**[Copy and paste into agency/organization letterhead]**

[DATE]

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia

California Assembly

State Capitol, Room 4140

Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kevin Mullin

California Assembly

State Capitol, Room 3160

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1500 (E. Garcia, Mullin)**

Dear Assembly Members Garcia and Mullin,

The [your agency or organization] thanks you for your leadership in drafting AB 1500, the *Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparation, Flood Protection, Extreme Heat Mitigation, and Workforce Development Bond Act of 2022*. This bill will help our local and regional communities build resilience and confront the water resource challenges we face.

[Short paragraph describing your organization. It may include the following information as it is relevant to your circumstances: type of organization (water agency, public agency, non-profit, etc.), geographic location, number of customers served, role in water management (retailer/wholesaler), and activities involved in such as drinking water, stormwater, groundwater, water reuse, etc. If this letter is being sent by a member of an IRWM Region, reference the name of the IRWM Region. Include any other compelling information such as high percent of DACs, number of Tribes, etc. Adding the amount of grant funds received, local matching funds provided, and number and type of projects implemented with IRWM grant funds to date will be extremely effective.]

Although we appreciate the inclusion of water resource funding in AB 1500, we are concerned about the lack of funding for regional and inter-regional projects funded through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program. We are strong supporters of the IRWM Program’s creative framework and approach, and request its inclusion in AB 1500,

IRWM provides a stakeholder-driven structure that comprises local project planning and prioritization, and resource-based management. It has been field-tested for almost two decades and has an established record of success in locations stretching from the North Coast to San Diego. This innovative planning and grant program promotes participation in water resource management planning by Native American Tribes, economically disadvantaged communities and all interested stakeholders in our local communities. The resulting trust and collaborative relationships have forever changed regional decision making.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you add language and funding in AB 1500 equivalent to that included in Proposition 1 (2014), and to similar requests from the Water Bond Coalition, the IRWM Roundtable of Regions and other groups across the state, as follows:

*Of the funds made available by this section, five hundred ten million dollars ($510,000,000) shall be available to the Department of Water Resources for direct expenditures and competitive grants for local, regional, and inter-regional projects that increase water resilience to climate change. Priority shall be given to projects that are included in an adopted integrated regional water management plan that includes climate vulnerability assessments. Up to 10% of these funds may be used for planning purposes. A minimum of 10 percent of the funds will be designated for implementation projects that benefit disadvantaged communities (under-represented communities) or Tribes that either are federally recognized or listed on the Native American Heritage Commission’s Tribal Consultation list.*

We also request you add “*IRWM planning regions accepted by DWR*” to the list of eligible applicants identified in AB 1500. This ensures existing planning regions will be able to apply for and receive funding from all sections of the ultimate bond measure.

Because many vulnerable communities are excluded from funding when CalEnviroScreen or median household income is used to define disadvantaged communities, we also request that you replace the term “disadvantaged communities” with the more inclusive “under-represented communities,” which is defined as follows in the Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management Program Proposal Solicitation Package (2020):

*Under-represented communities encompass all under-resourced groups historically excluded from regional water planning: Disadvantaged Community,  Severely Disadvantaged Community, Economically Distressed Area, Tribal Lands/Tribes, Environmentally Disadvantaged Communities and Fringe Communities.*

As climate resilience bonds evolve to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, we look forward to working with you to ensure continued investment to keep our watersheds healthy; provide clean, reliable, and affordable water supplies; and help communities become resilient against the effects of climate change.

The [your agency or organization] appreciates your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions or would like any clarifications on our recommendations, please contact me at [phone number, email address, or both].

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Agency or Organization]

Attachment: [Your Region] Fact Sheet

cc: Luz Rivas, Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee

Pablo Garza, Chief Consultant, Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, CA State Assembly

Your agency’s or organization’s legislative delegation.

Julia Hall, ACWA

Lisa Renton, Water Bond Coalition

Jodie Monaghan, Network Coordinator, Roundtable of Regions