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# Assembly California Legislature



**ROGER NIELLO**  
ASSEMBLYMAN, FIFTH DISTRICT

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October 1, 2010

Katherine Hart, Chair  
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region  
11020 Sun Center Dr., Suite #200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Dear Chairwoman Hart:

This letter is in regards to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's (SRCSD) tentative permit by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) that was released in September.

As the State Assemblyman representing the communities of Northern Sacramento County and a portion of Placer County, all of my constituents would be affected by the tentative permit and the required new construction facilities at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment plant. The current estimated costs are roughly \$2.1 billion or more and homeowners, businesses, public entities would be burdened with the costs for these new facilities and their ongoing operation.

In addition, I have further concerns about the excessive filtration requirements that will not provide any measurable benefit to public health. The Regional Board nor the Department of Public Health have been able to demonstrate that there is an actual risk to recreational water users down the river from the SRCSD discharge site.

The Regional Board proposes new ammonia limits that would require the District to completely remove all ammonia from its discharge and yet credible Delta scientists are unwilling to say that the SRCSD's ammonia discharge is causing harm to the Delta or endangered fish species. At this point the Regional Board itself has acknowledged that the science is inconclusive and yet these requirements are being put on the SRCSD and its rate payers. The current requirement will cost \$782 million and yet there is no scientific support on the effects of ammonia on the Delta. In addition to the costs associated with constructing the new facilities, the regional board proposes new limits on pathogens that cannot be met without energy-intensive filtration systems.

California and the Sacramento Region are currently struggling with any number of factors and as of August 2010 current unemployment in Sacramento County is 12.8% and yet the new drafted permit would require an additional \$2.1 billion to comply with the micro-filtration and ammonia related removal. This would only further stiffen the struggling economy if residential sewer bills would see an increase from \$20 a month to \$61.75. Throughout the State of California new construction on both residential and commercial have plummeted and yet these new requirements for the Sacramento Region would mean a new residential sewer hook-up fee to go from \$7,500 to as much as \$35,000. New businesses would see their sewer hook up fees to go from \$15,000 to \$70,000 for a 1000 square food restaurant and for a 1000 dry cleaner, they would see their fees go from \$13,000 to \$60,000. These new costs would sever any hopes of new construction in the upcoming years.

Because of this impact, I oppose the drafted permit by the Regional Board for the SRCSD. I would like the Regional District to take into consideration the fiscal impacts of any requirements on the Sacramento Region, especially during these economic times. I would also encourage the Regional Board to recognize that there is no current agreement within the scientific community on the effects of the treatment facilities release or how it affects ammonia.

If I can be of any further assistance to you or if you have any additional questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me and I can be reached at 916-319-2005.

Sincerely,



ROGER NIELLO  
Assemblyman, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
RN: vmo

cc: Pamela C. Creedon  
Kathleen Cole Harder