Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Emergency Regulations for Statewide Urban Water Conservation. It is critical that drought-resistant and sustainable water supplies ratepayers have invested in deliver their water reliability benefits during drought conditions to support California’s economy and quality of life. I urge the State Board to adopt the modifications to the existing emergency regulation to allow water agencies to achieve state water-use targets through a combination of conservation and sustainable drinking water supplies, such as desalination, potable reuse, and long-term transfers of conserved water. The State Board has a unique opportunity to incentivize the development of sustainable water supplies -- not only for this drought -- but to better prepare California for future droughts.

The cutbacks have led to unforeseen and unplanned water rate increases, as water agencies have had to increase the unit-price of water to pay their fixed expenses. These increases have hurt low-income customers, many of whom are already some of the most water-efficient customers. We hear the refrain: “I’m using less, but am paying more!” There is little water agencies can say or do to assuage their concerns.

Dona Frosio