



April 18, 2012

Honorable Wesley Chesbro  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources  
California State Assembly  
1020 N Street, #164  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2595 (Hall) – Support**

Dear Chair Chesbro:

On behalf of the California Water Association ("CWA"), the statewide trade group that represents more than 125 water utilities regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission ("CPUC" or "Commission"), I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 2595 (Hall). CWA members provide safe and reliable water service to nearly 6 million Californians.

CWA supports the bill's call to convene a Seawater Desalination Permit Streamlining Task Force through the Ocean Protection Council to (1) investigate current impediments to state permitting of seawater desalination plants and (2) make recommendations about how the process may be made more efficient. The bill would appropriate \$250,000 from Proposition 84 to fund the task force. The bill correctly notes that the goal should be to streamline the process, while retaining necessary regulatory oversight and protection.

Seawater desalination is an appropriate option to consider in our portfolio of water supply solutions. However, the complex, and sometimes conflicting, permitting requirements of the various local, state and federal agencies responsible for such facilities drives up the cost of potential projects during the design and permitting stages, thereby reducing the economic viability of seawater desalination as a supplemental source.

An example of the permitting tangle for seawater desalination can be found in a recent EIR issued by the CPUC for a proposed desalination plant on the central coast of California, in which approximately 20 different regulatory or discretionary agreements, approvals or permits at the local, state and federal level were identified as being required for the project to proceed. Each one has its own unique process with associated legal, technical and regulatory challenges to overcome. AB 2595's proposal to initiate a stakeholder driven review of the process to identify reasonable streamlining measures at the state level is a welcome idea.

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Accordingly, CWA supports passage of AB 2595 when it comes before your committee on Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Legislative Advocate, Meg Catzen-Brown, at 916-442-8888, if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Hawks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jack Hawks

Cc: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources  
Honorable Isadore Hall III  
Lawrence Lingbloom, Chief Consultant  
John Kennedy, Assembly Republican Consultant  
Gareth Elliott, Office of the Governor