

SUMMARY FOR MARCH 2024 Office of Government Relations



LOCAL ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Assemblymember Gail Pellerin's Annual "Women of the Year" Celebration



March 22: Vice Chair Richard Santos and Assemblymember Pellerin

On March 22, Valley Water co-sponsored Assemblymember Gail Pellerin's "Women of the Year" event held at the Valley Water headquarters administration building patio. Vice Chair Richard Santos provided welcoming remarks at the event. This annual celebration recognized women who live, work, or attend school in the 28th Assembly District in Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties and have made a significant contribution over the past year.

Valley Water Celebrates Women's History Month with the Community



March 23: Deputy Administrative Officer Marta Lugo with fellow panelists of women leaders from Silicon Valley

On March 23, Valley Water hosted a booth at the Valley Health Foundation Women's Leadership & Policy Summit 2024 at San José State University. The summit was comprised of a coalition of Silicon Valley leaders in government, healthcare, education, the private and nonprofit sectors, and youth, who are eager to uplift women's issues. Staff provided attendees with information regarding purified water, our projects, our rebate programs, Valley Water's Shopping Cart, and provided flood preparedness resources. Additionally, Deputy Administrative Officer Marta Lugo spoke on a panel regarding building networks across cultures and generations.

AAUW 41st Annual Wildflower Run



March 24: Valley Water staff playing water trivia with AAUW Wildflower Run 5k participants

On March 24, Valley Water hosted a booth at the 41st American Association of University Women (AAUW) Wildflower Run. Staff engaged with community members about flood preparedness, our rebate programs, volunteer opportunities, purified water, and how to make water conservation a way of life in Santa Clara County.

STATE ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Legislature Grapples with Budget Deficits

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has stated that the state budget deficit is up to \$78 billion while the Governor's Department of Finance has indicated the budget deficit is \$38 billion. Regardless of which estimate turns out to be true, there will be significant cuts to spending made possible by large budget surpluses in recent years.

Up first are early actions to reduce funds appropriated in the FY 2023-24 State Budget. The Governor has proposed clawing back a total of \$392 million in Coastal Resilience Programs which could fund the Shoreline Project, \$50 million in Dam Safety grants, and \$174.4 million from recycled water. Staff has been meeting with our delegation members and key legislative staff urging them to

reduce or reject these cuts due to the urgency of responding to water supply and public safety concerns.

The Senate released their plan for early actions that didn't cut Coastal Resilience Programs or Dam Safety grants. The Assembly hasn't yet released a plan for early action cuts but has agreed that they will take them up with the Senate in mid-April.

Staff continues to be in close contact with the Assembly and Senate leadership, budget committees, and our delegation members to underscore the importance of the FY 2023-24 appropriations to Valley Water's critically important projects. Staff is concurrently advocating for replacing any early action cuts in the climate resilience bond now being considered for the November 2024 statewide ballot.



California State Capitol

Consideration of a Climate Resilience Bond

The Legislature continues to consider a potential climate resilience bond for the November ballot. Recent meetings with Valley Water's legislative delegation indicate there are three potential bonds competing for the available funding capacity of the state, which include climate resilience, housing, and education. Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas recently indicated that the state's capacity for all bond priorities is somewhere around \$15-\$16 billion. How much of that amount could be allocated to a Climate Resilience Bond versus potential housing and education bonds remains a key question for negotiation. Observers expect the Legislature to address the early budget actions, then the budget at large, before moving on to the bonds sometime in May or June. Valley Water staff will continue to advocate for our top priorities of dam safety, State Flood Control Subventions, urban flood protection, sea level rise, and recycled water.

AB 2409 (Papan) Permitting Transparency for Water, Flood, Energy, and Restoration Projects

AB 2409, Valley Water's bill proposal now sponsored by the California Municipal Utilities Association, was referred to the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee on March 21. The bill will be scheduled for a hearing on or before April 26 and is well positioned for passage because the bill author, Assembly member Diane Papan (D-San Mateo), is chair of the Committee. Due to the bill's state cost, it must pass the Assembly Appropriations Committee on or before May 17, before going to the Assembly Floor and on to the Senate.

AB 2409, would require the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to create a dashboard website to increase transparency in state environmental permitting for public infrastructure projects, including water supply, flood risk reduction, energy reliability, and environment protection or enhancement projects with an estimated cost of \$100 million or more.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Staff Prepares for April Advocacy Trip to Washington, DC

On April 15-17, Chair Hsueh will lead a trip to Washington, DC, with senior staff to advocate for Valley Water funding and policy priorities. The Valley Water delegation will meet with key agency officials, Members of Congress, and congressional committee staff. The Office of Government Relations coordinates these visits to ensure that Valley Water is in regular communication with our federal representatives, providing project updates and working to advance policy priorities on behalf of Santa Clara County residents. This trip will focus on exploring funding opportunities for Valley Water's flood protection and water supply projects, such as the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project, and the Purified Water Program. As we have seen large cost increases on infrastructure projects nationwide, it is important that we advocate for federal (and state) funding to help keep local costs to tax and water rate payers as low as possible.

LOOKING AHEAD

- APR 18 San José State University Environmental Resource Center Earth Day- Booth
- APR 20 City of Cupertino's Earth and Arbor Day Festival- Booth

Federal Legislation Active in March 2024 with Board-Approved Positions

Bill (Author)	Subject	Position	Status
S. 24 (Feinstein)/ H.R. 516 (Lieu)	Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act	Support and Amend	Introduced
H.R. 186 (McClintock)	Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 872 (Calvert)	Federally Integrated Species Health (FISH) Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 2419 (Costa)/ S. 2161 (Feinstein)	Canal Conveyance Capacity Restoration Act	Support	H.R. 2419 Introduced; S. 2161 Heard in Committee
S. 2162 (Feinstein)	Support To Rehydrate the Environment, Agriculture, and Municipalities (STREAM) Act	Support and Amend	Heard in Committee

Federal Legislation Active in March 2024 with Board-Approved Positions (cont.)

Bill (Author)	Subject	Position	Status
S. 2202 (Feinstein)	Restore Aging Infrastructure Now (RAIN) Act	Support and Amend	Heard in Committee
S. 1430 (Lummis)	Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 2671 (Costa)	Restoring WIFIA Eligibility Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 1367 (Schakowsky)/ S. 660 (Markey)	Water System Threat Preparedness and Resilience Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
S. 919 (Duckworth)	A Donald McEachin Environmental Justice For All Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 873 (Donalds)	Water Quality and Environmental Innovation Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 1729 (Watson Coleman)/ S. 938 (Sanders)	Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity, and Reliability Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 1708 (Jayapal)	Housing Is a Human Right Act of 2023	Support and Amend	Introduced
H.R. 3896 (Cohen)	Airport Infrastructure Resilience Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
S. 2203 (Padilla)	Atmospheric Rivers Reconnaissance, Observation, and Warning (ARROW) Act	Support	Introduced
S. 2166 (Padilla)	Voluntary Agricultural Land Repurposing Act	Support	Heard in Committee
S. 2148 (Markey)	Local Infrastructure Funding and Technical Assistance (LIFT) Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 4052 (Davis)	National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
S. 2654 (Padilla)/ H.R. 5016 (Levin)	Water Efficiency, Conservation, and Sustainability Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 5254 (Lieu)	Housing for All Act of 2023	Support and Amend	Introduced
H.R. 5104 (Edwards)	National Dam Safety Program Reauthorization Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
S. 2250 (Bennet)/ H.R. 4902 (Caraveo)	Voluntary Groundwater Conservation Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
H.R. 5304 (Harder)	Safeguarding Our Levees Act	Support	Introduced
H.R. 3490 (Gallego)	Water Infrastructure Modernization Act of 2023	Support	Introduced
H.R. 6093 (Lucas)	Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Reauthorization (WEATHER) Act of 2023	Support and Amend	Reported by Committee
H.R. 3655 (Swalwell)	Preventing Our Next Natural Disaster Act	Support	Introduced
S. 3830 (Padilla)	Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Act	Support and Amend	Introduced
S. 3292 (Whitehouse)	Innovative Materials for America's Growth and Infrastructure Newly Expanded (IMAGINE) Act of 2023	Support and Amend	Introduced
H.R. 5793 (Dingell)	Water Access Act	Support	Introduced
DRAFT Legislation (Huffman/Butler)	Water Conservation Rebate Tax Parity Act	Support	Drafted

State Legislation Active in March 2024 with Board-Approved Positions

Bill (Author)	Subject	Position	Status
AB 305 (Villapudua)	California Flood Protection Bond Act of 2024	Support if Amended	Pending – Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – 2 Year Bill
AB 437 (Jackson)	Equity in State Government	Support	Pending – Senate Floor – Inactive File – 2 Year Bill
AB 518 (Wicks)	Paid Family Leave for Care of Designated Persons	Support	Pending – Senate Floor – Inactive File – 2 Year Bill
AB 1567 (Garcia)	Safe Drinking Water Bond Act of 2024	Support if Amended	Pending – Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – 2 Year Bill
AB 1581 (Kalra)	Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements	Support	Pending – Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – 2 Year Bill
AB 1827 (Papan)	Low Water User Protection Act	Support	Pending – Assembly Local Government Committee
AB 2257 (Wilson)	Property-Related Water and Sewer Fees and Assessments	Support	Pending – Assembly Local Government Committee
AB 2409 (Papan)	Permitting Accountability Transparency Dashboard	Support	Pending – Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee – 2 Year Bill
AB 2501 (Alvarez)	State and Regional Water Boards: Donations	Support	Pending – Assembly Appropriations Committee
AB 2682 (Kalra)	Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority	Support	Pending – Assembly Local Government Committee
SB 366 (Caballero)	The California Water Plan: Long-Term Supply Targets	Support	Pending – Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee – 2 Year Bill
SB 638 (Eggman)	Climate Resiliency and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2024	Support If Amended	Pending – Assembly Water, Parks, & Wildlife Committee – 2 Year Bill
SB 867 (Allen)	Resources Bond Act of 2024	Support if Amended	Pending – Assembly Natural Resources Committee – 2 Year Bill
SB 903 (Skinner)	Environmental Health: Product Safety: perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances	Support	Pending – Senate Environmental Quality Committee
SB 1218 (Newman)	Emergency Water Supplies	Support	Pending – Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee
SB 1395 (Becker)	Interim Housing Act	Support	Pending – Senate Environmental Quality Committee