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# California State Senate

SENATOR  
**BRIAN DAHLE**  
FIRST SENATE DISTRICT



VICE CHAIR  
ENERGY, UTILITIES  
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BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW  
SUBCOMMITTEE #2 ON  
RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION, & ENERGY  
GOVERNANCE & FINANCE  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
& WATER  
TRANSPORTATION

September 28, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Request for Veto of AB 779 (Wilson)**

Dear Governor Newsom:

I respectfully request your veto of Assembly Bill 779 (Wilson), which makes various changes to the groundwater adjudication process.

Groundwater proceedings are already very complex and expensive and this bill would only exacerbate those issues. Specifically, AB 779 would allow the court to refer the matter to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for investigation and report on the case. The Board is not properly prepared or equipped to handle groundwater adjudication proceedings and it does not have the authority to impose physical solutions to the adjudication. Involving the SWRCB will only increase the costs and further delay the resolution of the issues at hand.

Additionally, this bill expands the role of groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) by requiring that they publicly display all material orders related to the case. AB 779 also requires that the GSA hosts public meetings to explain the adjudication process and the status of those proceedings. Oftentimes, GSAs are a party to the adjudication so requiring them to also serve in a role that should be reserved for an impartial party, is misguided. Existing law already permits each party to participate in the proceedings and to obtain information from the courts. These duplicative provisions are not necessary and only add to the complexity of an already complex and expensive process.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your veto of this measure.

Sincerely,

*Brian Dahle*

Brian Dahle, Senator  
1<sup>st</sup> Senate District