

Orange County Sanitation District

10844 Ellis Avenue, Fountain Valley, CA 92708
714.962.2411 | www.ocsd.com

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Villa Park
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Costa Mesa
Sanitary District
Midway City
Sanitary District
Irvine Ranch
Water District
Yorba Linda
Water District

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Fourth Coronavirus Response Legislation

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD) located in Orange County, California writes to support the House passage of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, H.R. 6800 (HEROES). OCSD would like to request that when the Senate considers the HEROES Act that provisions to support local agencies, including Special Districts, are included in any final compromise.

OCSD is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County. OCSD is a special district that is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors comprised of 20 cities, four special districts, and one representative from the Orange County Board of Supervisors. OCSD has two operating facilities that treat wastewater from residential, commercial, and industrial sources.

We appreciate your past support of emergency spending to address COVID-19 and today we write to urge swift Senate passage of the fourth package of assistance. When the Senate considers HEROES, we seek your leadership to amend the bill to provide direct federal assistance to Special Districts. Also, we ask that you include water and wastewater sector employees as essential workers under the HEROES Fund.

Below we describe the elements that OCSD believes need to be included in the final HEROES Act:

Special District Eligibility for Direct Assistance: The CARES Act, established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (Fund) to deliver financial assistance to states and local governments. It did not extend such financial support to Special Districts. The absence of citing "political subdivisions of a state" within the definition excluded Special Districts from receiving federal assistance. This circumstance shuts out a substantial portion of the public sector that provides critical public health services. In California, many of our largest wastewater providers are Special Districts and are the sole source of this important public health service to tens of millions of Californians. HEROES, as passed by the House, failed to include a definition to allow such public entities with vital assistance. We request that you clarify this eligibility inequity in the Senate, by providing Special Districts with a dedicated funding assistance set-aside in HEROES.

Our Mission: To protect public health and the environment by providing effective wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling





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Equal Tax Treatment: OCSD supports HEROES provision of payroll tax credits to the public sector to help offset mandatory paid sick, medical and family leave. The simple extension of the current CARES Act tax credit provided to the private sector would remedy an important equity issue.

Summary: The next phase of federal assistance must, at a minimum, provide for the following forms of assistance:

- Provide Special Districts with their own funding set-aside to support the critical public health services that communities rely upon during this crisis;
- Extend payroll tax credits eligibility to the public sector for purposes of mandatory paid sick, medical and family leave.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Cabral, OCSD's Administration Manager at (714) 593-7581 or via email at jcabral@ocsd.com should you have any questions. Thank you for your continued support of the Orange County Sanitation District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'David John Shawver'.

David John Shawver
Board Chairman

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Yorba Linda
Water District

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Kamala Harris
U.S. Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Fourth Coronavirus Response Legislation

Dear Senator Harris:

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David John Shawver
Board Chairman

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