

Agenda Report

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FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager

SUBJECT:

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY/AUGUST 2021

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Legislative Affairs Update for the month of July and August 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

In response to the pandemic, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order granting boards and agencies modified Brown Act requirements. After a previous extension of the original order, it is scheduled to expire September 30, 2021. The surge in cases resulting from the Delta Variant highlights the need for the continuation of Brown Act flexibility. As of now, there are two avenues to pursue an extension:

- A new gubernatorial executive order or a re-extension of the existing executive order; or
- The passage of legislation such as AB 361 (Rivas) which, if passed, would grant local agencies approval to transition to remote meetings under modified Brown Act requirements without having to rely on a gubernatorial executive order. AB 361 is in the final stretch of the legislative process, requiring consideration from the Senate.

On April 12, 2021, OC San submitted a letter of support for Assembly Bill (AB) 361.

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