

**From:** [Jerry Gladbach](#)  
**To:** [April Jacobs](#)  
**Subject:** AB 1234 REPORT  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 2:21:56 PM

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CAUTION - EXTERNAL SENDER

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Director's Name: Jerry Gladbach  
Meeting Attended: ACWA's Legislative Symposium  
Date of Meeting: March 11, 2021  
Date of Meeting to be Presented at: April 6, 2021  
Points of Interest:

Steve LaMar, ACWA's President, welcomed everyone to the Symposium.

Brian Poulsen, Chair of ACWA's Legislative Committee, reviewed the process that ACWA takes regarding bills. ACWA staff reviews many bills, selects those that are of interest to ACWA members, prepares a summary and proposed action on each and presents them to the Legislative Committee. The Committee meets every 3 weeks while the Legislature is in session. The Committee then discusses each bill and takes a position on it. Although only members may vote, all in attendance may make comments. The Committee consists of 40 members plus the Chair. Each ACWA Region has 4 representatives on the Committee, which are recommended by the Chair of each Region and approved by the President.

Senator Dodd is very passionate about his 2 bills, SB 222 and SB 223, which deal with affordability of water and shutoff of water service due to unpaid bills. Senator Dodd pointed out that most people take water for granted and have no concept of what it takes to provide customers with a reliable supply of high quality water at affordable prices. He believes that government has a responsibility to make sure that everyone has a supply of good quality water that they can afford.

The Senator pointed out that the SWRCB's survey shows that 1.6 million customers owe more than \$500 and 150,000 owe more than \$1000, with a total of over \$1billion owed to water suppliers. The amount owed to water suppliers is sometimes 30% of the suppliers revenue. His bills are very complex but intends to cover the costs of basic services.

It was pointed out that the provision to prevent shut offs, does not apply to small water systems, those that have 200 or less connections. It was also pointed out that even if the past due bills are paid off by a state program, many are unable to pay for the monthly bills. Further we cannot ignore Prop 218. The goal of SB 222 is for the money to go to those who really need it and it should be administered by a State Agency that already has a system set up to work with low income families.

I was very impressed as to how well ACWA collaborates with the Community Water Center and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, both of which are organizations advocating for environmental justice. Regarding the subject of Climate Resiliency Bonds, Assemblyman Garcia pointed out that it will cost \$113B annually, by 2050, if nothing is done. The negative impacts of climate change include, flooding, wildfires, sea level rise, among others. The polling is positive for such a bond which may be from \$6-\$10b. They are hoping to get a bill passed so that proposition for the bond can be on the June 2022 ballot.

It was pointed out that there were 5 million acres destroyed from wildfires from 1930-2000, 5 million acres from 2000-2019, and 4.7 million acres in 2020.

Only 3% of the State's budget goes to natural resources, and the only way to augment this is with bonds.

There are other bills in the Legislature dealing with climate change, so it is imperative that the Assembly, Senate and Governor come together to agree on one.

ACWA is pushing for it to include \$100M for Integrated Regional Water Management Plans and \$350M for groundwater issues other than what is required by SIGMA.

Pam Tobin, ACWA Vice-President, thanked everyone for attending.

It was a great Symposium and I appreciate the opportunity to attend.

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**9:00 - 9:10 AM****Welcome Remarks****Steve LaMar**, President, ACWA**Brian Poulsen**, Chair, ACWA State Legislative Committee**9:10 - 10:25 AM****A Conversation About 2021 Water Affordability Legislation**

This program will delve into two high priority bills for the water community in the 2021-'22 Legislative Session – SB 222 and SB 223 by Senator Bill Dodd (D-Napa). SB 222 would create a water affordability program for low-income Californians. SB 223 would revise a new law (SB 998, Dodd, 2018) to place new statutory requirements on residential water service disconnections due to nonpayment – including the proposed forgiveness of ratepayer debt. Both bills have been introduced as ratepayers and public water agencies are experiencing financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

This program will offer perspectives from stakeholders involved in these issues.

**MODERATOR:****Cindy Tuck**, Deputy Executive Director for Government Relations, ACWA**PANELISTS:****Senator Bill Dodd** (D-Napa)**Michael Claiborne**, Directing Attorney, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability**Christine Compton**, Government Relations Officer/Deputy General Counsel, Irvine Ranch Water District**Jonathan Nelson**, Policy Director, Community Water Center**10:25 - 10:30 AM****ACWA Outreach Program Update****Cristel Tufenkjian**, Chair, ACWA Outreach Task Force**10:30 - 10:45 AM****Break**

# AGENDA continued

## **10:45 AM - Noon Climate Resilience Bonds**

With several legislative bond proposals failing in 2020, the Legislature has reintroduced several proposals for the 2021-'22 Legislative Session. The focus of these proposals is on mitigating the impacts of climate change, including the impact to California's water supply reliability. These bonds propose significant new funding for water specific issues as well as a host of other climate management related initiatives. Funding categories include recycled water, groundwater, and water quality.

This panel will discuss the specifics of these proposals, differences from last year's efforts, and the likelihood of a bond being placed on the November 2022 ballot.

### **MODERATOR:**

**Adam Quiñonez**, Director of State Relations, ACWA

### **PANELISTS:**

**Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia** (D-Coachella)

**Kip Lipper**, Chief Policy Advisor on Energy, Natural Resources, and Environment, Senate President Pro Tempore

**Jay Ziegler**, Director of External Affairs and Policy, The Nature Conservancy

## **Noon - 12:30 PM A Conversation with Assemblymember Luz Rivas**

Join us for a conversation with Assemblymember Luz Rivas who serves as the new Chair of the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and a member of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3 on Climate Crisis, Resources, Energy, and Transportation as we discuss the year's hot issues from wildfire to climate change adaptation.

### **MODERATOR:**

**Julia Hall**, Senior Legislative Advocate, ACWA

### **SPEAKER:**

**Assemblymember Luz Rivas** (D-Arleta)