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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**SOLANO
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May 6, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chairwoman, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Ste. 8140
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE, as amended April 25, 2024 – AB 2079 (Bennett), Groundwater extraction, large-diameter, high-capacity water wells, permits

Dear Chairwoman Wicks,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to inform you that we must respectfully oppose AB 2079, which would impose on local enforcement agencies the task of performing specified activities at least 30 days prior to approving a permit for a new large-diameter, high-capacity well, as defined.

Solano County must oppose AB 2079 because the bill restricts the local control of groundwater previously guaranteed by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The proposed requirements in the bill would mandate ministerial permitting agencies to deny all large-diameter, high-capacity wells within a quarter mile of a well-used for supplying domestic water to one or more people or to a community.

The standards mentioned above, and others proposed, are unreasonable and fail to consider localized geologic conditions, local groundwater management projects and actions, and the realities of local economic conditions. Further, Solano County believes that the state correctly recognized as SGMA was being developed that groundwater management standards and related decisions are best made locally, and additional legislation that reduces local control as SGMA is being implemented is premature and unwisely contradicts the premise that groundwater is best managed locally.

Solano County opposes AB 2079 because it would attempt to fundamentally redirect groundwater management from the original intent of SGMA—to allow for flexible local control based on hydrologic conditions. This bill preemptively assumes that GSAs are not up to the task of achieving sustainability under SGMA and creates an undue burden on local agencies. For example, the notification process outlined in the legislation is cumbersome and expensive—and may be difficult to achieve.

For these reasons, Solano County must respectfully oppose AB 2079.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitch N. Mashburn".

Mitch Mashburn, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

Honorable Buffy Wicks
May 6, 2024

CC:

Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Steve Bennett, California State Assemblymember
The Honorable Bill Dodd, California State Senator
The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assemblymember
Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors
Misty Kaltreider, Water & Natural Resources Program Manager, Solano County
Paragon Government Relations
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners, Inc.