TALKING POINTS: MANDATORY WATER CONSOLIDATION BUDGET TRAILER BILL

- Grants the State unprecedented unilateral power to take ownership and operation of a water system from one entity and force it upon another.

- Provides no guarantee the State will cover the costs involved with consolidation.

- Gives no protections for existing ratepayers.

- Strips away the right of self-determination for local residents who would be forced into new agencies with no opportunity to vote.

- Although framed as a response to the drought, the bill has no sunset date and is in no way limited to the drought state of emergency.

- While this bill is intended to help residents unable to afford water infrastructure, the vast powers granted to the State are not limited to disadvantaged communities.

- Consolidation of essential local services, such as water systems, is a highly complex endeavor with a multitude of long-lasting health, fiscal and legal consequences.

- Ill-conceived alterations to this area of law could exacerbate, rather than resolve, the plight of our communities.

- Our agency and all special districts are committed to finding workable solutions to our communities’ water challenges. This bill is not the right way to do it, and this process is not the right process.

- This bill has nothing to do with the budget. It is a major, complex policy change and should be given a full legislative policy review where stakeholders and experts can present the facts.

- We respectfully ask that you reject this bill and allow us the opportunity to work with you to find real, workable solutions.