



# COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

*Established in 1918 as a public agency*

GENERAL MANAGER

Jim Barrett

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Robert Cheng

CLERK OF THE BOARD

Sylvia Bermudez

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Dan Charlton

May 29, 2024

## ***VIA EMAIL***

The Honorable Raul Ruiz  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2342 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Ruiz:

### **RE: Letter of Support – H.R. 7525, “Special District Grant Accessibility Act”**

On behalf of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), I write today to thank you for your co-sponsorship of H.R. 7525, the *Special District Grant Accessibility Act*. This bipartisan legislation would codify a federal definition of a “special district” unit of local government—to include public water and wastewater utilities such as CVWD—and would recognize special districts as local governments eligible to receive federal assistance. On March 7, 2024, the U.S. House Oversight and Accountability Committee overwhelmingly approved the legislation, in a bipartisan 38-2 vote. The legislation passed the House of Representatives and will head to the Senate.

Established in 1918, CVWD was formed with the core mission of safeguarding and preserving water resources, primarily for agricultural irrigation purposes. Over the years, CVWD has evolved into a multifaceted agency serving a vast area of approximately 1,000 square miles, stretching from the San Geronio Pass to the Salton Sea, predominantly within Riverside County but also including portions of Imperial and San Diego counties. Today, CVWD offers a wide array of water-related services, including delivering irrigation and drinking water, groundwater replenishment, storm water protection, wastewater treatment and recycling, and promoting water conservation.

As you know, special districts are local governments created by a community to deliver specialized essential services which another unit of government is not otherwise providing. These include services consistent with CVWD’s mission of ensuring a safe and resilient water supply for municipal, industrial, and agricultural use, and collecting wastewater to ensure a clean and safe discharge, or facilitate wastewater recycling. In California, there are over 1,200 public water districts and agencies, most governed by elected or appointed officials, and operated by professional staff members—including CVWD.

The Honorable Raul Ruiz  
U.S. House of Representatives  
May 29, 2024  
Page 2

Federal law currently lacks a consistent definition for special purpose units of local government. Accordingly, communities served by these districts sometimes encounter challenges accessing federal funding opportunities. This legislation would establish parity and ensure special districts have the same access to federal resources as other units of local government.

Thank you again for your support of this important and bipartisan legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. M. Barrett", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

J. M. Barrett  
General Manager