

NOVEMBER 24, 2020

Office of Government Relations Legislative Update



FEDERAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS



US Capitol

2020 Federal Election Roundup

As it stands now, former Vice President Joe Biden has been declared the winner of the presidential election, with U.S. Senator Kamala Harris as the Vice President-elect. Current President Donald Trump has thus far vowed to challenge the results in court and force recounts of several states. Assuming the results hold, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris will be sworn in on January 20, 2021.

All four Congressional Members in Santa Clara County easily won reelection. Neither Senator Dianne Feinstein nor Senator Harris were up for reelection, but Senator Harris' election as Vice President means that Governor Newsom will now need to appoint someone to carry out her remaining Senate term (through 2022). There is much speculation about who Governor Newsom will select for that seat, but possible contenders include California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, and Congresswomen Karen Bass and Barbara Lee.

The U.S. House of Representatives will remain in Democratic control, although the Democrats hold just 216 seats (218 are needed for control) to the Republicans' 196. Nearly two dozen races have yet to be called. The 117th Congress will be sworn in on January 3, 2021, and Nancy Pelosi will likely remain Speaker for another two years.

The picture in the U.S. Senate remains less clear. Two races, Alaska and North Carolina, have yet to be called. In Alaska, Republican incumbent Dan Sullivan is leading Democratic challenger Al Gross; in North Carolina, Republican incumbent Thom Tillis is leading Democratic challenger Cal Cunningham. Both incumbents are expected to win, giving the Republicans a 50-48 majority with two outstanding races in Georgia that will go to a runoff on January 5, 2021. If the Democrats can win both of those seats, the party will have 50 seats and incoming Vice President Kamala Harris will cast the tiebreaking vote. If the Republicans win even just one of the Georgia seats, the chamber will remain under Republican control.

STATE ADVOCACY EFFORTS



State Capitol

2020 State Legislature Election Outcome

The election has increased the California Democratic 2/3 supermajority to 32-8 in the Senate and 61-17, with 1 independent in the Assembly. While the supermajority by the Democratic Party means some policies may be easier to adopt, it has been shown in the last several years that Democrat legislators are far from a monolithic voting bloc. Democrat legislators from the Central Valley often have different perspectives on progressive policies than do their counterparts from coastal areas.

Among the Valley Water delegation, several legislators who had been in office more than a decade were termed out: Senator Jim Beall (D-San Jose) will be replaced by Dave Cortese; Senator Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo) will be replaced by Josh Becker; and Senator Bill Monning (D-Carmel) will be replaced by returning legislator John Laird. Laird first served in the Assembly from 2002-2008 and later served as Natural Resources Agency Secretary from 2011-2019.

LOCAL ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Director Varela Updates Morgan Hill Residents at Town Hall Event

On October 22, Director Varela attended the virtual Town Hall hosted by the City of Morgan Hill. Director Varela provided an overview of Valley Water's Safe Clean Water & Natural Flood Protection Program renewal and the various projects of benefit to the residents of Morgan Hill, including the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project and the Llagas Creek Flood Protection Project.

Director LeZotte Updates Erikson Residents at Neighborhood Meeting

On October 28, Director Linda LeZotte attended the Erikson Neighborhood Association meeting and presented

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on Valley Water actions to address the litter and debris issues near the Guadalupe River. Director LeZotte also informed residents about different project elements included in the proposed renewal of the Safe, Clean Water Program, which would continue to fund cleanup of large creekside encampments, and facilitate better coordination with cities and social services agencies on those efforts, among other community-identified priorities.

Upcoming November Activities

Note: due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, staff is not physically participating in any events during the month of November. Staff is participating in virtual events as they are planned, including WaterPalooza! on December 2-3 and will assess participation in events in December to follow the most current shelter in place order.

Federal Legislation Active in November 2020 with Board-Approved Positions:

Bill (Author)	Subject	Position	Status
H.R. 548 (Calvert)	Federally Integrated Species Health (FISH) Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. 357 (Garamendi)	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act	Support	Signed into law as part of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (P.L. 116-9)
S. 40 (Barrasso)	Bureau of Reclamation Transparency Act	Support and Amend	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
H.R. 1137 (Garamendi)	To amend the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 to repeal the authority relating to reprogramming during national emergencies	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
S. 326 (Udall)	Restrictions Against Illegitimate Declarations for Emergency Re-appropriations (RAIDER) Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Appropriations
H.R. 1162 (Napolitano)	Water Recycling Improvement and Investment Act	Support	Hearing held in the House Committee on Natural Resources (June 13, 2019)
H.R. 1132 (Speier)	San Francisco Bay Restoration Act of 2019	Support	Passed the House by voice vote (September 19, 2019)
H.R. 1497 (DeFazio)	Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act	Support	Markup held in the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, ordered to be reported favorably (October 29, 2019)
H.R. 658 (DeLauro)	National Infrastructure Development Bank Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committees on Energy and Commerce; Transportation and Infrastructure; Financial Services; and Ways and Means
H.R. 1417 (Lawrence) / S. 611 (Sanders)	Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity, and Reliability (WATER) Act of 2019	Support	H.R. 1417: Introduced and referred to the House Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure; Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means; and Agriculture; S. 611: Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
H.R. 1621 (McClintock)	Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. 2313 (Huffman)	Water Conservation Rebate Tax Parity Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means
S. 923 (Feinstein)	Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
H.R. 2473 (Harder)	Securing Access for the central Valley and Enhancing (SAVE) Water Resources Act	Support and Amend	Hearing held in the House Committee on Natural Resources (June 13, 2019)
H.R. 363 (Calvert)	Reducing Environmental Barriers to Unified Infrastructure and Land Development (REBUILD) Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
S. 1932 (Gardner)	Drought Resiliency and Water Supply Infrastructure Act	Support and Amend	Hearing held in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (July 18, 2019)

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H.R. 363 (Calvert)	Reducing Environmental Barriers to Unified Infrastructure and Land Development (REBUILD) Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
S. 1932 (Gardner)	Drought Resiliency and Water Supply Infrastructure Act	Support and Amend	Hearing held in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (July 18, 2019)
S. 1730 (Harris) / H.R. 3115 (Pallone)	The Living Shorelines Act of 2019	Support	S. 1730: Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; H.R. 3115: Markup held in the House Committee on Natural Resources, ordered to be reported favorably (September 25, 2019)
H.R. 3723 (Levin)	The Desalination Development Act	Support	Hearing held in the House Committee on Natural Resources (July 25, 2019)
H.R. 855 (Peters)	The Strengthening The Resiliency of Our Nation on the Ground (STRONG) Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
S. 403 (Whitehouse) / H.R. 1159 (Cicilline)	Innovative Materials for America's Growth and Infrastructure Newly Expanded (IMAGINE) Act of 2019	Support and Amend	S. 403: Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; H.R. 1159: Introduced and referred to the House Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure; Science, Space, and Technology; and Energy and Commerce
H.R. 4033 (Kildee) / S. 2466 (Harris)	Water Justice Act	Support and Amend	Introduced and referred to the House Committees on Energy and Commerce; Budget; Ways and Means; Natural Resources; Agriculture; and Transportation and Infrastructure
S. 1837 (Gillibrand) / H.R. 3254 (Delgado)	Protecting Infrastructure and Promoting the Economy (PIPE) Act	Support and Amend	S. 1837: Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; H.R. 3254: Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Energy and Commerce
H.R. 3091 (Loebsack)	National Flood Research and Education Center Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
S. 2236 (Booker) / H.R. 3923 (Ruiz)	Environmental Justice Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
H.R. 5752 (Costa)	Conveyance Capacity Correction Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. 5504 (Brownley)	To amend the National Dam Safety Program Act with respect to the definition of eligible high hazard potential dam, and for other purposes	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
H.R. 5302 (McNerney)	Western Water Recycling and Drought Relief Act	Support and Amend	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. 5316 (Cox)	Move Water Now Act	Support and Amend	Marked up in the House Committee on Natural Resources, ordered to be reported favorably (February 12, 2020)
H.R. XXXX (Pelosi)	Coronavirus Stimulus Phase 3 (became the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act or the HEROES Act, H.R. 6800)	Support and Amend	Passed the House (May 15, 2020)

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H.R. XXXX (Pelosi)	Coronavirus Stimulus Phases 3.5 (became the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act, H.R. 7010) and 4	Support and Amend	H.R. 7010 was signed into law on June 5, 2020 (P.L. 116-142)
H.R. 2 (DeFazio)	Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America Act (INVEST in America Act)	Support and Amend	Passed the House (July 1, 2020)
H.R. XXXX (Huffman)	Furthering Underutilized Technologies and Unleashing Responsible Expenditures for Drought Resiliency (FUTURE Drought Resiliency) Act	Support and Amend	Not yet introduced (provisions included as part of H.R. 2)
S. 3591 (Barrasso)	America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020	Support and Amend	Markup held in the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, ordered to be reported favorably (May 11, 2020)
S. 3590 (Barrasso)	Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020	Support	Markup held in the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, ordered to be reported favorably (May 11, 2020)
H.R. 7073 (Garamendi)	Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act	Support	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Committee on Financial Services
S. 3811 (Feinstein)	Restoration of Essential Conveyance Act	Support	Hearing held in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (July 22, 2020)
S. 4188 (Harris)	Water for Tomorrow Act	Support and Amend	Hearing held in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (July 22)
H.R. 7575 (DeFazio)	Water Resources Development Act	Support and Amend	Passed the House (July 29)
S. 4308 (Sinema)	A bill to amend the Social Security Act to include special districts in the coronavirus relief fund, to direct the Secretary to include special districts as an eligible issuer under the Municipal Liquidity Facility, and for other purposes.	Support	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Finance
S. 2596 (Duckworth)	Voluntary Water Partnership for Distressed Communities Act of 2019	Support	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
S. 4530 (Feinstein) / H.R. 8041 (Harder)	Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Authorization Act	Support	S. 4530: Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; H.R. 8041: Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. 8166 (Cox)	Western Water Storage Infrastructure Act	Support and Amend	Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources
H.R. XXXX (Pelosi)	Coronavirus Stimulus Bill (Phase 4)	Support and Amend	Not yet introduced (currently being negotiated)