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State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Re: Water Conservation

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing about the recently proposed water conservation plan. I think the goal of an overall cutback of whatever percent is laudable goal. However, the plan to achieve that goal is seriously flawed and not at all fair, at least it is not fair to those of us who have conserved over the years, and who have gone without large lawns and other landscaping.

The proposed plan is obviously the easy way to mandate conservation, but I think you should spend more time to come up with a plan that is more fair to consumers, especially those of us who have already made great efforts to conserve. To punish us now is not at all a fair or equitable way to treat us. Where is there any incentive to conserve when I will be punished later with an arbitrary cutback. I could have wasted, and then, maybe, be forced to reduce my usage later. It would not hurt me at all, it would merely inconvenience me, and in the meantime I have been a less than ideal citizen. Your proposed plan would only hurt those who are already conserving. Just like punishing the innocent and letting the guilty get off with a slap on the wrist.

I would urge the following (at least for residential use), although I realize it is more difficult to implement, it is more fair: allocate a per capita amount of water to each person, giving priority to people and not to lawns. During these dry times, it is absurd to let people just pour water into the ground. Water that someone else can use to wash, cook, flush and bathe. It is completely unfair to require someone who has conserved to cut back on his/her usage by some arbitrary percentage which applies to every other user (including water wasters), no matter how much water that user is consuming. I think you should urge the local water districts and water companies to use this approach instead of the lazy person's way of an arbitrary cutback for everyone. Perhaps some combination of fixed allocation and a percentage of cutback above that.

By the way, I think you need to update your website. It seems that I cannot leave any email messages for you. Your website page (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/contact_us/index.shtml) doesn't work when you want to leave "questions or comments" and doesn't work to contact the "Webmaster" to tell him about the problem. It is almost as if you want to make it inconvenient to contact you. You have a Facebook page, but that only allow me to leave short twitter messages. Not a message such as this one. Thus this letter. I would have much preferred to send an email.

Very truly yours,
Eric Wong