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**ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT**  
ORANGE COUNTY'S GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

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July 22, 2020

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez  
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Capitol Office, Room 2114  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0080

Subject: SB 414 (Caballero): The Small System Water Authority Act of 2020 – Support

Dear Chair Gonzalez:

The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) writes to express its support of The Small System Water Authority Act (SB 414), and we thank you for addressing this complex and critical issue. SB 414 seeks to establish a new category of public water agency by way of merging formerly non-compliant drinking water systems in order to sustainably provide the technical, managerial, and financial capabilities necessary to ensure the consistent delivery of safe drinking water.

OCWD recognizes that water accessibility is truly a concern in a number of regions throughout the state. The State Water Resource Control Board has identified approximately 264 public water systems that are chronically serving contaminated water to customers and are in violation of primary state and federal drinking water standards. A great percentage of these failing systems are primarily located in economically distressed or rural counties. Systems that fail to provide access to clean, reliable, drinking water must be held accountable and have a plan to mitigate natural contaminants, and/or manmade contaminants, or fix their under-maintained water systems.

This bill authorizes the creation of a Small System Water Authority that will be authorized to absorb, improve, and competently operate currently non-compliant public water systems with either contiguous or non-contiguous boundaries. By establishing lasting changes to the governance structures of failing water systems, the state of California will take substantial steps toward achieving the goal of making safe, clean and reliable drinking water a reality for all Californians.

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez  
July 22, 2020  
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Please do not hesitate to contact Alicia Dunkin, Legislative Affairs Liaison, at [adunkin@ocwd.com](mailto:adunkin@ocwd.com) or (714) 378-8232, or me, if we may be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vicente Sarmiento".

Vicente Sarmiento, Esq.  
President