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Chair, Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee



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**Press Release**  
September 11, 2013

**Assembly Water Bond Working Group Completes Its Work on New State Water Bond**  
Leaner Cleaner Version of State Water Bond Submitted For Public Debate

Sacramento, CA – The Water Bond Working Group convened by Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez and chaired by Assembly Member Anthony Rendon has completed its initial work on rebooting the critically flawed water bond passed by the Legislature in 2009. Rendon commented:

*“I am very proud of the efforts of the Working Group. Each member dedicated a tremendous amount of time representing the priorities and concerns of their communities and constituents. We convened a very broad and public process to craft a leaner and cleaner proposal to move forward.”*

The product of the Working Group will appear in print in AB 1331, currently in the Senate, on Thursday, September 12. This initial revised bond totals \$6.5 billion and addresses Drinking Water Quality, Protecting Rivers & Watersheds, Regional Climate Change Response Projects – Integrated Regional Water Management, Protecting the Delta, and Water Storage for Climate Change.

This year, the Assembly took an entirely different approach to developing a water bond than in 2009. Instead of a last-minute, late-night, backroom deal filled with earmarked projects, the Assembly formed a diverse regional working group of members to start from scratch. Assembly Member Rich Gordon, a member of the Working Group, commented:

*“What impressed me most with the Working Group process was the time that my colleagues committed to engage in a thoughtful and frank debate about some of the most challenging water issues facing California today.”*

The other members of the Working Group included: Kevin Mullin, Susan Talamantes-Eggman, Henry Perea, Raul Bocanegra, Toni Atkins, Mike Gatto, and Wes Chesbro.

The 2013 legislative process included five public hearings (three in the Assembly; two in the Senate) over several months, six legislator briefings on water policy and funding, the development and publication of Assembly *Principles* that set priorities and emphasized accountability to the voters, three rounds of public comments, a visit to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and the publication of the *Water Bond Framework* for public review and testimony at a committee hearing. All documents have been posted on the Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee website at:

<http://awpw.assembly.ca.gov/waterbond>.

The Working Group's development of the *Principles* and the *Framework* reflected the members' diverse, regional and statewide perspectives on California's needs for water bond funding. Their discussions and visit to the Delta provided the members with valuable understanding of each other's regional water needs. Assembly Member Susan Talamantes-Eggman commented:

*"I am pleased that Chairman Rendon spent time with me and my local farmers learning about the issues and priorities of Delta communities. The product that is now in AB 1331 is a good restart on discussions about protecting the Delta and giving our communities a stronger voice in the process,"*

Members from Northern California and Southern California worked across what is commonly perceived as a regional divide on water issues to craft the *Principles*, *Framework*, and AB 1331.

*"AB 1331 contains critical investments in water infrastructure and a commitment to key efforts like water recycling and regional self-reliance. These issues are crucial to Southern California and I look forward to continue working with Chairman Rendon to deliver the best investment of bond dollars into our community,"* stated Assembly Member Raul Bocanegra from Los Angeles County

*"Working with my colleagues in the Working Group showed that we in the Assembly can craft a bond that provides funding for the most urgent needs of Californians, including the Bay Area voters who care deeply about statewide water resource issues."* stated Assembly Member Kevin Mullin from the San Francisco Bay Area

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) states that competition for water has become intense and the state has run out of cheap "new" water sources for the urban and agricultural needs of a growing state. PPIC also points to the increased costs of drinking water treatment, risks to public health, lower crop yields, and harm to aquatic ecosystems that need to be addressed by the state. The last time California voters approved a water bond was with Proposition 84 in 2006. Furthermore, PPIC notes that the elaborate 20<sup>th</sup> century water supply and flood control system that was the cornerstone of California's economic success is no longer adequate to satisfy the current and future demands of the state.

Lastly, the state's policy and infrastructure was designed prior to the tectonic shifts in global climate change. PPIC states a "more volatile climate now appears to be the norm, with an increasing frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, extreme high tides, and heat waves." The impact of climate change on the state's snow pack and the resulting change in flow and storage forces us to address these challenges NOW.

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