



**Board of Directors
November 20, 2019**

SUBJECT:

Eastern Municipal Water District's 2019 Water Champion

BACKGROUND:

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein was selected to receive the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) Water Champion Award for 2019. The EMWD Water Champion Award was established to recognize an individual who has demonstrated exemplary service and dedication to assisting EMWD in achieving its stated mission of delivering value to our diverse customers and the communities we serve by providing safe, reliable, economical and environmentally sustainable water, wastewater, and recycled water services.

Senator Feinstein has been a long standing supporter and advocate for many of EMWD's priority projects at the federal level where she has advocated for increased funding for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Environmental Infrastructure projects in the Senate's funding bill. This is the funding source for EMWD's South Perris Desalination program. In addition to being an advocate for the overall program, she has personally weighed-in to support the individual appropriations EMWD has received for the South Perris Desalination program through the USACE workplan. To date, EMWD has received over \$20 million for this program, and is approaching the \$25 million authorization cap. The Senator is also weighing in to support EMWD's effort to double the original authorization to \$50 million.

Senator Feinstein has also been an ardent supporter of advancing recycled water, and utilizing funding tools like the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Title XVI program. She and her staff championed the creation of a competitive grant element of Title XVI through the Water Infrastructure Investments for the Nation Act in 2016 that the water community is now utilizing to advance water recycling.

Senator Feinstein is a strong supporter of the tax parity issue, to bring consistency between the way energy and water conservation rebates are taxed. While EMWD has had difficulty gaining momentum on this issue, the Senator is lining up support to introduce another bill to change the code so water conservation rebates are not taxed as taxable income.

Most recently the Senator urged California Governor Gavin Newsom to veto State Senate Bill 1, a measure intended to strengthen environmental protections, but would have had the unintended consequence of derailing voluntary agreements that are critical to the future health of the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta. This bill was ultimately vetoed, and her opposition truly made a difference. This year she also weighed-in to the Federal Emergency Management

Agency to help get assistance for California disaster recovery funds for projects like the Oroville Dam recovery, and other areas that sustained flood damage.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOAL/OBJECTIVE:

Advocacy: Conduct a highly productive and effective Federal, State and local advocacy representation program to effectively influence legislation, regulation and funding in a manner that responds to a shifting political landscape, benefits EMWD's customers and consistently demonstrates industry leadership.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

This item is not a project as defined in the California Environmental Quality Act Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15378.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is informational only.

SUBMITTED BY:



Paul D. Jones II P.E., General Manager

11/19/2019

Attachment(s):

Proclamation - Senator Dianne Feinstein, 2019 Water Champion
Certificate of Appreciation - John Watts

11/20/19 Board Meeting

Staff Contact: Jolene Walsh