



ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Agenda Report

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File #: 2025-4138

Agenda Date: 4/9/2025

Agenda Item No: 6.

FROM: Robert Thompson, General Manager
Originator: Jennifer Cabral, Director of Communications

SUBJECT:

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2025

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend to the Board of Directors to:

Receive and file the Legislative Affairs Update for the month of March 2025.

BACKGROUND

The Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) legislative affairs program includes advocating for OC San's legislative interests; sponsoring legislation (where appropriate); and seeking local, state, and federal funding for projects and programs.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

- Maintain influential legislative advocacy and a public outreach program
- Build brand, trust, and support with policy makers and community leaders
- Maintain collaborative and cooperative relationships with regulators, stakeholders, and neighboring communities

PROBLEM

Without a strong advocacy program, elected officials may not be aware of OC San's mission, programs, and projects and how they could be impacted by proposed legislation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Continue to work with local, state, and federal officials to advocate for OC San's legislative interests. Help to create and monitor legislation and grants that would benefit OC San, the wastewater industry, and the community. To assist in relationship building efforts, OC San will continue to reach out to elected officials through facility tours, one-on-one meetings, and trips to Washington D.C. and Sacramento.

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

If OC San does not work with Local, State, and Federal elected officials, legislation could be passed that negatively affects OC San and the wastewater industry. Additionally, a lack of engagement may result in missed funding opportunities.

PRIOR COMMITTEE/BOARD ACTION

November 2024 - Adopted the Orange County Sanitation District 2025 Legislative and Regulatory Plan.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activities in March:

Positions Taken:

Through the guidance of the Board of Directors and as laid out in the Board-approved Legislative and Regulatory Plan, OC San has taken the following positions:

Assembly Bill (AB) 339 (Ortega) - Oppose

This bill proposes amendments to Government Code 3505 which would increase notice requirements for local public employee organizations.

The requirement for a 120-day notice before issuing requests for proposals, contract extensions or renewals, and quotes appears excessively stringent. Public agencies operate in dynamic environments where flexibility is crucial; such an extended notice period could lead to administrative inefficiencies and delays in service implementational.

Assembly Bill (AB) 370 (Carrillo) - Support

This bill extends the timeline for local jurisdictions to respond to a Public Records Act (PRA) request if they are actively experiencing a cyberattack.

AB 370 broadens the definition of "unusual circumstances" to include situations where an agency is unable to access its electronic servers or systems due to a cyberattack, preventing it from searching for and retrieving electronically stored records that may be responsive to a request. The extension granted under these circumstances would remain in effect only until the agency regains full access to its electronic systems and is able to conduct the necessary search and record retrieval.

Senate Bill (SB) 317 (Hurtado) - Support

SB 317 would require each county to establish and maintain at least one wastewater surveillance site to monitor for pathogens and public health indicators and include state reimbursement for costs mandated by this initiative.

Expanding the California Surveillance of Wastewaters network, which OC San is a current partner of, to include all counties, ensures that communities benefit from critical early warning systems.

The sharing of wastewater surveillance data with healthcare providers, as proposed in this bill, would allow for timely intervention, reducing the burden of disease outbreaks and improving public health outcomes when diseases are detected.

CASA Co-Sponsored Joint Coalition Letter Senate Bill (SB) 682 (Allen): Support

OC San has joined a coalition letter, co-sponsored by CASA, in support of SB 682. This legislation aims to ban non-essential uses of PFAS in consumer products, thereby reducing their presence in water, wastewater, and waste management systems. By addressing PFAS at their source, SB 682 aligns with OC San's commitment to environmental protection and public health.

Activities in April:**Sacramento Advocacy Day**

On April 8, Board Chairman Ryan Gallagher, General Manager Rob Thompson, OC San staff member Rebecca Long, and OC San lobbyist will be going to Sacramento for an Advocacy Day to meet with Legislators to discuss current legislation and funding opportunities for OC San's current and future projects. The meetings will include OC San's Orange County Delegation. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss various bills, including but not limited to: SB 682 (Allen), SB 317 (Hurtado), AB 794 (Gabriel), and AB 339 (Ortega).

CEQA

N/A

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

All items mentioned are included in OC San's FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 Budget.

ATTACHMENT

The following attachment(s) may be viewed on-line at the OC San website (www.ocsan.gov) with the complete agenda package:

- Federal Legislative Update
- Federal Matrix
- State Legislative Update
- State Matrix
- Local Legislative Update
- Assembly Bill (AB) 339 (Ortega) - Letter of Opposition
- Assembly Bill (AB) 370 (Carrillo) - Letter of Support
- Senate Bill (SB) 317 (Hurtado) - Letter of Support
- Senate Bill (SB) 682 CASA Joint Support Letter
- Presentation