SENATOR JOEL ANDERSON
THIRTY-SIXTH SENATE DISTRICT

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Senate Bill 962 – Access to Safe Drinking Water

SUMMARY

Senate Bill 962 is a compassionate and environmentally-conscious measure to maximize delivery of safe drinking water to more people.

ISSUE

The Department of Public Health is placed in charge of regulating public water systems and adopts regulations as needed. Authorized by the California Safe Drinking Water Act, those regulations, according to Legislative Counsel, “include requirements governing the use of point-of-entry and point-of-use treatment by public water systems in lieu of centralized treatment, where feasible.”

Access to clean drinking water is a neglected priority in California, so to confront that reality, the law has recently been changed to allow development of emergency regulations by the Department of Public Health. While those emergency regulations — governing the permitted use of point-of-entry and point-of-use treatment by public water systems — have been adopted, the effect is yet to be fully felt. In fact, the regulations have been found to effectively exclude some communities who should qualify for some help but through no fault of their own are unfairly excluded. Unfortunately, for them — small communities whose need exceeds 200 service connections — this basic thirst of clean drinking water still remains.

SOLUTION

Access to safe drinking water in California’s small, unincorporated communities is vital. This legislation will allow approved point-of-entry or point-of-use water treatment devices to be employed in communities of up to 2,500 connections when a centralized treatment plant is not economically feasible.

The Water Quality Association found in a recent survey, “More than half of Americans say they have concerns about the quality of their water as more people become educated about specific contaminants and take action in their homes.”

It further reported:

• A quarter of consumers are “extremely concerned” about the quality of their water supply, and only 45% say they are confident their water source poses no health risk.

• A majority of consumers are now willing to pay more for the elimination of contaminants such as pharmaceuticals. In previous surveys, less than 50% expressed this opinion.

• Nearly a quarter of consumers say they have primary responsibility in their home for quality water, up from 20 percent in 2008.

“About one-fifth (19%) of respondents were exposed to ‘boil water alerts.’ This prompted them to purchase a water filtration device. Typically, a water filter pitcher or end-of-tap device was purchased. More than half of those exposed to boil water alerts purchased home filtration devices afterward, higher than the 38% who said they did so in 2008.
“The New York Times ran a series of articles entitled ‘Toxic Waters.’ The newspaper reported that 10 percent of Americans ‘have been exposed to drinking water that contains dangerous chemicals or fails to meet a federal health benchmark in other ways.’”

And, the Obama Administration has been active on the issue. The same report indicated that “(i)n 2010, the President’s Panel on Cancer recommended that people use home filtering devices to decrease exposure to cancer-causing agents.”

**SUPPORT**

Support for Senate Bill 877, the key provisions of which are included in this bill:

- Water Quality Association (co-sponsor)
- Pacific Water Quality Association (co-sponsor)
- Association of California Water Agencies
- Lambert Water Conditioning Inc.
- ResinTech
- Water Techniques
- Pentair Residential Filtration, LLC
- Performance Water Products Inc.
- Systematix
- TST Water
- Atlantic Ultraviolet Corporation
- Culligan/Stainless
- Atlantic Filter Corporation
- Quality Home Services
- Thermax Inc
- Eversoft
- Rayne Water Conditioning
- Southern Water Services
- Boncor Water Systems
- Pionetics Corporation
- Quality Home Services
- Culligan Water Conditioning
- President Charles Judson, Weeks Drilling & Pump Co.
- California Groundwater Association
- Puronics
- Water, Inc.
- Watts Water Quality
- Precision Installation Products, Inc.

**CONTACT**

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