Background:

In 2016, OCWD sponsored AB 2022 (Gordon) Advanced purified demonstration water, Chapter 408, which authorized the bottling of advanced purified demonstration water for educational purposes and to promote water recycling. OCWD bottled its GWRS water beginning in 2017 and distributed it until November 2024.

However, the bill stipulated that once direct potable reuse (DPR) regulations are concluded (which was established by the State Water Resources Control Board) then the bottling of advanced purification water for demonstration purposes must meet the DPR regulations, which OCWD’s GWRS does not satisfy. However, as of the writing of this report DDW has indicated that the current bill is still operational and OCWD will not need to additionally comply with DWR regulations.

Advanced water purification allows billions of gallons that would otherwise be discharged to the ocean to be purified and reused as a safe and reliable local water supply. Authorizing the bottling of small quantities of this water extends public education to audiences who cannot visit the GWRS in person. The GWRS is the world's largest potable reuse facility of its kind and produces up to 130 million gallons per day of highly purified water. Visitors are allowed to sample the finished water during tours. Providing bottled samples has been one

of the most effective outreach tools for demonstrating to policymakers and the community the safety and reliability of the purification process and the value of this water supply.

## **PAST ACTIVITIES**

- October 28 Staff to staff meeting with Assembly Member Dixon's Field Representative
- Sept. 23 Staff to staff meeting with Assembly Member Tri Ta's Senior Field Representative
- July 21 Staff to staff meeting with Assembly Member Dixon's Field Representative
- July 14 Staff to staff meeting with Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris's District Director
- July 9 Staff to staff meeting with Assembly Member Tri Ta's Senior Field Representative
- May 28 Senator Ben Allen, Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Resources, Environmental Protection and Energy, Assemblymember Jeff Gonzalez, Vice Chair of Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee were included in the California Groundwater Coalition Legislative meeting in Sacramento, in which Alicia Harasty participated.
- May 5 California Municipal Utilities Association Executive Director and Legislative Director visited OCWD for a briefing and tour with John Kennedy, Lisa Haney and Alicia Harasty
- April 23 Madison Marks-Noble, District Representative, Office of Senator Tony Strickland (SB-36) visited OCWD for a briefing and tour of the GWRS with Alicia Harasty
- March 11 President Bilodeau, John Kennedy and Alicia Harasty visited Sacramento and met with Assemblymembers Chen, Dixon and Ta, as well as Senators Umberg and Choi. They also met with staff for Assemblymember Quirk-Silva, Sanchez, and the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
- March 26 Alicia Harasty participated in the ACWA Legislative Symposium
- January 23 Alicia Harasty briefed staff to Assembly Member Avelino Valencia



EDELSTEIN GILBERT ROBSON & SMITH<sup>LLC</sup>



**Joe A. Gonsalves & Son**  
Anthony D. Gonsalves  
Jason A. Gonsalves  
Paul A. Gonsalves  
PROFESSIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION  
925 L ST. - SUITE 200 - SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-3766  
916 441-6597 - FAX 916 441-5961  
Email: gonsalves@gonsalves.com

TO: ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

FROM: JOE A. GONSALVES AND SON  
EDELSTEIN GILBERT ROBSON & SMITH<sup>LLC</sup>

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: October 28, 2025

---

With the Legislature adjourned until January 5, it is a quiet time in Sacramento.

In anticipation of next year, policymakers are starting to anticipate the state's budget condition.

When the 2025-2026 Budget was adopted earlier this year, the Department of Finance (DOF) projected deficits of \$17-\$24 billion through 2028-2029. Since then, however, the state's financial footing has become far murkier.

On one hand, revenues have outperformed expectations. Personal and corporate income tax payments in September surpassed budget estimates by 16%. Income taxes alone are now \$3.5 billion above year-to-date budget projections.

Looking at revenue projections alone, one would assume that the state is well on its way to reducing the significant projected deficits. However, the state's actual financial condition is far murkier.

### **Higher Revenues Fueled in Part by AI Bubble**

It seems likely that the state's strong revenue gains are driven largely by the AI bubble. Should the economy continue to grow, state revenues will continue to grow as well. However, history has taught us that whenever the bubble bursts, California's revenues will swing down dramatically.

The question is if and when this will happen. The question is also whether the Governor and the Legislature will take action to plan for the inevitable bubble burst.

### **Uncertainty from Federal Actions**

The Big Beautiful Bill Act will have many implications for the state's budget, which is heavily augmented by Federal funding. Guidance is still evolving for the implementation of the law, and it is unclear exactly how the potential reductions in Federal funding and potential stimulatory effect of the measure will impact state revenues.

### **Fewer Reserves to Draw From**

The Governor and Legislature have used the state's reserves in recent years to keep the budget balanced. As such, the state's reserves have fallen from just over \$48 billion in 2023-2024 to \$16 billion.

In addition, spending plans in the last several years have relied more heavily on internal borrowing, eg, where the state borrows from funds available in a given pot of money intended for one use and puts that money to use for another purpose. That money must eventually be repaid. Consequently, the state is facing \$21.6 billion in new internal debt.



## AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2025  
**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.  
Board of Directors

**From:** John Kennedy

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/A. Harasty

**Budgeted:** N/A  
**Budgeted Amount:** N/A  
**Cost Estimate:** N/A  
**Funding Source:** N/A  
**Program/Line-Item No.:** N/A  
**General Counsel Approval:** N/A  
**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A  
**CEQA Compliance:** N/A

**Subject: FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

---

### SUMMARY

The Orange County Water District's (OCWD) federal advocate and staff will brief the committee on OCWD's 2025 accomplishments and provide an update on federal activities of interest to OCWD.

#### Attachments:

- ENS Resources August Update
- Federal Bill Matrix

### RECOMMENDATION

Agendize for the November 19 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate.

Please see attached "ENS Resources November Update," for current updates on federal activities that are of interest to OCWD.

### FEDERAL 2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- OCWD staff and consultants continued to advance federal assistance through Community Project Requests for PFAS clean-ups with support for two ongoing PFAS wellhead projects. Funding assistance was among the top levels secured by the Orange County delegation, specifically from Congressmembers Kim and Correa.
- Worked with Senator Padilla staff to advance PFAS liability protection.
- Secured co-sponsorship of House PFAS liability protection legislation (H.R. 1267) by Congressmembers Kim and Correa.
- Participated in the federal PFAS Passive Receivers Coalition.
- Monitored development of PFAS drinking water regulations and advised on impacts.

- Lisa Haney and ENS Resources worked successfully to ensure that United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) would not interrupt implementation of water conservation due to Prado Dam construction activities. Lisa also worked successfully to ensure that deviation approval would occur to allow for water capture in 2025-26.
- Supported increased funding of USACE FIRO program in the fiscal year 26 spending bill.
- Supported the design of the OC Water Summit PFAS panel.
- Provided detailed analyses on pending legislation, and recommended positions to take.

## **PAST ACTIVITIES**

Nov. 4	ENS Resources participated in Congressional Briefing on Innovation in Water Management: FIRO Implementation and Enhanced Storm Forecasting.
Oct. 20	Due to the federal government shut down OCWD did not visit Washington D.C. as planned.
August 7	President Bilodeau will brief and provide a GWRS tour for Congressman Derek Tran and his staff.
July 21	Staff to staff meeting with Congressman Young Kim's District Director.
July 16	Staff to staff meeting with Congressman Lou Correa's Field Representative.
July 15	Staff to staff meeting with Congressman Dave Min's Field Representative.
June 26	Staff to staff meeting and GWRS tour with Congressman Tran's District Director.
June 18	<p>A coalition of national water sector organizations, including the Association of Municipal Water Agencies (AMWA), convened a congressional briefing in Washington, D.C. focused on the growing challenges utilities face in addressing PFAS contamination. The event drew attention to how federal policies are shaping the responsibilities and liabilities of essential public service providers.</p> <p>The panel featured experts from across the water, wastewater, solid waste, and local government sectors, and included Jason</p>

Dadakis, executive director of water quality and technical resources for OCWD. Jason's testimony echoed concerns shared across the utility community: Congress must enact liability safeguards so the financial burden addressing PFAS rests with polluters; not with the communities tasked with cleaning it up.

- May 12                    Congressman Correa toured the Santiago Basin with President Bilodeau and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Orange County and OCWD staff.
- May 5                     California Municipal Utilities Association's Director and Legislative Director visited OCWD for a briefing of OCWD's legislative priorities with John Kennedy, Lisa Haney and Alicia Harasty.
- March 28                OCWD applied for Community Project Funding (CPF) or "earmarks" for PFAS Cleanup Projects of \$5 million from Congressmembers Kim, Tran, Min, and Senators Padilla and Schiff. The City of Santa Ana applied for CPF for PFAS Cleanup Projects of \$5 million from Congressman Correa.
- February 17            President Bilodeau and Alicia Harasty provided a briefing and tour of OCWD/GWRS to Congressman Dave Min and his staff.
- January 30              President Bilodeau, John Kennedy and Alicia Harasty briefed Congresswoman Young Kim and her staff on PFAS, FIRO, Sunset Gap, and Sediment removal from behind Prado Dam.
- January 22              Alicia Harasty briefed staff to the office of Congressman Lou Correa.



TO: Alicia Harasty  
FROM: Eric Sapirstein  
DATE: October 28, 2025  
SUBJECT: Washington Update

---

The federal government remains in shutdown as the Senate has been unable to pass the House-passed Continuing Resolution (CR) due Senate Democrats' demand that any final CR include an extension of the expiring Affordable Health Care Act's insurance premiums subsidies. The demand for this has been rejected by Senate Republicans. Instead, Senate Republicans have proposed a course of action to offer the opportunity to negotiate an extension after the federal government reopens. This has been rejected by Senate Democrats. Meanwhile, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) has kept the House on recess since September 19, precluding legislative business. Johnson has maintained that once a CR passes in the Senate, the House will reconvene.

***Government Shutdown Closes Out Fourth Week with Prospect for Compromise on Spending Agreement Elusive***

The Senate standoff on funding the federal government has now reached thirty days. With just four days until the shutdown passes the record setting thirty-four day shutdown in 2019, it seems highly unlikely that a compromise will occur before early November. This outlook may be optimistic given the logistics of assembling a final agreement. As of this writing, it is reported that Senate and House Republicans have begun early discussions on the parameters of a health insurance premium "fix" to avoid any long term escalation in insurance premiums. However, with premium notices being issued on November 1, any compromise that could be developed would not avoid the notifications from being issued. The other factors lending urgency to end the shutdown involve the first wave of missed paychecks for federal workers, lack of funding for nutrition assistance programs, and additional federal agency personnel furloughs. These impacts suggest that the House and Senate will confront the reality of the shutdown over the next two weeks forcing a funding compromise.

If negotiations over a compromise begin to take place, the key will be whether to develop a long term CR, perhaps extending funding into December 2026 to avoid a shutdown during the congressional mid-term elections, pass another short-term CR until early January, or

finalize an omnibus spending bill that would fund the federal government until October 1, 2026. At this writing, any of these options could be in play.

### **Importance of the Government Shutdown Resolution**

The shutdown resolution, however, it is designed will carry consequences for funding levels for programs of interest to OCWD. If a year-long CR is passed, it would mean that federal funding would continue at Fiscal Year 2025 levels that mirror the Biden budget levels. If, alternately, an omnibus is passed and enacted, it would provide new spending levels as defined by Congress and the White House. This could involve reduced funding of many programs, but in the case of water infrastructure and PFAS cleanup resources, the funding levels should remain robust due to the levels provided in both the House and Senate committees approved budget bills. Additionally, the final year of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is in place (due to advanced appropriations), providing more than \$8 billion in water infrastructure assistance (including PFAS cleanups).

The matter of congressionally directed funding assistance for projects continues to remain viable. If an omnibus spending or individual spending bills are passed, then we anticipate the directed spending will be included. This means that OCWD's PFAS clean-up assistance, sponsored by Representative Young Kim would be part of any final spending agreement. If, however, a long term CR is passed, it is still possible that the funding assistance would be provided. Several Representatives and Senators have called for amending any CR with a package that would carry the directed project assistance.

### ***Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) Issues Memo on Deregulation***

OIRA, the key White House office that oversees rulemakings by federal agencies, issued new guidance to all federal departments, agencies and commissions detailing the priority to implement the President's deregulatory agenda. The directive follows up on earlier Executive Orders and presidential memorandum. Under the memorandum, agencies are directed to roll back all regulations deemed to be "facially" illegal based upon finding that the rules are not statutorily mandated or are inconsistent with U.S. Supreme Court decisions, including *Loper Bright* and the "major questions" decision that reversed the *Chevron Doctrine* that previously deferred whether a regulation is warranted based upon an agency's expertise. Additionally, for regulations not considered to be facially illegal, the directive instructs agencies to review rules that are in place to build a record to identify rules that fail to provide appropriate cost benefits. OIRA would review the record and determine if the rule is eligible to be repealed.



# October 2025 OCWD Federal Update

## Summary of Pending Legislation

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

### H.R. 4754

Department of the Interior,  
Environment, and Related  
Agencies Appropriations Act,  
2026

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The bill authorizes appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for fiscal year 2026, including funds for land management, wildlife conservation, and environmental protection, with specific provisions on fund usage and restrictions.

**Introduced:** 07/24/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Mike Simpson ID-02

**Latest Actions:**

07/24/2025 - Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 175.

07/24/2025 - The House Committee on Appropriations reported an original measure, H. Rept. 119-215, by Mr. Simpson.

07/24/2025 - The House Committee on Appropriations reported an original measure, H. Rept. 119-215, by Mr. Simpson.

**Committees:** House Appropriations Committee

**Why this bill is important:** Provides annual funding to USEPA including Community Projects requests. H.R. 4754 includes \$750,000 to support OCWD PFAS clean-up and \$1,092,000 for Santa Ana PFAS clean-up.

**Outlook:** Congressional efforts to complete action on FY 26 spending bills is unlikely to be finalized until late in the year. A Continuing Resolution is anticipated to avoid a government shutdown after October 1 and allow final spending bills to be passed.

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 337

To provide technical and financial assistance for groundwater recharge, aquifer storage, and water source substitution projects.

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The bill authorizes \$3,000,000 annually from fiscal year 2026 to 2031 for groundwater recharge, aquifer storage, and water source substitution projects.

**Introduced:** 01/13/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Jim Costa CA-21

**Latest Actions:**

01/13/2025 - Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

01/13/2025 - Introduced in House

**Committees:** House Natural Resources Committee

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 1267

Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act

● High Priority ● Support

**AI Summary:** The Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act exempts water and wastewater treatment facilities from CERCLA liability for releases of certain perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, provided they comply with applicable laws and regulations.

**Introduced:** 02/12/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez WA-03

**Latest Actions:**

02/12/2025 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment.

02/12/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation an...

02/12/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation an...

**Committees:** House Energy and Commerce Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee

**Why this bill is important.** H.R. 1267 represents a marker bill to allow for the House to consider the issue of water sector CERCLA liability due to the USEPA's action to designate PFAS as a hazardous substance under CERCLA that exposes water agencies to potential liability simply because water supplies contain PFAS and treatment residuals that must be disposed of could become subject to third party efforts to attach responsibility for cleanups.

**Outlook:** Both the House and Senate Members with jurisdiction over CERCLA are have expressed concerns over the potential for water sector liability. Committee consideration of legislation to provide liability protections for water sector could be considered in the latter months of the session, but actual floor debate is unlikely to occur until the final session of Congress next year.

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 1871

### Water Conservation Rebate Tax Parity Act

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The Water Conservation Rebate Tax Parity Act expands the IRS exclusion for conservation subsidies to include water conservation, storm water management, and wastewater management measures for residential properties.

**Introduced:** 03/05/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Jared Huffman CA-02

**Latest Actions:**

03/05/2025 - Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

03/05/2025 - Introduced in House

**Committees:** House Ways and Means Committee

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 2344

### Water ISAC Threat Protection Act

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The bill establishes a program to enhance drinking water and wastewater system preparedness and resilience by supporting participation in the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center, offsetting associated costs, and improving threat monitoring and response tools.

**Introduced:** 03/25/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Jan Schakowsky IL-09

**Latest Actions:**

03/25/2025 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment.

03/25/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ene...

03/25/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ene...

**Committees:** House Energy and Commerce Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 3898

### PERMIT Act

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The PERMIT Act amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to streamline water quality standards, reduce regulatory burdens, clarify permitting terms, and improve federalism and efficiency in clean water permitting.

**Introduced:** 06/11/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Mike Collins GA-10

#### Latest Actions:

07/02/2025 - Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 145.

07/02/2025 - Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H. Rept. 119-180.

07/02/2025 - POLITICO Pro - Republicans on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Wednesday advanced a sweeping pack...

**Committees:** House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee

**Why this bill is important:** H.R. 3898 is important because it provides for a comprehensive reform of Clean Water Act permitting and compliance mandates. For OCWD, the bill would, if enacted, statutorily provide an explicit exemption for groundwater recharge from being subject to Waters of the U.S. regulation.

**Outlook:** H.R. 3898 will be voted on by the full House in September. Senate consideration of a permit reform bill is likely in the fall.

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## H.R. 4733

### Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Establishment Act

○ No Priority ○ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The bill authorizes a program to provide grants to states and Indian tribes for assisting low-income households with water service costs, with funding allocated based on household income and housing expenses, and includes provisions for rural and underserved areas.

**Introduced:** 07/23/2025

**Sponsor:** Rep. Eric Sorensen IL-17

#### Latest Actions:

07/23/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ene...

07/23/2025 - Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ene...

07/23/2025 - Introduced in House

**Committees:** House Energy and Commerce Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## S. 322

### Improving Atmospheric River Forecasts Act

◦ No Priority ◦ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The bill establishes a program to enhance atmospheric river forecasts through improved modeling, data assimilation, and research, aiming to reduce risks and economic losses by providing more accurate and actionable warnings.

**Introduced:** 01/29/2025

**Sponsor:** Sen. Alex Padilla CA

**Latest Actions:**

01/29/2025 - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Sponsor introducer...

01/29/2025 - Introduced in Senate

**Committees:** Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

FEDERAL - 119TH CONGRESS

## S. 1118

### Water Intelligence, Security, and Cyber Threat Protection Act of 2025

◦ No Priority ◦ No Stance

**AI Summary:** The Water Intelligence, Security, and Cyber Threat Protection Act of 2025 establishes a program to enhance drinking water and wastewater system preparedness by supporting participation in the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center, offsetting associated costs, and improving threat monitoring and response tools.

**Introduced:** 03/25/2025

**Sponsor:** Sen. Ed Markey MA

**Latest Actions:**

03/25/2025 - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

03/25/2025 - Introduced in Senate

**Committees:** Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

**POLITICO**PRO

This report was created using **POLITICO's Policy Intelligence Assistant.**

This report is for informational purposes only. The views and opinions presented do not necessarily reflect those of POLITICO LLC.



## AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2025

**Budgeted:** Yes

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.  
Board of Directors

**Budgeted Amount:** \$265,000

**Cost Estimate:** \$265,000

**From:** John Kennedy

**Funding Source:** 1012.51112

**Program/Line Item No.:** 1206

**General Counsel Approval:** N/A

**Staff Contacts:** G. Ayala/M. Diaz

**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A

**CEQA Compliance:** N/A

**Subject: CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL UPDATE**

---

### SUMMARY

The 29<sup>th</sup> annual Children's Water Education Festival (Festival) will take place on April 15-16, 2026, at Oak Canyon Park. Staff will provide a verbal update of the event.

### RECOMMENDATION

Informational

### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The Children's Water Education Festival is an annual, successful program started in 1997 to educate Orange County's youngest stakeholders about the importance of water. Since inception, more than 158,000 students have experienced the Festival and all it has to offer. The 2026 Festival will take place April 15-16, 2026, at Oak Canyon Park. The free event is open to third, fourth and fifth grade classes in Orange County, Calif. Registration opened September 30, 2025. As of October 27, 5,343 students from 207 classes have registered to attend. Additionally, 12 presenters have committed to hosting interactive education booths at the event. Staff continue to solicit participants and will update the committee monthly.

### PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION(S)

N/A



## AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2025

**Budgeted:** N/A

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.  
Board of Directors

**Budgeted Amount:** N/A

**Cost Estimate:** N/A

**Funding Source:** N/A

**From:** John Kennedy

**Program/Line Item No.:** N/A

**General Counsel Approval:** N/A

**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/C. Nettles

**CEQA Compliance:** N/A

**Subject: PUBLIC AFFAIRS OUTREACH REPORT (OCTOBER 2025)**

---

### SUMMARY

Outreach for the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) and its programs and projects continue in in-person and virtual formats.

Attachment: October 2025 Media Clips Report

### RECOMMENDATION

Informational

### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

#### Tours

In October, 448 guests from 17 groups toured OCWD. Below is a breakdown by group type.

Industry	3
International	1
Public/Community	13

The GWRS [on-demand technical virtual tour](#), in all forms, has been viewed more than 15,500 times. The [on-demand general virtual tour](#), in all forms, has been viewed more than 6,700 times. An on-demand tour of OCWD's surface recharge operations has garnered more than 900 views.

In October, the GWRS Tour Ad Hoc Committee visited the Water Replenishment District's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning (ARC) to learn about their exhibits and community education, as research for updates to the GWRS tour experience.



### **Speakers Bureau/Media**

As part of OCWD's standard to forge and maintain long-term, positive, and proactive relationships with members of the community and to be transparent about its operations and programs, OCWD Board members and staff participate, regularly, at conferences and events and speak before civic groups.

October Speakers Bureau:

- October 3 – General Manager John Kennedy presented on emergency water supplies to south Orange County to the Water Advisory Committee of Orange County.
- October 3 – Communications Specialist Michelle Diaz and Temporary Communications Assistant Annie Oliver led an educational activity at the Rotary Club of Huntington Beach's and Golden West College's Science Night.
- October 8 & 9 – Recharge Planning Manager Adam Hutchinson gave two presentations to the Western Groundwater Congress: 1) "Overview of Basin Characterization Efforts in Orange County and How That Has Informed Management", and 2) "Mass Removal of Deep Fine-Grained Layer to Improve Recharge Capacity of a Large Recharge Basin".
- October 11 – Public Affairs Intern Anthony Guillen and Public Affairs Consultant Kira Erquiaga staffed an OCWD/GWRS information table at the Yorba Linda Water District Open House.
- October 18 – President Denis Bilodeau provided an OCWD overview presentation to the Republicans of North Orange County.
- October 21 – Principal Regulatory Affairs Specialist Claire Johnson provided the keynote address to the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators.

## Media Clips

In October, there were six global news hits for OCWD, the GWRS and other District programs and projects with a total reach of 4.78 million. The media clip report for October (as of October 29) is attached.

## Social Media

The District posts regularly to the following social media channels: X, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In, Tik Tok, Threads, and YouTube. Below are statistics for OCWD's social media for October (as of October 27). Impressions refer to the total number of times a post shows up on a user's feed. Engagement refers to the number of users who interact with a post.

- Followers: 20,125
- Impressions: 31,066
- Engagement & video views: 1,957

A sample of top posts is below:



## Website Analytics

Below are October analytics for OCWD's website (as of October 27):

- Users: 9,982
- Page views: 26,124
- Top five pages (not including homepage):
  - Careers
  - RFP & contracts
  - Meeting agendas & minutes
  - GWRS

- Board of Directors & service area

## **Electronic Publications**

Staff wrote and distributed the October issue of Hydrospectives, OCWD’s monthly e-newsletter.

## **Events**

OCWD commemorated the completion of Well 28, a new well in the City of Orange, constructed with a PFAS treatment system. A dedication ceremony was held October 29 and coincided with a new park opening at the same location.

Nearly 80 people attended the 2025 Groundwater Adventure Tour. The all-day tour included an OCWD overview presentation, as well as visits to the GWRS, lab, water quality, Santa Ana River, Burris and La Palma basins, and Prado wetlands. Attendees included a diverse mix of people and backgrounds, including elected officials, water industry professionals, and members of the public. Director Van Tran provided the welcome address and OCWD staff were tour guides.



## **Webinar**

Approximately 80 people attended the October 28 webinar “Beneath the Surface: Understanding OCWD’s Groundwater Monitoring Network”, which covered the science and strategy behind OCWD’s monitoring network, including well design, construction, and data applications. The webinar featured hydrogeology staff members Roy Herndon, Tim

Sovich, and Brendan Neel as speakers. A [recording of the webinar](#) was posted to the District's YouTube channel.

### **Award**

OCWD received the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies' Sustainable Water Utility Management Award. Judges found OCWD demonstrates a strong record of effective utility management and a significant contribution to the drinking water industry. The award was presented on October 27 at AMWA's Executive Management Conference.



**OCWD  
MEDIA CLIPS  
OCTOBER 2025**

Date	Source Name	Title	Country	URL	Reach
2025-10-01	Coastal View News	Advanced Purification Facility set to break ground in 2026	USA	<a href="https://www.coastalview.com/opinion/advanced-purification-facility-set-to-break-ground-in-2026/article_52c71be8-30a9-4027-a344-1616990448eb.html">https://www.coastalview.com/opinion/advanced-purification-facility-set-to-break-ground-in-2026/article_52c71be8-30a9-4027-a344-1616990448eb.html</a>	8,344
2025-10-07	American Water Works Association	Keep Funds Flowing: Federal funding fuels PFAS response in Southern California	USA	<a href="https://www.awwa.org/AWWA-Articles/keep-funds-flowing-federal-funding-fuels-pfas-response-in-southern-california/">https://www.awwa.org/AWWA-Articles/keep-funds-flowing-federal-funding-fuels-pfas-response-in-southern-california/</a>	62,492
2025-10-13	USC University of Southern California	Let It Flow: Building the World's Largest Recycling Plant — in Orange County	USA	<a href="https://magazine.viterbi.usc.edu/spring-2025/alumni/let-it-flow-building-the-worlds-largest-recycling-plant-in-orange-county/">https://magazine.viterbi.usc.edu/spring-2025/alumni/let-it-flow-building-the-worlds-largest-recycling-plant-in-orange-county/</a>	2,392,964
2025-10-28	The Orange County Register	O.C.'s first wave pool approved by Newport Beach City Council	USA	<a href="https://www.ocregister.com/2025/10/28/o-c-s-first-wave-pool-approved-by-newport-beach-city-council/">https://www.ocregister.com/2025/10/28/o-c-s-first-wave-pool-approved-by-newport-beach-city-council/</a>	1,111,196
2025-10-29	STANFORD magazine	Pipe Dreams	USA	<a href="https://stanfordmag.org/contents/pipe-dreams">https://stanfordmag.org/contents/pipe-dreams</a>	95,162
2025-10-29	OC Register	Orange taps well project to also add a small park	USA	<a href="https://www.ocregister.com/2025/10/29/orange-taps-well-project-to-also-add-a-small-park/">https://www.ocregister.com/2025/10/29/orange-taps-well-project-to-also-add-a-small-park/</a>	1,111,196
				Total Reach	4,781,354



## AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2025

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.  
Board of Directors

**From:** John Kennedy

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/A. Dunkin

**Budgeted:** N/A

**Budgeted Amount:** N/A

**Cost Estimate:** N/A

**Funding Source:** N/A

**Program/Line Item No.:** N/A

**General Counsel Approval:** N/A

**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A

**CEQA Compliance:** N/A

**Subject: ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT STATE AND FEDERAL  
LEGISLATIVE GOALS & STRATEGY**

---

### SUMMARY

The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) annually updates the OCWD State and Federal Legislative Goals and Strategy (Goals), and reviews existing legislative policies. Two documents are attached for Committee review and input: (1) the current Legislative Goals and (2) the OCWD Legislative Policies. OCWD staff and consultants have included proposed updates and suggestions for 2026.

#### Attachments:

- DRAFT State and Federal Legislative Goals and Strategy V-1
- OCWD Legislative Policies

### RECOMMENDATION

Informational

### DISCUSSION

The OCWD State and Federal Legislative Goals and Strategy is a summary of District goals and a proposed means to achieve them for the upcoming biennium. OCWD traditionally removes the legislative goals that have already been accomplished and develops new goals that reflect the needs of the District and retail water suppliers in OCWD's service area. Staff will reach out to OCWD's retail water providers, key OCWD staff and other stakeholders to provide input. A final proposed draft will be provided at an upcoming comm/leg committee meeting.

# DRAFT State and Federal Legislative Goals and Strategy for 2026

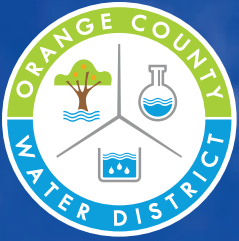
<b>FEDERAL</b>				
<b>DRAFT Federal Legislative Policy Priorities</b>	<b>Status and Outlook</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>New or continued effort from 2025</b>	<b>DRAFT Rank</b>
Exempt water and wastewater agencies from any CERCLA liability for PFAS cleanup costs	Legislation is pending that OCWD supports & gained Congressmembers Kim and Correa to co-sponsor the bill	Work with passive receivers to ensure full liability protections for water sector	Continue	#1
Preserve the Safe Drinking Water Act's use of cost-benefit analysis in the development of drinking water standards such as PFAS family of chemicals and other constituents of emerging concern	Amendments and legislation that OCWD opposed that would have altered the use of cost-benefit analysis have not been adopted	Work with Senate and House Committees and OCWD congressional delegation to ensure that cost-benefit analysis is relied upon in any PFAS legislation	Continue	#2
Target federal assistance to support construction of large-scale water supply facilities to support urban and agricultural needs which otherwise would not be constructed without such funding	OCWD board, staff and consultant continue to convey this message to the OC delegation	Ensure that current program is reauthorized and is fully funded working with OCWD congressional delegation and key western water House and Senate committees	Continue	#3
Maintain Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations congressional support and funding to update water control manual at Prado Dam		Work with Senate and House Committees, OCWD congressional delegation, and Scripps Institute of Oceanography	Continue	#4
With dam safety as a priority, maximize implementation of minor deviation at Prado Dam during upcoming repairs of the Prado Dam spillway		Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to collaborate	New	#5
Support collaboration to enable long-term sediment management behind Prado Dam		Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, elected officials (state and federal), cities, beach communities, University of California-	New	#6

		Irvine, etc. to collaborate; possibilities include pulsing sending through Prado Dam during wet weather; gaining funding in the Water Resources Development Act, etc.		
Gain funding for the South Basin groundwater cleanup project	OCWD staff will apply for federal and state grant funds	Seek federal and state grants (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#7
Gain funding for the Sunset Gap Barrier project	The CA state 2025 water climate bond now has eligibility language in for the Sunset Gap project -OCWD staff will apply	Seek federal WaterSMART grants and state grants through the 2025 climate bond (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#8
Gain funding for a multipurpose education center at OCWD's headquarters and at Prado Dam		Seek federal and state grants (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#9
<b>STATE</b>				
Support water infrastructure funding opportunities, including PFAS cleanup	Advocate for climate bond (Prop 4) funds to be used for PFAS cleanup		Continue	#1
Advocate for water infrastructure funding (grants) for OCWD's water producers	OCWD has provided multiple support letters for producer's projects	This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities	Continue	#2
Ensure indoor water use is not limited as outlined in the OCWD board adopted resolution 23-9-134		OCWD must protect from having "stranded assets" which may happen to the GWRS if indoor water use is further constrained by pending regulations	Continue	#3
Oppose legislation that would impose stringent water quality requirements on OCWD and its producers or increase the cost of PFAS clean-up	OCWD's firms lobbied in opposition to SB 601 and AB 794. Neither bill passed in 2025. Both bills are "2-year bills" that can still move in 2026. While it is good that they were defeated in their	SB 601 (Allen) and AB 794 (Gabriel) were introduced in 2025 and would have imposed costly new requirements on OCWD and its producers. OCWD lobbyists will work to oppose these bills	New	#4

	first year more work will be necessary on these issues in 2026.			
--	---	--	--	--

Note: Item removed was as goal for 2025 that was accomplished: “Lift the State Revolving Fund (SRF) \$5 million cap on grants and gain an allowance for multiple applications per applicant.”

After meetings arranged by OCWD’s lobbyists with State Water Board Chair Esquivel and several subsequent meetings between OCWD staff and the Board, the Board adopted guidelines that virtually mirrored what OCWD was asking for, thus increasing the amount of money OCWD was eligible to receive from the Board by millions of dollars.

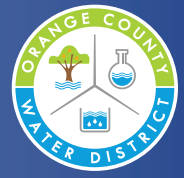


---

2024-2025

# LEGISLATIVE POLICIES

---

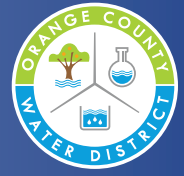


The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) works to influence legislation and funding in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. and ensures that OCWD's service area of 2.5 million people have a reliable, drought-resistant, affordable and safe water supply for now and the future. OCWD maintains an active presence in the government arena to forge and maintain long-term, positive and proactive relationships with legislative offices, to expand water reuse, advocate for the development of new water supplies, expand the use of new technologies, increase stormwater capture, among other topics.

## Water Supply

- The federal and state government should prioritize the necessary funding to construct large scale water supply facilities to support urban and agricultural needs that provide a statewide or significant regional benefit which otherwise would not be constructed without such funding. Examples of these type of projects should include above and below ground storage of surface and storm water, water reuse, weather modification, brackish water, and seawater desalination. Local, state and federal officials should collaborate on projects and prioritize the necessary funding. Use of such funds for environmental restoration should be for project impact mitigation and funds for environmental improvements should be classified under their own category.
- Add “water supply” to the authorized use of Prado Dam.
- Support legislation that adds to the reliability, affordability, and security of water supplies to Orange County.
- Protect the quality of surface and groundwater and support entities to meet state and federal water quality standards.
- Encourage economical outdoor water use efficiency while preserving flows for existing reuse.
- Ensure indoor water use is not limited as outlined in the OCWD board adopted resolution number 23-9-134.
- Expand water recycling, potable reuse, groundwater recharge, storage, brackish and ocean water desalination, and surface water development.
- Allow for local governmental agencies to provide input to statewide water resource planning decisions.
- Support water storage and exchange/transfer programs where the primary benefits occur to OCWD, its local water suppliers and the ratepayers they serve.
- Engage on legislation and regulatory actions related to constituents of emerging concern that ensures continued access to safe and reliable drinking water supplies with regulation of constituents of emerging concerns based on sound, peer-reviewed science.

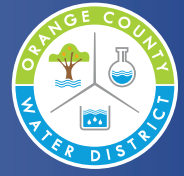
# GENERAL OCWD LEGISLATIVE POLICIES (CONT.)



- Support state and federal legislation to manage salinity in source water supplies.

## Groundwater

- Legislation should not interfere with the authority of governance of special act non-adjudicated basins.
- Existing laws and court/agency decisions that effectively govern groundwater production and recharge should not be disturbed. The rights of parties to take water pursuant to prior court decisions, decisions of the State Water Resources Control Board (the State Board) or inter-agency agreements must be protected, and existing legal obligations imposed on parties should remain enforceable.
- Support legislation and programmatic reforms that expedite the appropriate and applicable use of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and/or leads to the clean-up of toxic chemical contamination in groundwater.
- Existing groundwater basin management boundaries created through statute or court decision should not be modified and new groundwater management areas should not be carved out of existing groundwater management plan areas without the approval of the affected groundwater management agency(ies). Similarly, where a statute or a court decree has authorized an entity to manage a groundwater basin, legislation should not create or empower other local entities with duplicative or overlapping authority.
- Local agencies are in the best position to implement sustainable groundwater management. Groundwater management can best be accomplished at the local level by agencies that have the technical expertise and existing or newly-granted authority to ensure aquifer health is maintained and competing uses balanced.
- Any definition of sustainable groundwater management should allow groundwater managers, including OCWD, sufficient flexibility to manage groundwater, recognizing the following:
  - Sustainability varies as a function of local hydrogeologic conditions, water supply availability, and historic groundwater utilization.
  - Sustainable groundwater management can include periods when groundwater withdrawals exceed recharge if it causes no long-term negative impacts and there is a commitment to balance pumping over time with natural or artificial replenishment.
  - Managed aquifer recharge is a key tool that allows for sustainable groundwater management. As such, groundwater recharge should be recognized as a beneficial use of the water supplies of the state.
- Monitor activities related to Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and will take a position as appropriate.



## Recycled Water

- Authorize local government agencies to regulate the discharge of contaminants to the sewer collection system that may adversely affect water recycling and reuse.
- Reduce regulatory burdens on water recycling and brackish or ocean water desalination projects.
- Authorize, promote and provide incentives for potable and non-potable reuse projects.
- Support funding for research needed by the State Board to be able to develop direct potable reuse regulations.
- Support the expansion of recycled/reused water for potable and non-potable purposes without the use of ocean discharge prohibitions or percentage reuse mandates.

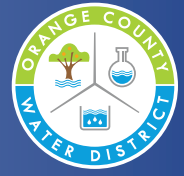
## Stormwater

- Support stormwater capture projects that are cost-effective.
- Support policies, programs and projects that enhance stormwater capture, sediment management, water conservation, and ecosystem restoration.
- Support adequate state and federal funding to increase understanding and prediction of atmospheric rivers that provide most of California's precipitation.
- Support adequate state and federal funding for development of Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) and modifications to dam water control manuals to incorporate FIRO to increase water supplies to Orange County.
- Gain Congressional approval for a "reallocation" of the use of Prado Dam to maximize water capture through the use of FIRO and gain a permanent major deviation or greater.

## Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

- Advocate to exempt water and wastewater entities for any liability for PFAS clean-up costs if PFAS is listed under CERCLA as a hazardous waste. A water utility that properly disposes of residuals containing PFAS, in a manner consistent with applicable laws, must not be held liable for current and future costs associated with PFAS cleanup.
- Support development of a maximum contaminant level (MCL) for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) to be developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Support development of PFAS MCLs through a rigorous health-based, scientific approach that promotes consistency across the nation.

# GENERAL OCWD LEGISLATIVE POLICIES (CONT.)



- Oppose legislation that sets PFAS MCLs without following sound regulatory processes with stakeholder input.
- Advocate for state and federal funding to ensure that adequate funds are available to address costs associated with PFAS monitoring, research and potential groundwater treatment by OCWD and local water suppliers.
- Allow water and wastewater agencies to determine the PFAS treatment systems they will use; oppose tying federal funding to only EPA-approved treatment systems.

## Imported Water Supply

- Support administrative/legislative action and state funding to keep the California Delta Conveyance Project on schedule to advance conveyance and ecosystem improvements to help achieve the coequal goals of water supply reliability and Delta ecosystem restoration.
- Support the California Delta Conveyance Project and EcoRestore and projects that facilitate delivery of high-quality water from the Bay-Delta and the Colorado River.
- Support projects that enhance the Bay-Delta's ecological health, while employing sound scientific research and ensuring that costs of such projects are shared equitably among beneficiaries.
- Oppose projects that would reduce water reliability or would increase the cost of imported water without improving reliability or quality. Also, oppose any water fee that does not fund water supply improvements in the Delta.

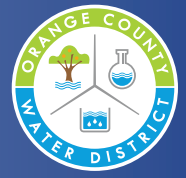
## Greywater

- Any state greywater policy should encourage generating new water supplies for the state. Specifically,
  - Avoid adding a new upstream greywater system that would significantly impact the current flows to the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) and waste capacity of OCWD's existing or future GWRS water recycling infrastructure.
  - Encourage the State Board's greywater policy to be flexible enough to consider local conditions where there is already an investment in water recycling facilities.
  - Advocate that the State Board not develop a uniform statewide policy, but instead address local conditions where extensive recycling is already occurring, and new greywater systems would lead to the diverting of water that could be recycled for potable reuse projects.

## Water Transfers

- Oppose regulatory or procedural barriers to water transfers and legislation that interferes with the financial integrity of a water utility or compromises water quality.

# GENERAL OCWD LEGISLATIVE POLICIES (CONT.)



## Environment

- Support legislation to streamline and modernize the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Preserve OCWD's state and federal rights to seek cost recovery for groundwater clean-up projects.

## Energy

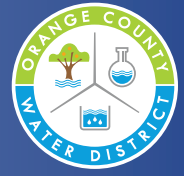
- Encourage energy efficiency through incentives, funding and other assistance to facilitate water use efficiency partnerships with the energy sector, including wastewater programs.
- Support legislation and policies that encourage and incentivize energy storage and creates incentives for demand response use by water districts.
- Seek available funding for water projects under existing programs for climate resiliency and/or climate change response.
- Support legislation or regulations that facilitate the development or expansion of clean, renewable energy in California if it does not significantly increase the cost of water.

## Funding

### Distribution of Bond Funds

- Support adequate funding to expand statewide and/or regional groundwater supplies, newly created water supplies through water recycling/reuse, weather modification, brackish water and seawater desalination, stormwater capture, and remediation of groundwater contamination.
- Support regional projects through the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) process.
- Funding for any Delta restoration project shall support the co-equal goals of water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration.
- Bond proceeds should be distributed to beneficial projects throughout the state in an equitable, balanced and reasonable manner.
- Any water infrastructure financing measure should include specific criteria which must be met before a project obtains funding. The specific criteria should include cost-effectiveness, a project proponent's ability to implement the project, specific timelines for project implementation, and a high-level of measurable benefit.
- Bond proceeds should be leveraged to the maximum extent possible utilizing local or federal matching funds. Projects funded with a higher percentage of non-state funds should be given priority.

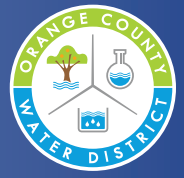
# GENERAL OCWD LEGISLATIVE POLICIES (CONT.)



- The allocation of bond funds should be handled with minimal bond administration costs.
- Obtain funding for PFAS cleanup in any upcoming climate/water bond in the amount of \$50 to \$75 million (retroactive to when CA drinking water Response Levels were lowered in 2020).

## Water Infrastructure Financing and Project Funding

- Support establishing grants or other funding opportunities for local and regional water infrastructure projects and support programs that reduce the cost of financing water infrastructure planning and construction, such as tax-credit financing, tax-exempt municipal bonds, advance refundings of tax-exempt municipal bonds, Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA), Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN), the Environmental Infrastructure Accounts, revitalization of the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI program, and other funding mechanisms.
- Support water infrastructure funding from the EPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE; Corps), and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) as part of a Congressional Infrastructure funding package.
- Advocate for funding and federal appropriations of low-interest loans through the EPA State Revolving Fund (SRF) to support water infrastructure funding in California.
- Gain allowance through SRF of multiple applications per applicant for PFAS cleanup funding up to 50% per project cost with a cap of \$15 million per project.
- For any PFAS state or federal grant funding expand cost eligibility, which should begin when regulation was adopted.
- Continue to build on federal appropriations of funding for expanding the existing Corps' FIRO program from Lake Mendocino to Prado Dam and support for study of atmospheric river precipitation events that impact California water supplies.
- Support funding for weather modification.
- Support legislation that allows for Congressional earmarks.
- No unfunded mandates. For newly mandated federal and state costs or regulatory actions, support legislation that requires the federal and/or state governments to provide reimbursement to local governments.
- Ensure that regulations and legislative mandates are developed using sound science and cost benefit analysis and oppose imposition of unfunded mandates in accordance with existing law.

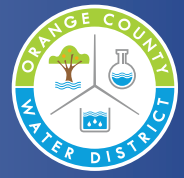


- Protect special district ad valorem tax revenues.
- Advocate for water infrastructure funding (grants) for OCWD’s water producers.
- Pursue additional PFAS cleanup funding through federal programs.
- Obtain WaterSMART grants of \$2 million for planning and CEQA compliance to support the Sunset Gap project and 50% grant funding for construction (estimated at \$150 million).

## **Water Rate Structures**

- Support legislation that allows flexibility in water rate structures and does not mandate a specific rate structure for local water suppliers.
- Oppose a “public goods charge” or “water tax” on public water agencies or their ratepayers.

# OCWD PROCESS FOR TAKING POSITIONS ON BILLS

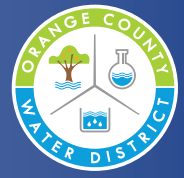


Legislation that meets or fails to meet the principles set forth in the platform may be supported or opposed accordingly. Pending approval by the Board President and General Manager, the platform also allows staff and the District's legislative advocates to act in a timely fashion in between Board meetings on issues that are clearly within the legislative platform. Such actions are then reported to the Board at the next available monthly Comm/Leg Committee meeting or Board meeting. The legislative team, in conjunction with the Board, may take appropriate action consistent with the legislative platform, including, but not limited to, drafting letters, lobbying legislators and staff, engaging in legislative work groups, and drafting bills.

## Procedure for Taking Positions on Bills

1. Staff and legislative advocates will track bills of greatest interest to OCWD, particularly those that fall within the goals and objectives identified by the Board of Directors. Staff will monitor bills being watched by similar agencies in Orange County as well as state, federal and national agencies and associations such as the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), National Association of California Water Agencies (NACWA), Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), WaterReuse Association (WRA), and California Association of Municipal Water Companies (CalMutuals).
2. For those bills that are being tracked, where there is clear policy direction stated in the Board-adopted legislative platform, staff can send letters and give direction to its lobbyists to advocate.
3. When a bill does not fall within the scope of the legislative platform or is a politically controversial issue, but if a position may be needed before the next scheduled Comm/Leg Committee meeting or Board meeting, staff will seek direction from the Board President and General Manager.
4. If a bill does not fall within the scope of the legislative platform, but an association such as ACWA or WRA has adopted a position, and timing is critical, staff will inform the Board President and General Manager about the organization's position to seek approval to follow the organizations' position, but staff must inform the Comm/Leg Committee of such action at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
5. All bills that are of potential interest or concern to the District are monitored by staff and legislative advocates, as reflected on the monthly bill matrix provided to the Board. If any of those measures are amended, they are re-evaluated to determine if a formal position should be recommended for Board consideration.

# OCWD PROCESS FOR TAKING POSITIONS ON BILLS (CONT.)

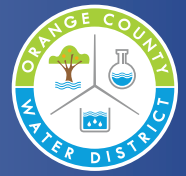


## Bill Positions Considered by OCWD Board of Directors

The following represent active bill positions that may be recommended by District staff for consideration by the District's Board in providing guidance to the District's legislative advocates and staff. Once adopted by the Board of Directors, the bill position will be communicated with the author of the legislation and may be communicated with other legislators, legislative staff, the Administration, water agencies, and the public.

Advocacy strategies and activities will be directed toward implementation of the Board's policies through advancement of the District-adopted bill position.

- **SUPPORT:** This position reflects the District's interest to see the legislation become law. District staff and legislative advocates will work for passage of the bill in its present form.
- **SUPPORT IF AMENDED:** This is an affirmative position that connotes conditional support for a measure, but only if it is amended to incorporate specific amendments approved by the District Board. District staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in support of the legislation unless it is amended as requested by the District.
- **WATCH:** Take no action, but monitor the bill during the legislative process to see if any amendments are added that may impact the District or its local water suppliers.
- **OPPOSE:** This position reflects the District's interest to defeat the legislation. District staff and legislative advocates will work for defeat of the measure in its present form, and will not pursue amendments to address the measure's shortcomings.
- **OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED:** This position reflects the District's interest to defeat the legislation, but only if it is not amended to incorporate specific amendments approved by the District's Board. District staff and legislative advocates will not advocate in opposition of the legislation if it is amended as requested by the District.



## United States Senate



Laphonza Butler  
State of California



Alex Padilla  
State of California

## United States House



Young Kim  
40<sup>th</sup> District



Michelle Steel  
45<sup>th</sup> District



Jose Luis "Lou" Correa  
46<sup>th</sup> District



Katie Porter  
47<sup>th</sup> District

## California State Senate



Kelly Seyarto  
32<sup>nd</sup> Senate District



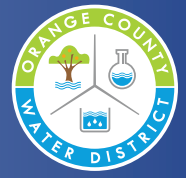
Tom Umberg  
34<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Janet Nguyen  
36<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Dave Min  
37<sup>th</sup> Senate District



## California State Assembly



Phillip Chen  
59<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



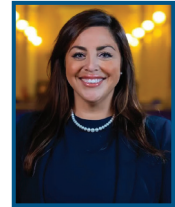
Sharon Quirk-Silva  
67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Avelino Valencia  
68<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Tri Ta  
70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Kate Sanchez  
71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



Diane Dixon  
72<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District



Cottie Petrie-Norris  
73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

## Orange County Board of Supervisors



Andrew Do  
1<sup>st</sup> District



Vicente Sarmiento  
2<sup>nd</sup> District



Donald P. Wagner  
3<sup>rd</sup> District



Doug Chaffee  
4<sup>th</sup> District



Katrina Foley  
5<sup>th</sup> District

# LEGISLATIVE TEAM



## OCWD Staff

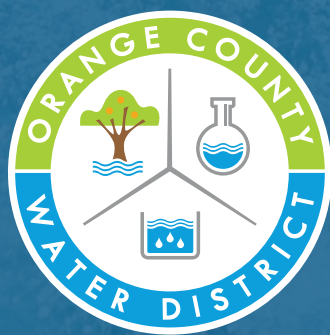
Michael R. Markus P.E, D.WRE General Manager	(714) 378-3305	mmarkus@ocwd.com
Alicia Dunkin Legislative Affairs Liaison*	(714) 378-8232	adunkin@ocwd.com
<i>*Key Contact for Legislative Issues</i>		
Gina Ayala Director of Public Affairs	(714) 378-3323	gayala@ocwd.com

## Federal Lobbying Team

ENS Resources Eric Sapirstein, President	(202) 466-3755	esap@ensresources.com
David French		dfrench@ensresources.com

## State Lobbying Team

Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith, LLC Donald B. Gilbert	(916) 443-6400	don@EGRSlobby.com
Trent Smith		trent@EGRSlobby.com
Jason Ikerd		jason@EGRSlobby.com
Joe A. Gonsalves & Son Anthony D. Gonsalves Jason A. Gonsalves Paul A. Gonsalves	(916) 441-0597	gonsalves@gonsalvi.com



SINCE 1933

**Orange County Water District**  
**18700 Ward Street | Fountain Valley | California 92708**  
**(714) 378 - 3200 | [www.OCWD.com](http://www.OCWD.com)**