

TO: Hon. Sheila Kuehl, Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Janice Hahn, Chair Pro Tem, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor, First District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor, Second District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Kathryn Barger, Supervisor, Fifth District, Los Angeles County
Mark Pestrella, Director of Public Works, Los Angeles County

Date: May 23, 2018

RE: Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program

Dear Board of Supervisors,

As you deliberate on the Safe Clean Water Program and consider a funding mechanism to address stormwater capture, treatment and community benefits, we the undersigned elected school board members and trustees from across Los Angeles County want to provide you with our input on this subject. In our work as elected school board members, our first and primary responsibility is to our school children and young adults to ensure that we are preparing them for a bright future in our county. We care deeply about our communities and share your values when it comes to making sure that Angelenos are well-educated, can secure living wage jobs and live in communities that are vibrant and sustainable.

Los Angeles County voters have long supported funding measures which help support those objectives as evidenced by the many school bonds and county taxes for transportation, housing and parks, particularly those passed in late 2016 and early 2017. We are now at another crossroads where we hope to address water quality and supply for our region. We support the overall goals of the proposed measure which as stated in your motion of May 17, 2017: “Develop an Expenditure Plan that will determine an appropriate parcel tax to implement stormwater projects and programs, with emphasis on projects providing multiple benefits that increase water supply, improve water quality, and provide community enhancements such as the **greening of schools [emphasis added]**, parks and wetlands, and increased public access to rivers, lakes and streams.....”

As your motion suggests, school properties across the County provide some of the most effective sites for nature-based solutions to achieve stormwater capture, treatment and infiltration using natural solutions. It is also expected that very shortly schools across the state will be subject to the MS4 permit. Therefore, it is in all our interests to ensure that, as you contemplate a funding mechanism, the role of schools in our county must be a significant consideration. For these reasons, we are surprised that we have not been contacted to engage in these discussions, particularly as members of the recently established Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

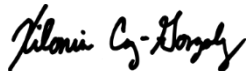
Some of the issues that are prominent for us are:

- Governance: School districts must be represented on all decision-making bodies including those focused on both regional and county-wide projects.
- Education: As pollution prevention education is key component to improving future water quality, we recommend a significant allocation for a Water Resiliency education program with an emphasis on low-income communities of color.
- Workforce training: Investment in high school to community college training for green jobs is a critical component to ensuring a prepared workforce.

As evidenced by the broad range of signatories on this letter, we would like to assure you that we are very supportive of addressing our future supply of safe, clean water, and we hope that you will accommodate our very reasonable requests.

We also welcome the opportunity to discuss these items with you further. Please feel free to contact us through our steering committee so that we may engage in a meaningful dialogue to ensure that, as this program is developed, it includes a key partner in stormwater capture solutions – school districts throughout the Los Angeles County region.

Sincerely,



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Board Vice-President, Azusa Unified School District*
Schools for Safe and Clean Water Steering Committee

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Board Member, El Monte Union High School District*
Schools for Safe and Clean Water Steering Committee

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CC: Safe, Clean Water Program Stakeholder Advisory Committee
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Russ Bryden, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
Leslie Friedman Johnson, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
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