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California State Senate

SENATOR
CHRISTINE KEHOE
THIRTY-NINTH SENATE DISTRICT



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 - BUDGET AND FISCAL REVIEW
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January 21, 2009

Mr. Richard Wright, Chairman
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123

Subject: Carlsbad Desalination Project (Resolution No.R9-2008-0039)

Dear Chairman Wright and RWQCB Members:

In 2006 and 2008 I wrote the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board requesting your support for the Carlsbad Desalination Project. I write today asking that the Regional Board reaffirm its support for the Carlsbad Desalination Project by approving the project's Marine Life Mitigation Plan during your February 11, 2009 meeting.

As a member of the San Diego City Council for seven years, as a California State Assembly member for four, and four years as a State Senator, I am well-versed on California's water issues at both the local and state levels. It is important that our region continue its effort to diversify its supply of potable water.

There is no question that San Diego's water supply system has many challenges. As a fire-prone region with heavy agricultural use that imports almost 90 percent of its water, diversifying our water supply portfolio must include developing local water sources. Desalination is a key element of both the San Diego County Water Authority's Urban Water Management Plan and the California Department of Water Resources' Water Plan Update.

It has been ten years since the Carlsbad Desalination Project was first proposed. Numerous agencies, including the California Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission have reviewed and approved the project. Research conducted by Poseidon Resources demonstrates that effects on the marine environment will be minimal and offset by the wetland habitat restoration plan that will restore up to 55.4 acres of coastal habitat as described in the Marine Life Mitigation Plan.

In addition, the Carlsbad Desalination Project will be a good steward for the Agua Hedionda Lagoon, ensuring that this 388-acre wetland is preserved for future generations to enjoy.



The Carlsbad Desalination Project offers a local solution to our long term water supply needs that will reduce the region's dependence on imported water especially during this period of extended drought. I urge your favorable consideration of this project.

Sincerely,



CHRISTINE KEHOE
Senator, 39th District

cc: David King, Vice Chairman
Eric Anderson, Board Member
Grant Destache, Board Member
George Loveland, Board Member
Wayne Rayfield, Board Member
Gary Thompson, Board Member
Kris Weber, Board Member
John Robertus, Executive Director
Catherine Hagan, Regional Board Attorney