

March 30, 2015

Honorable Ricardo Lara  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 94249

**RE: SB 355 (Lara) Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Board – OPPOSE**

Dear Senator Lara,

The Orange County Water District (The District) respectfully opposes SB 355 (Lara), a bill that would reduce Orange County's voting representation on the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) Board.

The RMC is of importance to Orange County. In fact, its territory includes the watersheds for portions of the lower Santa Ana River. The Santa Ana River is primarily responsible for the replenishing of Orange County's groundwater basin, which provides 72 percent of water needs for the residents and businesses in a majority of Orange County's cities. Ensuring broad representation on the RMC is effective in developing the programs and procuring the funds, through Proposition 1 or other vehicles, to achieve regional environmental objectives.

Specifically, Proposition 1 includes approximately \$30 million in direct allocation for watershed improvements and a share of \$100 million for urban creek restoration that will be allocated through the RMC. The current RMC board is an equitable representation of the Conservancy's population and coverage area. These funds will work towards improving all of Southern California, not just one county.

The District believes that the RMC is important for regional collaboration, and that Orange County should maintain proportional representation on the RMC Board. For this and the reasons described above, the District respectfully opposes SB 355. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 714-897-2039 or [cgreen@ocwd.com](mailto:cgreen@ocwd.com).

Sincerely,

Cathy Green  
President, Orange County Water District