



May 11, 2026

The Honorable Anna Caballero  
California State Senate  
1021 O Street, Suite 7620  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1153 (Caballero, D-Merced) Disaster Preparedness: Urban Retail Water Suppliers and Public Water Systems: Wildfire - Support

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of Orange County Water District (OCWD), and the undersigned organizations, we write to express our support for SB 1153, which would bolster wildfire planning efforts and clarify the role and limitations of public water agencies in wildfire response.

In OCWD's service area, retail water agencies have gone above and beyond to help safeguard life, property, and the environment by multiple actions, including supporting aerial firefighters by strategically installing helicopter hydrants. These hydrants reduce the response time for helicopters in the wildland-urban interface zone, which fill roughly 2,000 gallons of water in 56 seconds so helicopters can make drops on spot fires and return to repeat the process.

SB 1153 would build upon existing emergency planning requirements and strengthen wildfire preparedness. Specifically, the bill requires all urban retail water suppliers serving a high or very high fire hazard severity zone to incorporate planning elements regarding wildfire preparedness and response into their disaster preparedness and emergency response plans. The bill would also establish that the inability of a public water system to maintain water supply or water pressure during a wildfire shall not be considered a substantial cause of the damages resulting from a wildfire. SB 1153 also specifies that the spread of wildfire is not an inherent risk presented by the deliberate design, construction, or maintenance of a public water system.

For these reasons, we support SB 1153. If you have any questions, please contact us or Alicia Harasty, Legislative Affairs Liaison, at (714) 477-3750 or [aharasty@ocwd.com](mailto:aharasty@ocwd.com).

Sincerely,

John Kennedy, P.E.  
General Manager  
Orange County Water District



Jerry Vilander  
General Manager  
Serrano Water District



Mark Toy, P.E., BC. WRE  
General Manager  
Yorba Linda Water District



Paul Shoenberger  
General Manager  
Mesa Water District



Dave Youngblood, P.E.  
General Manager  
East Orange County Water District



Mike Chandler  
Water Services Manager  
City of Tustin



Stephen Bise, PE, TE  
Director of Public Works  
City of Fullerton



Mark Vukojevic  
Utilities Director  
City of Newport Beach



Craig J. Parker, P.E., BCEE  
Assistant General Manager,  
Water Services  
Anaheim Public Utilities



Scott Smith  
Director of Public Works  
City of Fountain Valley



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)