



August 21, 2009

Honorable Joe Simitian, Chair
State of California
Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Senate Bill SB696

Dear Senator Simitian :

The Southern California Alliance of Publicly Owned Treatment Works, or SCAP as we are commonly referred to as, is comprised of 90 public water and wastewater agencies. Our membership provides essential public services, including but not limited to, the collection and safe treatment of wastewater for over 17 million people residing in seven counties throughout Southern California. Most importantly, 47 of our member agencies are located within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and have been significantly affected by the SCAQMD's current moratorium on permit issuance from its internal offsets accounts.

Presently, many of our members are unable to proceed with necessary capital replacement and improvement projects that are essential to maintaining proper operation of their wastewater facilities, while at the same time remaining in compliance with their state and federal discharge requirements. Prime examples of these projects currently being delayed are: installation of emergency standby generators at wastewater plants and sewer lift stations, which are essential to preventing sewer spills; wastewater treatment plant expansions to meet present and future demands; replacement of older inefficient boilers at treatment plants with cleaner efficient units; installation of new digester gas flares; as well as numerous greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reducing projects mandated by AB32. Many of these projects are included in the over one thousand permit applications currently on-hold at the SCAQMD due to the existing permitting moratorium. It is estimated that the cost to purchase emission reduction credits (ERCs) on the open market for these projects will run in the tens of millions of dollars, which becomes completely unaffordable for most public agencies.

It is imperative that for the safety and welfare of the public, essential public services not be held hostage to the time constraints imposed by the legal system in dealing with the on-going Court decision. Senate Bill SB696, will provide relief to these agencies by providing a limited CEQA exemption for implementation of specific SCAQMD rules creating or providing offsets from the

P.O. Box 231565

Encinitas, CA 92024-1565

Fax: 760-479-4881 Tel: 760-479-4880 Website: www.scap1.org Email: info@scap1.org

SCAQMD's internal credit bank. Therefore, on behalf of our SCAP agencies, I respectfully request that the Senate Environmental Quality Committee support the advancement of SB696 throughout the legislative process.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter of extreme importance to our public water and wastewater agencies.

Sincerely,

John Pastore, Executive Director

cc: Richard Atwater, SCAP President