



June 11, 2019

The Honorable Bill Monning
State Capitol, Room 4040
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 200 (Monning): Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Monning,

On behalf of the City of Santa Rosa, I am writing to express our support of SB 200, which would establish the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund. SB 200 would provide California with a durable funding source and a long-term plan to help community water systems in disadvantaged communities provide their customers with access to safe and affordable drinking water.

TOM SCHWEDHELM
Mayor

CHRIS ROGERS
Vice Mayor

JULIE COMBS
VICTORIA FLEMING
ERNESTO OLIVARES
JOHN SAWYER
JACK TIBBETTS

The City of Santa Rosa is an urban retail water supplier servicing approximately 175,000 residents in Sonoma County. Santa Rosa strongly supports and understands the need to solve longstanding water quality issues in California and ensure everyone has access to safe and affordable drinking water. While the City appreciates previous efforts and dedication to assist disadvantaged communities who do not have safe drinking water, we believe that the development and implementation of a long-term plan and the continuous appropriation of general fund dollars would better facilitate access to safe and affordable drinking water, as opposed to the proposed statewide tax on water.

Many community water systems in disadvantaged communities lack the financial ability to operate and maintain their systems in compliance with drinking water standards. Further, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) costs generally cannot be financed with existing federal and state drinking water funding sources that are available to supplement capital expenses. In some situations, the consolidation of a failing community water system with one or more systems may be the most effective solution to providing the community with safe drinking water. The development of a plan to implement a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, as proposed in SB 200, would establish a perpetual funding source to provide assistance to disadvantaged communities for consolidation, ongoing O&M costs to bring systems into compliance, and replacement water as a short-term solution.

The continuous appropriation of general fund dollars to establish a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water fund is a better solution than imposing a tax on drinking water because, unlike a tax, the usage of general fund dollars does not increase the cost of water nor would it potentially counteract the state's Human Right to Water Policy. SB 200 would provide a sensible long-term solution that will increase access to safe and affordable drinking water in disadvantaged communities.

For these reasons, the City of Santa Rosa supports SB 200 and respectfully asks for your "Aye" vote.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you, or members of your staff, have any questions, please contact Kimberly Zunino, Deputy Director of Administration at (707) 543-3960 or kzunino@srcity.org

Sincerely,



Tom Schwedhelm

Mayor, City of Santa Rosa

Cc: Santa Rosa City Council
The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 3
The Honorable Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 2
The Honorable Mike McGuire, California State Senate
The Honorable Marc Levine, California State Assembly
The Honorable Jim Wood, California State Assembly
The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, California State Assembly
The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Senate Governmental Organization Committee
Honorable Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Mr. Brian Duke, Committee Consultant
Mr. Richard Paul, Senate Republican Caucus Consultant
Cindy Tuck, Association of California Water Agencies
Kyra Emanuels-Ross and David Jones, Emanuels Jones & Association