



March 21, 2022

To: Stacy Taylor, Mesa Water District  
From: Dennis Albiani and Anthony Molina, California Advocates  
Subject: March 2022 Report

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The Legislature hit another significant milestone as the year continues to progress. February 18<sup>th</sup> was the bill introduction deadline, or as some refer to it, “the kick-off to the new season.” This year, the California Legislature introduced 2,109 bills, including Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions. Specifically, the California State Senate introduced 687 total bills, and the California State Assembly introduced 1,422 total bills. These totals do not account for two-year bills that remain active for the year.

Moreover, the Governor has begun transitioning the state into a “SMARTER” endemic strategy. Slowly, he’s started to roll back executive orders, showing signs of getting back to pre-pandemic normalcy. However, the Governor has kept a dozen executive orders in place to allow the state to react swiftly, should there be a spike in COVID-19 cases in the future.

In a similar fashion, the Senate and Assembly have also begun removing the COVID-19 restrictions, such as the “masks mandate” in the Capitol Building. However, as policy committees have begun hearing newly introduced bills, there is still a hybrid approach for policy hearings – the same is to be said for meetings with lawmakers and their staff.

And finally, the candidate filing deadline for this year’s elections was last Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. A few key announcements came the final week – Assemblymembers Tom Daly and Mark Stone decided to not seek reelection for their final terms in office. This election season is shaping up to be very interesting with over 30 announcements of legislators seeking new offices, resignations/retirements, and those who are termed out. Stay tuned for more information as election season heats up!

### **Mesa Water District Legislative Tracking with Bill Positions**

#### **AB 2041 (E. Garcia) California Safe Drinking Water Act: primary drinking water standards: compliance.**

This bill will require the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) under the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) would be required to devise a plan and determine funding to help small water systems comply with new drinking water regulatory standards.

**Status: Support**

**Position: Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee. Hearing Date TBD.**

**AB 2054 (Quirk-Silva) Corporation taxes: exempt organizations: mutual ditch or irrigation companies: public water system: mutual water companies.**

This bill that conforms to the California Revenue and Taxation Code with Section 501(c)(12) of the Internal Revenue Code, which provides federal tax-exempt status for mutual water companies.

**Status: Support**

**Position: Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee. The bill hearing date is March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**AB 2142 (Gabriel) Income taxes: exclusion: turf replacement water conservation program.**

This bill would reinstate an important exemption for turf replacement rebates from gross income in California, aligning with certain other permanently exempt water efficiency rebates (E.g., toilet, clothes washers).

**Status: Support**

**Position: Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee. The bill hearing date is March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**AB 2449 (Rubio) Open meetings: local agencies: teleconferences.**

This bill will eliminate the previously existing concept of teleconference locations and will revise notice requirements to allow for greater public participation in teleconference meetings of local agencies. The bill does not require teleconferencing, rather it modernizes existing law to ensure greater public participation in meetings of the legislative bodies of local agencies who choose to utilize teleconferencing.

**Status: Support**

**Position: Assembly Local Government Committee. Hearing Date TBD.**

**SB 892 (Hurtado) Cybersecurity preparedness: food and agriculture sector and water and wastewater systems sector.**

This bill requires companies in the food and agriculture industry to report to the California Department of Food and Agriculture and California Cybersecurity Integration Center (CSIC) instances of a verified cyber threat or cyberattack within 30 days. It also requires actors in the water and wastewater sector to disclose risk assessments and emergency response plans to CSIC and state water authorities. Finally, the bill directs Cal-OES and CSIC to develop plans to increase outreach for cybersecurity preparedness as well as identify potential funding sources that support cybersecurity.

**Status: Oppose**

**Position: Senate Governmental Organization Committee. Hearing Date TBD.**

**SB 1157 (Hertzberg) Urban water use objectives: indoor residential water use.**

This bill would eliminate the option of using the greater of 52.5 gallons per capita daily and the greater of 50 gallons per capita daily as the standard for indoor residential water use. The bill would instead require that from January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2030, the standard for indoor residential water use be 47 gallons per capita daily, and beginning January 1, 2030, the standard be 42 gallons per capita daily.

**Status: Oppose**

**Position: Senate Natural Resources Committee. Hearing Date TBD.**

### Two-year Bill Tracking

#### **SB 222 (Dodd) Water Affordability Assistance Program.**

This bill would establish the Water Affordability Assistance Fund in the State Treasury to help provide water affordability assistance, for both drinking water and wastewater services, to low-income ratepayers and ratepayers experiencing economic hardship in California. The bill would make money in the fund available upon appropriation by the Legislature to the state board to provide direct water bill assistance, water bill credits, water crisis assistance, affordability assistance, and short-term assistance to public water systems to administer program components.

**Status: Assembly Floor, Inactive File**

**Position: Oppose Unless Amended**

#### **SB 230 (Portantino) State Water Resources Control Board: Constituents of Emerging Concern**

This bill would require the State Water Resources Control Board to establish, maintain, and direct a dedicated Constituents of Emerging Concern (CEC) in the Drinking Water Program to assess the state of information and recommend areas for further study on the occurrence of CECs in drinking water, and would establish the CEC Action Fund.

**Status: Assembly Rules, Pending referral.**

**Position: Watch**

### Budget Update

After California recorded its driest January and February in more than 100 years of records in the Sierra Nevada, Governor Newsom's administration has put together a drought emergency package, spending an additional \$22.5 million to respond to the immediate drought emergency.

The additional \$22.5 million allocation includes more funding for the Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Specifically, the additional funds are allocated in the following manner:

- \$13.25 million to the state Department of Water Resources, including \$8.25 million for water conservation messaging and activities for the "Save Our Water" campaign and \$5 million for near-term improvements to spring runoff forecasts.

- \$6.75 million to the Water Board for emergency drinking water, drought and water outage emergencies, and water rights litigation.
- \$2.5 million to the California Department of Food and Agriculture to provide direct relief grants to small and historically underserved farmers.

The funds requested are part of a comprehensive effort by the Newsom Administration to increase water conservation. Earlier this month, the state launched new video ads to encourage Californians to reduce outdoor watering.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, the survey of the state's snowpack showed levels were dropping sharply after robust storms in December. Current snowpack readings are about one-third below average. The Department of Water Resources is analyzing the latest snowpack data and has indicated it may revise its current forecast for State Water Project deliveries in 2022.

### Regulatory

#### **Department of Water Resources: Statewide Snowpack Falls Well Below Average Following Consecutive Dry Months**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) conducted the third snow survey of the season at Phillips Station. Following a January and February that will enter records as the driest documented in state history, the manual survey recorded 35 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 16 inches, which is 68 percent of the average for this location for March. The snow water equivalent measures the amount of water contained in the snowpack and is a critical component of DWR's water supply forecast. Statewide, the snowpack is 63 percent of the average for this date. The DWR announcement can be found [HERE](#).

#### **Bureau of Reclamation Outlines Initial 2022 Water Allocations for Central Valley Project (CVP) Contractors**

The Bureau of Reclamation announced initial 2022 water supply allocations for Central Valley Project contractors. Allocations are based on an estimate of water available for delivery to CVP water users and reflect current reservoir storage, precipitation, and snowpack in the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada. This year's low allocations are an indicator of the third consecutive dry year California is experiencing and will be updated if conditions warrant. The initial allocation will be zero-water for irrigation districts that supply many farmers across the Central Valley. Cities that receive water from the project in the Central Valley and parts of the Bay Area were allocated 25% of their historical water use. The press announcement can be viewed [HERE](#).

#### **State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Workshop on Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Funding**

The SWRCB staff will hold a staff workshop to provide an overview of the proposed implementation plan for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Funding appropriated in the 2021/22 State Budget (PFAS General Fund allocation). This funding is available for technical and financial assistance to drinking water systems. Below is the detailed information for the workshop:

Date: Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>  
 Time: 9:00am  
 Location: Virtual

You can join the meeting online using Zoom or by phone:

- To join online, use the following link: [bit.ly/PFASWorkshop](https://bit.ly/PFASWorkshop).
- To join by phone, call 1 (669) 900-9128 and use meeting ID # 933 2570 5706.

### **Governor's Appointments**

**Christine Bouma, 55, of Sacramento, has been appointed Legislative Affairs Secretary in the Office of the Governor.** Bouma was President of Capitol Connection from 2008 to 2022, where she was Legislative Advocate from 2000 to 2008. She was a Mathematics and Computer Science Teacher at the Hesperia Unified School District from 1989 to 1999 and an Instructor at Victor Valley Community College from 1991 to 1998. She is a member and former President of the Institute of Governmental Advocates and served two Governors as a Member of the Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation.

**Daniel Curtin, 73, of Sacramento, has been reappointed to the California Water Commission, where he has served since 2014.** Curtin has been Director at the California Conference of Carpenters since 2001, where he was a Legislative Advocate from 1987 to 1999. He was Chief Deputy Director for the California Department of Industrial Relations from 1999 to 2001.

**Matthew Swanson, 54, of Turlock, has been reappointed to the California Water Commission, where he has served since 2019.** Swanson has been President and Chief Executive Officer of Associated Feed since 1996.

**Dorene D'Adamo, 62, of Turlock, has been reappointed to the State Water Resources Control Board, where she has served since 2013.** She was a Senior Policy Advisor for the Office of Congressman Jim Costa from 2013 to 2014 and for the Office of Congressman Dennis Cardoza from 2003 to 2012. She was Legal Counsel for the Office of Congressman Gary Condit from 1994 to 2003, where she was Legislative Director from 1990 to 1991. She served on the California Air Resources Board from 1999 to 2013. D'Adamo was a Visiting Instructor at California State University, Stanislaus from 1992 to 1998. She was an Associate Attorney at the Law Offices of Perry and Wildman from 1992 to 1994.

### **Key Dates and Deadlines**

#### **April**

Apr. 1 – Cesar Chavez Day observed.

Apr. 7 – Spring Recess begins upon adjournment.

Apr. 18 – Legislature reconvenes from Spring Recess.

Apr. 29 – Last day for policy committees to hear and report to fiscal committees' fiscal bills introduced in their house.

#### **May**

May 6 – Last day for policy committees to hear and report to the floor nonfiscal bills introduced in their house.

May 13 – Last day for policy committees to meet prior to May 31.

May 20 – Last day for fiscal committees to hear and report to the floor bills introduced in their house. The last day for fiscal committees to meet prior to May 31.

May 23-27 – Floor session only. No committee may meet for any purpose except for Rules Committee; bills referred pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2, and Conference Committees.

May 27 – Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house.

May 30 – Memorial Day.

May 31 – Committee meetings may resume.