



LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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Agenda Report

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Agenda Item No: 11.

FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager

SUBJECT:

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2021

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Legislative Affairs Update for the month of March 2021.

BACKGROUND

The Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) legislative affairs program includes advocating OC San's legislative interests; sponsoring legislation (where appropriate); and seeking Local, State, and Federal funding for projects and programs. Staff will provide an update on recent legislative and grant activities.

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 OC San's legislative interests. Help to create/monitor legislation and grants that would benefit OC San, the wastewater industry, and the community as a whole. To assist in our relationship building activities, we will continue to reach out to our elected officials providing facility tours, one-on-one meetings, and trips to Washington D.C. and Sacramento.

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **OC San Visits Washington, D.C. Virtually for Annual Advocacy Day**
As part of our legislative outreach program, OC San's Board Chairman Dave Shawver and Vice-Chairman John Withers hosted, for the first-time ever, virtual Advocacy Day meetings on March 29 - April 7, during which current legislation, regulatory affairs, infrastructure, and funding opportunities was discussed with the Orange County Congressional Delegation.
- **Governor Signs Legislation for Supplemental Paid Sick Leave for Workers**
On March 19, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 95 by Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkley) which creates uniform, statewide policy to ensure employees have access to COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave as of March 29, 2021 through September 30, 2021 retroactive to January 1, 2021. Staff has provided the legally required notice to employees and are ensuring compliance with the new law.
- **American Rescue Plan**
On March 11, the President signed the American Rescue Plan into law providing for \$1.9 trillion in COVID-19 assistance to the public and private sectors. It is the largest congressional funding bill to date and delivers benefits to OC San and its member cities and agencies.
- **Community Funding Requests**
Last month, the House Committee on Appropriations unveiled the new process that will be relied upon for directed federal spending to specific projects, including water and wastewater projects. As such, staff and ENS have entered in project requests to the OC Congressional Delegation and will continue to work with the Delegation and monitor the requests and possible funding opportunities.
- **Governor Holds the State of the State**
The State of the State address was held on March 9 and reviewed the State's priorities and goals. Staff and our State legislative consultants will continue to go through the priorities and goals to identify and understand funding and/or impact to the wastewater industry, if any.

ATTACHMENT

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

- Federal Update - ENS Resources
- Federal Legislative Matrix - ENS Resources
- State Update - Townsend Public Affairs
- State Legislative Matrix - Townsend Public Affairs
- Grant Matrix
- Presentations