



Media Release

State Water Board Appointee Laurel Firestone Confirmed by State Senate

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Contact: George Kostyrko
George.Kostyrko@waterboards.ca.gov

SACRAMENTO – The California State Senate has voted to confirm Laurel Firestone as a member of the State Water Resources Control Board, following her [appointment by Governor Gavin Newsom](#) earlier this year.

“It is an honor to be appointed by Governor Newsom and confirmed by the Senate to serve the people of California in this capacity.” Firestone said. “I look forward to working with partners throughout the state to ensure we live up to the promise of the human right to water, build resiliency for all throughout our water systems, and protect and enhance our natural watersheds and ecosystems in every region of the state.”

The five-member State Water Resources Control Board is responsible for protecting all water quality and water supplies in California, from source to tap. The Board is also responsible for the allocation of surface water supplies for agricultural, public trust, and urban purposes throughout the state.

Firestone fills the position on the State Water Board designated for an attorney. Appointed by Governor Newsom on Feb. 12, she was recommended for confirmation by the Senate Rules Committee on Aug. 21. Firestone’s term expires in January 2023.

Prior to joining the Board, from 2006-2019, Firestone co-founded and co-directed the Community Water Center, a statewide nonprofit environmental justice organization. Based in California’s Central Valley and Central Coast, the center helps disadvantaged communities gain access to safe, clean, and affordable drinking water and builds civic engagement and leadership to achieve the human right to water.

Firestone has received a variety of awards and recognitions, including the James Irvine Foundation’s Leadership Award in 2018 and the Gary Bellow Public Service Award by the Harvard Law School in 2013. She also received an Equal Justice Works fellowship to start the Rural Poverty Water Project in the Central Valley from 2004-06 as part of the Center for Race, Poverty and the Environment. Firestone served on the Tulare County Water Commission from 2007-2012 and co-chaired the Governor’s Drinking Water Stakeholder Group from 2012-2014.

She served on a variety of state policy advisory committees and partnered with universities to develop research and clinical programs to ensure the human right to water. In 2009, Firestone



authored the comprehensive *Guide to Community Drinking Water Advocacy* and has written a variety of articles relating to safe drinking water and the environment.

Laurel graduated with honors from Harvard Law School and holds a B.A. *magna cum laude* in Environmental Studies from Brown University. She lives in Sacramento.

For more information on State Water Resources Control Board members, go to:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/board_members/

Background on the State Water Boards

The [State Water Resources Control Board](#) and the nine [Regional Water Quality Control Boards](#) collectively known as the California Water Boards, are dedicated to a single vision: abundant clean water for human uses and environmental protection to sustain California's future. Under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and the state's pioneering Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the State and Regional Water Boards have regulatory responsibility for protecting the water quality of nearly 1.6 million acres of lakes, 1.3 million acres of bays and estuaries, 211,000 miles of rivers and streams, and about 1,100 miles of exquisite California coastline.