



**League of Women Voters
Monterey County**

September 1, 2020

Chair and Members, and Staff

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105- 2219

RE: Coastal Permit Application - California American Water Coastal Development

The League of Women Voters of Monterey County (LWVMC) in a letter to you dated October 16, 2019 urged the CA Coastal Commission (CCC) to deny the California American Water application for a Coastal Development Permit for intake slant wells and desalination infrastructure because the Pure Water Monterey Expansion (PWM X) is a vastly superior environmental alternative water supply project. By comparison with PWM X, the intake wells and desalination project shows numerous disadvantages related to environmental impacts, environmental justice, cost, and size.

Since then, the Pure Water Monterey Expansion has been under political attack by a number of its own Monterey One Board members. Their goal was to prevent the PWM X from going forward. On April 27, 2020 the Monterey One Board of Directors voted, by a one vote majority, to deny the Marina Coast Water District (MCWD) request to increase its weighted vote from 2 to 3, based on increased population. The only reasons that were given by Board opponents were that other agencies in Monterey One Water might deserve changes in their number of votes. The guidelines for changes are prescribed in their Joint Powers Agreement and the process exists for them to apply to the Board for such changes. This process was followed by Marina Coast Water District. The only other request from the Board was that the staff make a recommendation on MCWD's request prior to bringing this to a vote.

Clearly the staff must recommend in favor of MCWD or violate the JPA.

It is clear that this vote denied MCWD its appropriate representation. According to the Joint Powers Agreement forming Monterey One Water, the request from Marina Coast Water District was completely valid. The directors violated their own bylaws, as stated in the Joint Powers Agreement.

The League is extremely concerned about representation and voting rights at all levels of government. Disenfranchisement of the population, represented by Marina Coast Water District, goes against the democratic norms that govern us at the local, state and national levels.

At the same meeting, the Monterey One Board proceeded to vote to NOT certify the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the PWM X (again by a one vote majority). This vote would have failed if MCWD had its increased weighted vote. There were no valid reasons given for denial of certification. Their own experts assured the Board that the SEIR met all requirements of CEQA. In addition the Board vote against certifying the SEIR violated its own previous policies on the Expansion. Under threat of legal action, the Monterey One Board, at a later meeting, granted the MCWD request.

The Coastal Commission should be aware that these efforts against PWM X are meant to influence your vote on Cal Am's desalination project. The League urges you to deny the California American desalination project permit because PWM X is the superior project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Howard Fosler

Howard Fosler, President

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