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California State Senate

SENATOR
DOUG LA MALFA
FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT



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September 1, 2011

Ms. Katherine Hart, Chair
Central Valley Regional Water Quality
Control Board
415 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 100
Redding, CA 96002

RE: City of Willows Wastewater Facility

Dear Ms. Hart and Members of the Board:

The City of Willows, located in the Fourth Senate District and the Second Assembly District, has been in contact with my office and that of Assemblymember Jim Nielsen to request assistance with a matter pertaining to the city's wastewater permit.

Only four years ago, the city invested in a new wastewater treatment facility; however, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board recently informed the city that the wastewater runoff (that is UV treated and feeds into local agricultural drains and canals) are being re-classified as a municipal and domestic water supply.

This significant policy revision essentially revokes a 20-year exemption permit that has recognized the historical treatment and use of this water supply and will require the city to upgrade its four-year old plant to a meet a much more stringent drinking water standard rather than the non-potable water standard under which the plant has been operating. The city has already increased local water fees to cover the cost of the new wastewater treatment facility, and this unnecessary regulatory burden will incur significant costs that will unnecessarily and negatively impact the residents of this small city.

At a minimum, we are requesting that the Board identify a source of funding to facilitate the study and implementation of the "Basin Plan Amendment," to identify and exempt certain agricultural drains and canals from the Board's definition of "municipal" waters. However, in light of the historical exemption provided the City of Willows, the traditional treatment and use of the water supplies in question, and the fiscal burden this re-designation will impose, we respectfully request that the Board re-evaluate and reverse the decision to impose the municipal water standard on the city and its residents. It is also worth noting that similar re-designations will also have negative impacts on the cities of Biggs, Colusa, Live Oak and Davis.

This is a matter of utmost importance to our districts, and the Board's conscientious consideration of will be appreciated.

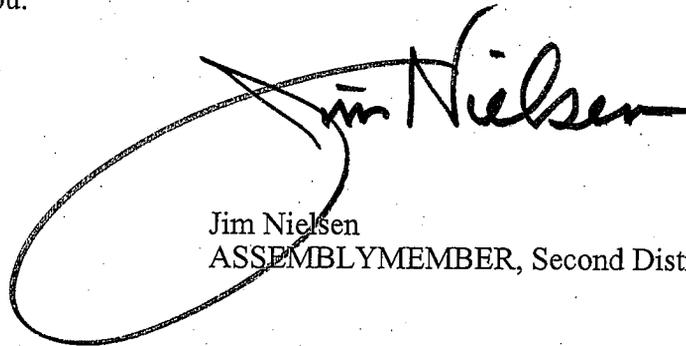
Please contact either of us at our respective Capitol offices if you would like to discuss this further.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Doug LaMalfa
SENATOR, Fourth District



Jim Nielsen
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, Second District

DL:cb