



April 16, 2019

Honorable Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry, Chair  
 Assembly Committee on Local Government  
 1020 N Street, Room 157  
 Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: Support for AB 600**

Dear Chair Aguiar-Curry,

We write to express our strong support of AB 600, which will provide much needed basic services to California’s disadvantaged unincorporated communities by building on existing land use planning and development processes.

Hundreds of thousands of people in our state live in disadvantaged unincorporated communities. In just the San Joaquin Valley alone, there are 350,000 people living in 450 disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs)<sup>1</sup>. Many DUCs lack safe drinking water or wastewater access despite their proximity to cities and special districts that provide these services; many are even surrounded by or contiguous to medium or large cities or special districts. Of the total population of San Joaquin Valley DUCs with inadequate drinking water, 27% live within 500 feet of a city boundary; 12% live between 500 feet and one mile<sup>2</sup>. Throughout California, about one million people lack access to safe drinking water, and a similar number likely lack adequate and reliable wastewater service.

<sup>1</sup> UC Davis Center for Regional Change. 2018. “The Struggle for Water Justice in California’s San Joaquin Valley: A Focus on Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities.” (p. 8) <https://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk986/files/inline-files/The%20Struggle%20for%20Water%20Justice%20FULL%20REPORT.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

That these basic water and wastewater services are unavailable or inadequate--anywhere in the state--is a serious problem for public health, climate resilience, and social equity in California. These deficiencies and inequalities have persisted for years and will continue to persist without the commitment of local agencies to work collaboratively to solve this issue.

In 2011, SB 244 (Wolk) began the work to address this problem. It required cities and counties to identify disadvantaged unincorporated communities in their general plans, and update the elements of the plan to include this analysis. It also required Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) to assess the infrastructure needs of DUCs in municipal services reviews and annexation decisions.

SB 244 was an important first step. Now, it is time for step two.

AB 600 (Chu) will ensure that local entities provide basic services to communities that have been long neglected by state and local governments. The bill proposes that cities, special districts, and counties develop accessibility plans in collaboration with LAFCOs that will outline actionable steps to address the deficiencies and lack of services that were identified in SB 244 analyses.

As a critical follow up to SB 244, AB 600 confronts decades of under-investment in disadvantaged unincorporated communities' drinking water and wastewater systems. This bill carries forward the important work of achieving adequate, equitable services for all California residents.

We thank you for your support of this measure.

Sincerely,



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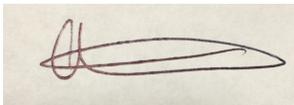
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