



## COUNTY OF PLACER

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June 28, 2019

The Honorable Ben Allen, Chair  
Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **SUBJECT: Support for AB 402 (Quirk)—Optional LPA Fund Stabilization**

Dear Chair Allen and Members of the Environmental Quality Committee:

On behalf of the Placer County Board of Supervisors, we are pleased to offer its strong support for AB 402 which offers a much-needed fund stabilization option for local jurisdictions to implement their Local Primacy Agency (LPA) drinking water oversight programs. AB 402 helps to ensure that all Californians who rely on public drinking water systems – regardless of whether they live in counties whose system oversight is through the state or delegated to the county – can be assured of safe and affordable drinking water.

Specifically, the measure will enable counties who oversee their water system through Local Primacy Agency (LPA) delegation agreements to provide the required level of system oversight as specified by state and federal law with the most efficient use of limited resources. The measure changes the public drinking water oversight system to provide an opt-in/optional alternative funding mechanism that would accomplish the following:

**Protect Public Health:** Ensuring safe drinking water is a fundamental public health protection service. Thirty local environmental health departments serve as the LPA on behalf of the state to provide oversight and guidance to small community and disadvantaged community water systems. AB 402 is essential to ensure that these local agencies can continue to provide this critical service.

**Assistance to Disadvantaged Communities:** Many of the systems that do not comply with our state drinking water standards serve disadvantaged communities. While the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has adopted a policy to limit the oversight fee for these systems to \$100 per year, local jurisdictions performing the same oversight role for other disadvantaged communities are financially unable to limit their fees to \$100 per year – especially when the true cost of oversight runs 5 to 10 times this amount per system per year. Without AB 402 this disparity will continue – or be exacerbated.

**Government Efficiency:** Local agencies perform the same regulatory oversight as state agencies, but typically at reduced costs due to local oversight efficiencies, proximity to the regulated community and local knowledge. After working with the California Association of Environmental Health Administrators and the State Water Resources Control Board, estimates show that retaining the existing local drinking water oversight program could save as much as \$1.5 to \$2 million per year compared with the same oversight services provided by the state.

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**SUPPORT OF AB 402**

In summary, this legislation will secure sustainable funding for the established and highly effective LPA regulatory program. Placer County urges the Legislature to enact this optional funding mechanism that will support local communities and enhance public health protection. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please contact Wesley Nicks, Environmental Health Director at [wnicks@placer.ca.gov](mailto:wnicks@placer.ca.gov) or at (530)745-2341

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kirk Uhler', written in a cursive style.

Kirk Uhler, Chair (District 4)  
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CC: Members of Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
Justin Malan, California Association of Environmental Health Administrators  
Placer County Board of Supervisors  
Todd Leopold, Placer County Executive Officer  
Shaw / Yoder / Antwih