



April 14, 2020

Hon. Jared Huffman
Chairman
House Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife
1527 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for the FUTURE Drought Resiliency Act of 2020—Discussion Draft Act

Dear Hon. Huffman,

The Western Urban Water Coalition (WUWC or Coalition) appreciates this opportunity to express its strong support for FUTURE Drought Resiliency Act and provide its feedback and recommendations on the discussion draft. Throughout the west, significant investment in water supply infrastructure is needed to provide drought resilience and reliable water supply in the face of growing populations, aging water systems, and changes in the amount and type of precipitation due to climate change. This new bill aims to improve the nation's water supply and drought resiliency and prevent severe water shortages. We urge Congress to act expeditiously to enact legislation to promote water supply infrastructure and improve and protect our nation's water supplies, and the FUTURE Act is the forward-looking legislation that is so important to address the critical needs of western states at this time.

Established in 1992 to address the West's unique water supply and water quality challenges, WUWC consists of the largest urban water utilities in the West, serving more than 40 million western water consumers in major metropolitan areas in seven western states. WUWC includes the following urban water utilities:

- *Arizona* – Central Arizona Project, City of Phoenix and Salt River Project;
- *California* – Eastern Municipal Water District, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, San Diego County Water Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District and City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission;
- *Colorado* – Aurora Water, Colorado Springs Utilities, and Denver Water;
- *Nevada* – Las Vegas Valley Water District, Southern Nevada Water Authority, and Truckee Meadows Water Authority;
- *New Mexico* – Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority;
- *Utah* – Salt Lake City Public Utilities, and
- *Washington* – Seattle Public Utilities.

The WUWC is committed to presenting new and different perspectives on the management of water resources in the modern West. The WUWC articulates the needs and values of Western cities to provide a reliable, high quality, sustainable urban water supply for present and future generations. As operators of public water supply systems, WUWC members serve the health, environmental, and economic needs of their communities around the clock and every day of the year. WUWC advocates for effective and practicable approaches to water supply infrastructure programs at a time when water is becoming more scarce and critical to the economic growth, natural resource sustainability, and quality-of-life in the Western states. The WUWC is in strong support of federal legislation to improve the sustainability and resilience of the infrastructure and economy of the West.

It is particularly important to put federal legislation into effect immediately, without delay, that provides the federal funding and financing tools that have long been a critical component of water development in the west and continues to be essential to meet the water resources challenges faced by the members of our Coalition. In nearly every basin in the Western states, there is a need for new storage (both including surface and groundwater facilities), conveyance (canals, pipes, and distribution facilities), reuse and recycling plants, desalination projects and other facilities. The predictability and timeliness of such federal funding and financing tools are critical to unleashing local investments. The current process is a major improvement over the traditional Reclamation model which is cumbersome and unpredictable and should be continued to avoid delaying and discouraging needed projects. The FUTURE Act provides a fiscally realistic way to assist drought resiliency projects.

Earlier this year, the public was invited to provide comments to help inform further development of this comprehensive water bill. WUWC appreciates this opportunity and attaches its feedback and comments. We look forward to working with you and your staff further as this legislation is formally introduced and begins to move through the legislative process.

Again, we truly believe that FUTURE Act would significantly benefit the efforts of WUWC members and other water providers across the country.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support and comments, and feel free to reach out to us if you would like more information as to how this legislation will benefit western water. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at 702-258-7166 or greg.walch@lvvwd.com, or the WUWC national counsel, Don Baur at 202-654-6234 or dbaur@perkinscoie.com.

Very truly yours,



Gregory J. Walch
Chairman

cc: Donald C. Baur, Perkins Coie LLP