July 1, 2026

The Honorable Benjamin Allen
Chair, Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 7610
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

The Honorable Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
Vice-Chair, Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 7220
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

The Honorable Josh Becker
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 6520
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

The Honorable Kelly Seyarto
Vice-Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 7120
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

The Honorable Cottie Petrie-Norris
Chair, Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 8120
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Joe Patterson
Vice-Chair, Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 4530
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Diane Papan
Chair, Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife

CALIFORNIA WATER ASSOCIATION

WORKING TOGETHER. ACHIEVING RESULTS.

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CALIFORNIA WATER ASSOCIATION

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RE: Urgent Request to Delay California Public Utilities Commission Vote on Last-Minute Proposal Affecting Water System Consolidation

Dear Chair Allen and Vice Chair Ochoa Bogh:

On behalf of the California Water Association (CWA), representing California's regulated water providers serving more than six million Californians, **we urgently request your assistance in calling on the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to postpone its July 2 vote** on a significant proposal added just hours before they are scheduled to act. Decisions of this magnitude deserve a transparent process and meaningful public input.

With 48 hours before the scheduled vote, the CPUC substantially revised its proposed decision by adding new provisions that could fundamentally alter the future of voluntary water system consolidation in California. These significant changes were introduced without providing affected communities, water providers, or other interested stakeholders a meaningful opportunity to review the proposal or provide public input.

California has spent years encouraging the voluntary consolidation of struggling water systems as one of the state's most effective strategies for improving safe, reliable drinking water in rural and disadvantaged communities. Through the State Water Resources Control Board's SAFER Program and related initiatives, consolidation has helped connect smaller systems with larger, better-resourced providers capable of making long-term infrastructure investments, maintaining regulatory compliance, and delivering reliable service.

Unfortunately, the CPUC's newly revised proposal threatens to undermine that progress.

As drafted, the proposal would create a large level of uncertainty and would make it extraordinarily difficult to negotiate voluntary sale of system agreements. It ultimately risks discouraging the very consolidations California has relied upon to improve drinking water service.

The CPUC already possesses the authority to review every consolidation transaction and disallow gains it determines are excessive or not in the

public interest. This new proposal does not provide additional oversight. Instead, it introduces unnecessary uncertainty that could prevent consolidations from occurring in the first place.

The communities most affected will be the small communities across the state that depend on consolidation to secure safe, reliable drinking water and long-term infrastructure investment. Slowing or discouraging these transactions risks delaying improvements for the very Californians state leaders have worked to prioritize.

Policy decisions of this significance deserve a transparent public process. Communities, local leaders, water providers, and other stakeholders should have more than 48 hours to evaluate and comment on a significant change on a proposal with potentially far-reaching consequences for California's drinking water future.

We respectfully urge you to encourage the California Public Utilities Commission to postpone its July 2 vote on this provision and allow for meaningful stakeholder review before any final action is taken.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to ensuring safe, reliable drinking water for all Californians. We welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information or answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Capitolo
Executive Director

CC: The Honorable Bob Archuleta
The Honorable Jesse Arreguín
The Honorable Anna Caballero
The Honorable Megan Dahle
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez
The Honorable Shannon Grove
The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
The Honorable Jerry McNerney
The Honorable Eloise Gómez Reyes
The Honorable Laura Richardson
The Honorable Susan Rubio

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The Honorable Henry Stern
The Honorable Tony Strickland
The Honorable Aisha Wahab
The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon
The Honorable John Laird
The Honorable Henry Stern
The Honorable Tasha Boerner
The Honorable Lisa Calderon
The Honorable Phillip Chen
The Honorable Laurie Davies
The Honorable Mark González
The Honorable John Harabedian
The Honorable Gregg Hart
The Honorable Jacqui Irwin
The Honorable Ash Kalra
The Honorable Chris Rogers
The Honorable Pilar Schiavo
The Honorable Nick Schultz
The Honorable Tri Ta
The Honorable Greg Wallis
The Honorable Rick Chavez Zbur
The Honorable Juan Alanis
The Honorable David A. Alvarez
The Honorable Anamarie Ávila Farías
The Honorable Jasmeet Kaur Bains
The Honorable Steve Bennett
The Honorable Jessica M. Caloza
The Honorable Heather Hadwick
The Honorable Celeste Rodriguez



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