

Water Rates & Fees, Water Affordability

- Support local rate-setting authority and cost-based water rates compliant with California's Constitution, including Articles X, XIII C (Proposition 26) and XIII D (Proposition 218)
- Support the "2/3 vote" needed from the legislature and voters to approve new levies; oppose "Split Roll" changes to Proposition 13
- Support water rates proportionality, rate/taxpayer protections, transparent rate-setting
- Support rates that provide a strong price signal for water use efficiency and conservation
- Support the "Expenditures Per Capita" metric -- which accounts for the full, true cost of water -- as superior to comparing water rates alone for measuring water affordability
- Support voluntary, locally administered or externally funded water rate assistance programs; oppose a state tax on water bills and one-size-fits-all affordability mandates

Water Abundance: Infrastructure Investment & Supply Development

- Support seawater and brackish desalination in California and more favorable permitting conditions for desal projects, as well as grant funding for such, especially for the Local SIP
- Support statewide water infrastructure improvements, investments and the development of cost-effective, environmentally-sensitive sources of water, and efforts to expedite and streamline the permitting for such
- Support the "Beneficiaries Pay" principle for funding water supply projects, including water banking/storage and exchange/transfer programs, with full cost recovery at a minimum
- Support grant funding for special districts' water projects, prioritized primarily to local and regional benefits, and secondarily to statewide and Lower Basin State benefits; oppose efforts to design grant funding opportunities to favor any specific water rate structure
- Support efforts by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MET) to ensure that the CA Delta and CO River systems remain reliable water sources for the region

Water Quality, Infrastructure & Source Protection

- Support tap water standards and treatment mandates that are science-based, technically practical, and economically feasible based on a consistent, objective cost/benefit analysis
- Support protections for public water systems from PFAS liability under CERCLA, and application of the "Polluter Pays" principle
- Support efforts to safeguard water sources and secure water infrastructure from threats, including cybersecurity, fleet flexibility, fuel/power availability and supply chain reliability
- Support penalties for water theft and for actions that harm water infrastructure or supplies
- Support wildfire risk mitigation for California's headwaters and forests, wildfire risk reduction for public water agencies in or near a Wildland Urban Interface, and funding for headwaters and forest management

2026 Policy Platforms & Positions

Updated: January 28, 2026

Groundwater: Management of the Orange County Groundwater Basin (Basin)

- Support the Orange County Water District (OCWD) groundwater quality protection programs and Basin management programs; support OCWD's financial strength
- Support raising and stabilizing the Basin Pumping Percentage (BPP), with a minimum of 80%, and a long-term target of 100%
- Support OCWD keeping the Basin full through Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) production, stormwater capture and wastewater reliability
- Support annexations into OCWD that are financially neutral; oppose Basin adjudication

Governance: Fiscal Stewardship, Local Control, Transparency & Accountability

- Support protection of special district revenue sources and reserves to ensure financial stability and strength, operational sustainability, and perpetual infrastructure investment
- Support recognition of special districts in federal law for grant funding equity, and support special districts' access to financing and investment opportunities; oppose limits on public water agencies' capacity, connection and development impact fees
- Support local control, representative governance and current Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) protest thresholds; oppose cumulative or ranked-choice voting mandates for special districts
- Oppose the encroachment of Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) easements, rights-of-way and property without negotiation, agreed upon compensation, and advance approval at Mesa Water's sole discretion
- Support balanced public records, ADA accessibility, open meeting requirements, and remote meeting flexibility and government transparency without unfunded mandates; oppose unfunded mandates that delay or impair essential public utility operations

Water Use Efficiency & Conservation

- Support indoor, irrigation, commercial, industrial and institutional water use that is both efficient and sufficient for protecting public health, landscapes and economic vitality
- Support water use efficiency requirements that recognize local conditions, investments and drought-resilient supplies; oppose water conservation mandates that strand assets and oppose one-size-fits-all water conservation regulations, including the *Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life* regulation
- Support tax exemptions for water conservation rebates

Water Education, Workforce Development & Regional Collaboration

- Support grant funding for water outreach and education programs -- such as the Mesa Water Education Center (MVEC) -- that provide academic, community, economic and workforce development benefits
- Support increased influence at MET, including coordination of the entire Orange County MET delegation, and increased allocations of Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) resources for engagement at MET