Board Report

TO: Jason Gianquinto, GM, Semitropic Board
FR: Dean Florez, Balance Public Relations (BPR)
RE: Monthly Report October 2026
DATE: November 1, 2026

Governor Becerra

As anticipated, Democrat Xavier Becerra has a commanding lead capturing over close to 64 percent of all ballots counted thus far moving closer to officially becoming the state's 41st Governor of California. After what's been described as a lackluster and plodding campaign where he emerged out of an eclectic pack of 23 candidates, following the implosion of former Congressman Eric Swalwell's campaign, to become the leading candidate, Becerra's rise can't be credited to any one interest source. He's not the fill in the blank candidate – labor, teachers, chamber of commerce, technology. These normal heavy state influencers haven't necessarily laid claimed to Becerra's inevitable win as a victory for their side of the political spectrum.

At its core, Becerra simply seemed experienced having served in Congress, as attorney general and Secretary of Health and Human Services, and competent, in lacking any real professional or personal scandals. This means that Becerra does not enter office with any particular mandate. Throughout his run, he has proposed mostly incremental changes to existing state policies and has not made mention of any particular viewpoint around water.

Politically plain-speaking, Becerra is boring. At issue is whether his style will produce results operating with a heavily lopsided Democratic majority legislature that has been slowly drifting further to the left – and likely to speed up with the expectation that the green light has turned brighter with the enormous Democratic turnout in the general election – tussling with the legislature will ultimately be Becerra's true test at governing.

Becerra will undoubtedly face headwinds on immediate issues surrounding the state's budget and the impact from the looming federal cuts to social services that will start to kick in at the start of his term. It's likely that he'll soon have to say "no" just days into office to the many people and interests who are already lining up hat in hand as he must send his first state budget proposal to the Legislature by January 10, just six days after taking office.

The outstanding question is whether he'll seize the opportunity to show a particular leadership style or whether he'll simply kick the can down the road until the May Revision. Not having any

particular political benefactor claiming his victory also means that those powerful interests can easily pivot to attack mode when the going gets tough – in other words, who's going to defend Becerra when he's on the political ropes? It's a situation worth keeping an eye on – if policies line up, an early friendship could go a long way later in the year.

In terms of water policy, as mentioned, Becerra's campaign ascribed to generalizations on policies during his run and the press never pressed him for more. He has generally stated that as governor, he plans on bringing stakeholders to the table to modernize the state's water infrastructure and guarantee safe, affordable drinking water. In terms of groundwater, Becerra has publicly taken the position that rules and guidance are necessary in the management of groundwater but that doesn't mean that they are set in stone and can be adjusted if necessary.

We'll have to continue to monitor the Becerra administration as he begins to assemble and select cabinet secretaries and fill high level staff positions.

Insurance Commissioner?

The other statewide office of consequence to keep an eye on is the state's Insurance Commissioner which has dueling Democrats in the fight to lead the Department of Insurance following the terming-out of two term Commissioner Ricardo Lara. Former San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim currently is in the lead to run the nation's largest state consumer protection agency which oversees 1,600 insurance companies and more than 520,000 agents, brokers, adjusters, bail agents and businesses.

Outside of the governorship, the Department has the most influence over the daily lives of Californians regulating home, car, health, life, and car insurance. It also importantly regulates worker's compensation insurance. And it further regulates ride-hailing companies and Medicare supplement – Medigap – insurance.

At its core the commissioner has the final say over rate increase proposals on home and small business property insurance rates which insurance companies must file with the commissioner justifying any increases. The greatest challenge for the incoming commissioner is the increased rate of coverage denials for homeowners that is resulting in a likewise increase in the number of those needing coverage by the state California Fair Access to Insurance Requirement Plan, better known as the FAIR Plan which makes up the last resort fire insurance pool. The plan currently insures 686,000 residents.

In a nutshell, the biggest difference between the candidates is Kim's plan to create a public wildfire insurer that critics point out could cost homeowners and possibly tax payers. The plan would include a two-part wildfire premium that would be collected by private insurers and sent to the state to administer plus a small, capped share that every homeowner in the state would contribute to in order to cover bad wildfire seasons.

Unlike Kim's proposal to essentially create a single-payer style system for major catastrophes, former State Senator Ben Allen focused his campaign toward improving the mechanics of the

current system by speeding up reviews of insurer rate applications, creating a business office to attract more carriers to the state and work with state and local governments to design programs that reduce fire risk of individual properties at the neighborhood and community level.

Taxes

Voters were somewhat split on taxes on the ballot. After mostly billionaires spent nearly ten to one against Proposition 40 the Billionaire tax hike ($368 million against vs $36 million for), the measure is failing by 800K votes. Proposition 41, a measure that would have undercut the effects of the Billionaire's tax if it passes is also losing by 400K votes. Proposition 42, also put on the ballot to counter the Billionaire tax if it passed, which limits personal and property taxes is winning by 600K votes. The rejection of Proposition 40 doesn't necessarily indicate a new anti-tax mood among voters, especially in light of Proposition 3 winning which makes permanent a higher income tax rate on the wealthy that funds education leading by over 1 million votes. The rejection of the Billionaire tax and the support for maintaining the higher income tax bracket in Proposition 3 is likely because of the differing foundations of the levies – the Billionaire tax is a new kind of tax applied to all assets, while Proposition 3 applies to existing income which voters are more accustomed to

The last part of the tax puzzle is the rejection of Proposition 43 that aimed to raise the vote threshold from citizen-proposed local special taxes from a simple majority vote to a two-third voter approval. It is losing by 700K votes.

New Faces in the State Legislature

The Democratic advantage in the State Legislature significantly expanded. While we have to wait for the official vote count to be complete, preliminarily it looks like there will only be 16 Republicans in the 80-member state Assembly, with Republicans having lost 4 incumbent seats: Josh Hoover 7th AD down by 4K votes; Jeff Gonzalez 36th AD down by 10K votes; Greg Wallis 47th AD down by 13K votes; and Leticia Castillo 58th AD down by 29K votes. Three out of the 16 Republican seats are still influx with incumbent Tri Ta 70th AD up by 2K votes; Laurie Davies 74th AD up by 580 votes; and open Republican seat candidate Gracey Van Der Mark AD 72 up by 2,500 votes over her Democratic rival. These seats could be further compromised for Republicans depending on late ballots which often tend to move toward a Democrats advantage.

The state Senate lost one Republican seat where Democrat Mara Elliot is up by 12K votes in former Republican Senator Brian Jone's seat that he vacated because of term limits. Also attracting attention is the 36th Senate District when incumbent and long-time politician Senator Tony Strickland is down by 1,000 votes to Democrat Chris Duncan. Republicans will only have 9 seats in the 40-member senate chamber if Strickland can hold on.

Bill List

AB 35 – Alvarez – Proposition 4: Administrative Procedure Act
Speeds up funding for Proposition 4 climate projects by 12-18 months by exempting funds from the Administrative Procedure Act if the state entity develops draft solicitation and evaluation guidelines and submits final guidelines to the Secretary of Natural Resources. Position**:**
SUPPORT

Assembly Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 13-0-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass - 15-0-0; Assembly Floor – 76-0-4
Senate Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Floor – Pass – 36-0-4
Assembly Concurrence in Senate Amendments – Pass – 68-0-11
Chapter 89, Statutes of 2026

~~**AB 259 –** Rubio - Open meetings: local agencies: teleconferences.~~
Extends to January 1, 2030, alternative teleconferencing procedures for legislative bodies of a local agency. Authorizes a local agency's legislative body to use teleconferencing for a public meeting without having to post agendas at each teleconference location, identify each teleconference location in the notice and agenda, make each teleconference location accessible to the public. Requires at least a quorum of the legislative body to participate from within the local agency's jurisdiction from a singular physical location which must be identified on the agenda, open to the public. Position: **SUPPORT**

Assembly Local Government Committee – Pass – 9-0-1; Assembly Floor – Pass – 73-0-6
Senate Local Government Committee
Senate Judiciary Committee
Missed Committee Deadline

AB 372 – Bennett – Office of Emergency Services: state matching funds: water system infrastructure improvements.
Establishes the Rural Water Infrastructure for Wildfire Resilience Program within the California Office of Emergency Services for the distribution of state matching funds to communities within the Wildland Urban Interface in designated high fire severity zones or very high fire hazard severity zones to improve water system infrastructure. Amendments removed reference to the use of Prop 4 bond funds and instead make the fund contingent on an appropriation of the Legislature. Supported by ACWA, League of Cal Cities. No opposition was received. Position: **WATCH**

Assembly Emergency Management Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 13-0-2; Assembly Floor – Pass – 79-0-0

Senate Governmental Organization Committee – Pass – 15-0-0
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0 - amendments
Senate Floor – **Inactive File**

~~**AB 929 –** Connolly – Sustainable groundwater management: managed wetlands~~.
Note: This measure has been gutted and amended, to a measure that now transfers the Mount Tamalpais Mortuary and Cemetery to a nonprofit or cemetery authority.

~~Exempts groundwater used by managed wetlands and small community water systems serving a disadvantaged community from a groundwater sustainability agency's authority to regulate groundwater pumping up to their historic pumping levels and assess fees under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. If a small community water system or a managed wetland extractor increases its extraction of groundwater above what was historically required to support the small community water system or annually flood the managed wetland, authorizes a groundwater sustainability agency to impose a fee for the usage above the historical amount. The bill would repeal this provision on January 1, 2029.~~ Position: ~~**OPPOSE**~~

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass 9-3-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-4-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 45-16-18
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 4-3-0
Senate Floor – **Votes not relevant**

AB 1156 – Wicks – Solar-use easements: Suspension of Williamson Act contracts.
Allows additional Williamson Act cancellations until January 1, 2037, that facilitate the development of a solar facility for the purpose of collecting, storing, and distributing solar energy for electricity generation that is located within a critically-over drafted basin or subbasin to qualify for reduced or eliminated cancellation fees. To qualify, the developer must enter into a community benefits agreement with the local government where the facility will be located.
Position: **SUPPORT**

Assembly Local Government Committee – Pass – 9-0-1; Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee – Pass – 16-0-2; Assembly Agriculture Committee – Pass – 6-1-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-1-3; Assembly Floor - Pass 66-5-8
Senate Local Government Committee – Pass – 5-0-2
Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 5-0-3
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass 5-1-1
Senate Floor – Pass – 25-8-7
Senate Local Government – Pass – 5-1-1
Senate Floor – Pass – 25-8-7

Chapter 875, Statutes of 2026

AB 1413 – Papan – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: groundwater adjudication. Provides that a court's judgment substantially interferes with the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act if the judgment permits more total pumping from a basin annually or on average than a valid groundwater sustainability plan; and requires that a validation action be filed within 180 days of the GSP's adoption. Require a groundwater sustainability agency to review and update it sustainable yield every 7 years to ensure that the yield is based on the best available information and best available science. Requires an action against a GSA in a basin that is subject to a pending comprehensive adjudication be consolidated with the comprehensive adjudication and require the court to resolve the cause of action for judicial review of a GSP's sustainable yield before trying any other issue in the action. Opposition believes that it would unconstitutionally insulate agency decisions from judicial review, deprive groundwater right holders of due process, and remove constitutionally granted authority from the courts. Opponents to the bill include a large coalition of agriculture and business interests, water agencies, and GSAs, including the Western Growers Association, Association of California Water Agencies, and the California Chamber of Commerce. Position: **OPPOSE**

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 9-4-0; Assembly Judiciary Committee – Pass – 8-3-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 10-4-1; Assembly Floor – Pass – 45-21-13

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 4-3-0

Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 10-3-0

Senate Appropriations – Pass – 5-2-0

Senate - **Inactive File**

~~**AB 1710 –** Carrillo **–** Housing Developments: ordinances, policies and standards~~.

Requires a housing development project to be subject only to the ordinances, policies and standards adopted and in effect when a preliminary application was submitted – includes general plan, community plan, zoning and design review. Applies a "reasonable person" standard, to public agency determinations of whether a housing development project is consistent, compliant, and in conformity with applicable standards. Position: **WATCH**

Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee – Pass – 12-0-0; Assembly Local Government Committee - Pass – 10-0-0; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 15-0-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 78-1-1

Senate Housing Committee – Pass – 9-0-1

Senate Local Government Committee – Pass 7-0-0

Senate Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

~~**AB 1772 –** Papan – Fish and wildlife: aquatic invasive species: golden mussels~~
Require water supply system operators to update their plans to address all invasive mussel species present in the operator's water system as of January 1, 2026 and thereafter update the plan within 180 days of the discovery of any new species. Authorizes the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to decontaminate or order the decontamination of a conveyance found or reasonably believed to harbor aquatic invasive species. Position: **WATCH**

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 12-0-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 15-0-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 79-0-1
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 6-0-1
Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 13-0-0
Senate Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

AB 1881 – Ramos - California Indian Freedom Act of 2026
Prohibit a governmental agency from substantially burdening a California Indian or tribe's exercise of religious beliefs or spiritual practices, including their access to and use of sacred sites and objects, and their ability to perform religious ceremonies and rites. Provides that the application of the act is strictly limited to a governmental agency's management actions that involve only state lands – which are lands owned by the state or any state agency, excluding lands owned by or under the jurisdiction of any city, county, or district. The bill does not apply to the State Water Resource Control Board activities. Specifies that "state lands" does not include private lands or lands used for public infrastructure or services or authorized for private use or development. Requires a government agency to obtain the consent of the affected California tribe before undertaking any project that may pose a risk to sacred sites on state public land.
In his veto message the governor simply indicated that the measure could have far-reaching impact on the basic operation and management of state property.
Opposed by ACWA and building industry associations. Position: **OPPOSE**

Assembly Judiciary Committee – Pass – 10-0-2; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-0-4; Assembly Floor – Pass – 65-0-15
Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 10-1-2
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 5-0-2
Senate Floor – Pass – 29-1-10
Concurrence in Senate amendments – Pass – 65-0-14
VETOED

AB 1894 – Rubio – Fish and wildlife: invasive mussels

Prohibit a public agency from prohibiting imported water deliveries, for groundwater replenishment due to invasive mussels if the importation complies with a specified invasive mussel control plan and unless there is substantial, documented evidence of a proven health and safety risk as a result of the invasive mussels. Finds and declares that the regulation, control, management, and eradication of invasive mussels are matters of statewide concern. Opposition notes that local agencies are often best positioned to respond quickly and effectively to invasive species threats based on regional conditions, infrastructure vulnerabilities and further opposes broad preemption of local authority.
In his veto message, the governor was concerned about a "one-size-fits-all" approach that denies local water deliveries, especially as invasion of mussels continues to evolve.
Position: **OPPPOSE**

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass - 13-0-0; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 14-0-1; Assembly Floor – Pass – 74-0-6
Senate Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Floor – Pass – 40-0-0
Assembly Concurrence in Senate Amendments - Pass – 77-0-2
VETOED

~~**AB 1895 –** Hadwick – Surplus Land Act: exemptions: land unsuitable for housing~~
Broadens the definition of exempt surplus land to include land unsuitable for housing due to slope instability and other seismic hazards. Surplus Land Act typically requires local agencies to prioritize selling surplus land to affordable housing developers. Position: **WATCH**
Assembly Local Government Committee
Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee
Did not meet house of origin deadline.

AB 1941 – Gonzalez – Organized metal theft.
Creates a new crime of organized metal theft. Applies to theft of specified utility metal materials. Includes acting in concert with one or more people to steal metal materials from specified public utility metals; - includes telecommunications provider, railroad, public utility, or public entity engaged in furnishing public utility service; 2) acting in concert with two or more persons to receive, purchase, or possess specified utility metal materials; 3) acting as an agent of another individual or group to steal specified utility metal materials; and 4) recruiting, coordinating, organizing, supervising, directing, managing, or financing another to undertake specified organized metal theft acts. Punishable as either a misdemeanor or felony. Position: **SUPPORT**

Assembly Public Safety Committee – Pass – 8-0-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 15-0-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 71-0-9

Senate Public Safety Committee – Pass – 6-0-0
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Floor – Pass – 40-0-0
Concurrence in Senate Amendments – Pass – 72-0-7
Chapter 838, Statutes of 2026

~~**AB 2013** – Bennett – Fire risk areas: water suppliers: emergency preparedness plan~~
Require a community water system that services more than 100 customers located in a high, or very high fire risk area to include an annex to it disaster preparedness plans including information regarding system preparedness and resiliency during a wildfire. Requires the annex to contain an assessment that identifies the minimum number of and type of water pumps that are necessary to maintain average daily capacity to operate fire hydrant systems at the related capacity. The plans must be reviewed every 3 years beginning in 2028. Position: **OPPOSE**
Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee – **failed** - 3-0-4

~~**AB 2026** – Aguiar-Curry – Water diversion: groundwater recharge permit~~
Streamlining the permit process for diverting floodwaters, particularly for GSAs operating under SGMA. Supports 5-year rather than 180 day permits for recharge projects. Exempts the diversion of flood flows for groundwater recharge from CEQA and Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement requirements if the diversion does not require a permit or involve new construction. Position: **WATCH**

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-2; Assembly Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 12-0-2; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 13-1-1; Assembly Floor – Pass – 68-0-12
Senate Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 5-0-2
Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 5-0-2
Senate Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

AB 2125 – Bennett – Groundwater basin adjudication: notice
Imposes additional requirements on a plaintiff when filing the notice of completion of mailing. Require the plaintiff to include with the notice of completion an affidavit of the person who mailed the notice and the certified or registered mail delivery receipt for each parcel showing stating the date, time, and place of mailing. If the notice was posted on the subject property a plaintiff is to also file the affidavit of the person who posted the notice specifying the date, time, and physical location of each parcel. Position: **WATCH**

Assembly Judiciary Committee – Pass – 12-0-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 72-0-8
Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass-12-0-1
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0

Senate Floor – Pass – 39-0-1
Chapter 138, Statutes of 2026

~~**AB 2132 –** Macedo – CEQA: exemption for groundwater recharge project~~
Exempts from CEQA a groundwater recharge project if the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency determines the project would address subsidence. Position: **OPPOSE**
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
Failed to meet house of origin deadline

AB 2180 – Ward – Proposition 218 Omnibus Implementation Act: proposed cost of service.
Authorizes a local government to demonstrate the proportional cost of the service attributable to the parcel by any method that reasonably allocates the ascertainable cost of providing service to all parcels for any fee or charge adopted under Proposition 218 of 1996. When imposing a fee or charge for water or sewer service, an agency is not required to provide an exact measure of the cost of the service at each parcel, and an agency may impose uniform or tiered rates to parcel or customer classes that are defined based on common characteristics. The bill does not apply to fees for water or sewer connections or capacity charges. Position: **SUPPORT**
Assembly Local Government Committee – Pass – 7-2-1; Assembly Floor – Pass – 46-18-16
Senate Local Government Committee – Pass – 5-2-0
Senate Floor – 30-10-0
Assembly Concurrence in Senate Amendments – Pass – 53-17-9
Chapter 587, Statutes of 2026

~~**AB 2215** – Calderon – Water rights: permits: State Water Project~~
Requires that the time periods for the application of water to beneficial use and for the completion of construction work for specific water right permits held by the Department of Water Resources for the operation of the State Water Project be December 31, 2046.
Sponsored by State Water Contractors Position: **WATCH**
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-2; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 12-1-2; Assembly Floor – Pass – 59-1-20
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Missed Committee Deadline

AB 2218 – Karla – Water policy: California Native American tribes
Declare that it is the established policy of the state to recognize and address inequities inflicted upon California Native American tribes through financial assistance, protection of tribal water

uses, consultation on water projects, plans and policies and incorporation of indigenous knowledge to restore and protect ecosystems. Requires the State Water Resources Control Board, regional water quality control boards, and the Natural Resources Agency, to consider and incorporate this policy when revising, adopting, or establishing policies, regulations, permits, or grant criteria to address identified inequities. Added mediation with the Office of Tribal Affairs prior to a state agency action is challenged in court.
In his veto message the governor expressed concern that the bill undermines the state's policy to protect our water supply from climate change by adding new and duplicative layers to the process. Position: **OPPOSE**

Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 9-0-4; Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee – Pass – 5-0-2; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-0-4; Assembly Floor – Pass – 57-0-23
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 5-0-2
Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 4-0-3
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 4-0-3
Senate Floor – Pass – 28-0-12
Concurrence in Senate Amendments – Pass – 56-0-23
VETOED

~~**AB 2447 –** Bauer-Kahan – Water Supply Protection Act~~
Requires the State Water Resources Control Board to require the regional boards to update the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program in order to reduce nitrogen waste discharges from commercial irrigated agricultural areas. In addition, it requires the regional boards to adopt revised orders with waste discharge requirements on or before January 1, 2030, that are sufficient to meet certain reductions in nitrogen waste discharges. Position: **OPPOSE**
Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee – Pass – 5-2-0
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

~~**AB 2569 –** Hart – CEQA: natural hazards and adverse environmental conditions~~
For the purpose of CEQA expands the definition of "environment" and "significant effect on the environment" to include impacts on people. Additionally require the leading agency to include in the EIR a detailed statement on any significant effects that may result from locating the proposed project near, or attracting people to, existing or reasonably foreseeable natural hazards or adverse environmental conditions. Position: **OPPOSE**
Assembly Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 9-4-1
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

~~**AB 2630 –** Bennett – Water diversion and use: adoption of regulations~~

Requires until January 1, 2032, that all further regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board requiring measurement and reporting of water diversion and use by persons authorized to appropriate water under a permit, a license, a registration for small domestic, small irrigation, or livestock stock pond use, or a certificate for livestock stock pond use be adopted as emergency regulations and remain in effect until revised by the state board, and would exempt them from the California Environmental Quality Act. Position: **OPPOSE**
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 8-4-1
Assembly Natural Resources Committee –
Failed to meet house of origin deadline

AB 2739 – Soria – Community Water Affordability Program
Establishes the Water Affordability and System Stabilization Trust as a charitable trust to generate ongoing funding for the Community Water Affordability Program administered by the Department of Water Resources and the Water Rate Assistance Fund administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. Authorizes general fund transfers to provide grants to community water systems for local water infrastructure projects including projects that improve water supplies and quality and reduce energy costs for a community water system.
In his veto message, the governor express concerns over creating a permanent program without identifying a sustainable ongoing funding source. Position: **WATCH**
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 12-0-1; Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 15-0-0; Assembly Floor – Pass – 78-0-2
Senate Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0
Senate Floor – Pass – 78-0-1
VETOED

ACA 11 – Macedo and Alanis – California Water Resiliency Act
Require the Treasurer to annually transfer an amount equal to 1% of all state revenues from the General Fund to the Water Conveyance and Capacity Infrastructure Fund for grants for the entitlement, repair, design, and construction of water infrastructure projects that will maintain or expand the availability of clean, safe drinking water for homes and businesses, and water for agricultural uses, consistent with area of origin water rights. Position: **WATCH**
Assembly Rules Committee - **DIED**

~~**SB 239** –~~ Arreguin – Crimes: criminal threat
The measure has been gutted; it now makes threatening an election official an aggravated offense.

~~Open meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body.~~
~~Authorizes a subsidiary body to meet via teleconferencing without providing notice of all remote locations, making the remote locations accessible to the public, or requiring an in-person quorum of the members of the subsidiary body, if certain conditions are met – including designating on physical location where the public may physically attend, observe, hear and participate in the meeting. Sunsets on January 1, 2030.~~ Position: **SUPPORT**

*Senate Local Government Committee – Pass – 5-2-0***;** *Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 10-1-2***;** *Senate Floor – Pass – 29-11-0*
Assembly Public Safety Committee – Pass – 9-0-0
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **votes no longer relevant**

SB 599 – Caballero – Atmospheric rivers: research: forecasting methods
Requires the Department of Water Resources to research, develop, and implement experimental tools that produce seasonal and sub-seasonal atmospheric river forecasts under the Atmospheric Rivers Research and Forecast Improvement Program. Position: **SUPPORT**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass - 6-0-1; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 6-0-1; Senate Floor – Pass – 38-0-2
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 12-0-1
Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass 15-0-0
Assembly Floor – Pass – 78-0-1
Chapter 650, Statutes 2026

~~**SB 601** – Allen – Water: water discharge~~
Provides that any water quality standard applicable to nexus waters that was submitted to, approved by, or awaiting approval by the U.S. EPA or State Water Board prior to May 24, 2023, to remain in effect. The bill defines "nexus waters" as all waters of the state that are not also navigable waters, as defined in existing law. Because the existing law for navigable waters reverts to the federal definition, this essentially means that most of California's wetlands become nexus waters and can be treated as they were in the pre-Sackett era. Requires the State Water Resources Control Board to adjust specified penalty amounts for inflation. Additionally, the bill authorizes local public prosecutors to enforce specific provisions of the Porter-Cologne Act and permits issued in accordance with the Act. This provision expands the enforcement avenues beyond just state-level regulators Opposed by numerous business groups, chambers of commerce and water entities. Position: **OPPOSE**

Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 5-3-0; Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 10-3-0; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 5-1-1
Senate Floor – Pass – 23-12-5
Assembly Judiciary Committee – Pass – 8-2-2

Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee – Pass – 5-2-0
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

SB 872 - McNerney – Delta Levees and Canal Subsidence Fund
Establishes the Delta Levees and Canal Subsidence Fund and, upon appropriation, requires the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to allocate from the fund, subject to funding availability, in proportion to need, as determined by the Secretary, and based at least in part on seismic risk assessment. Supports multi-benefit levee projects and capital improvements to water conveyance systems impacted by subsidence in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
In his veto message, the governor objected to establishing parameters for spending revenue from a Fund that did not receive resources in this year's budget and therefore found the bill unnecessary. Position: **SUPPORT**

Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 5-0-2; Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Floor – Pass – 39-0-1
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-2
Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-0-4
Assembly Floor – Pass – 77-0-2
Concurrence in Assembly Amendments – Pass – 37-0-3
VETOED

~~**SB 899** – Grove – Fire prevention: Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force~~: wildfire smoke
Requires the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, on or before July 1, 2028, and in cooperation with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and the Department of Public Health, to assess the health costs and impacts of wildfire smoke, and to develop a model to determine the health benefits of achieving the goals of the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. Position: **SUPPORT**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Environmental Quality Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Floor – Pass – 39-0-1
Assembly Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 13-0-1
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

~~**SB 910** – Seyarto – Municipal water district: water service: Indian Lands~~
Extend provisions that allow a water district to provide service on substantially the same terms applicable to the customers of the district to an Indian tribe's lands that are not within a district to January 1, 2032. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Local Government Committee
Failed to meet house of origin deadline.

SB 997 – Caballero – North Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency: lien authority
Authorizes the North Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency to impose liens for unpaid civil penalties for up to 10 years. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Judiciary Committee – Pass – 13-0-0; Senate Floor – Pass – 38-0-2
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-1
Assembly Judiciary Committee – Pass – 12-0-0
Assembly Floor – Pass – 73-0-6
Chapter 86, Statute of 2026

~~**SB 1001 –** Archuleta – Local agency, corporation, or mutual water company: personnel access~~
Requires the Office of Emergency Services, beginning on July 1, 2028, to issue, upon request, a specified identity verification credential to specified public works and critical infrastructure personnel to facilitate access to an emergency area. Position: **WATCH**
Senate Emergency Management Committee – Pass – 8-0-1
Senate Public Safety Committee – Pass – 6-0-0
Senate Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

SB 1085 – Durazo – Water supply planning CEQA determinations.
Reinstates a requirement that cities and counties that approve certain large development projects – residential development or 500 or more units: shopping centers: commercial office buildings: industrial plants: hotel or motel: mixed use projects - comply with specified water supply planning requirements. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 6-0-1; Senate Local Government Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Floor – Pass – 35-1-4
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-1
Assembly Local Government Committee – Pass – 10-0-0
Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 15-0-0
Assembly Floor – Pass – 79-0-0
Concurrence in Assembly amendments – Pass – 40-0-0
Chapter 1004, Statutes of 2026

~~**SB 1108** Caballero – Grassland Ecological Area Conservancy.~~
Establishes the Grassland Ecological Area Conservancy within the California Natural Resources Agency, codify the geographic scope of the Grassland Ecological Area and Focus Area, establish

the administrative structure and functions of the Grassland Ecological Area Conservancy, and create the Grassland Ecological Area Conservancy Fund. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Floor – 37-1-2
Assembly Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 14-0-0
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 11-0-2
Assembly Appropriations Committee – **Held Under Submission**

SB 1135 - Blakespear – California Wildlife Coexistence Act.
Establishes the Wildlife Coexistence Program by the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage and promote wildlife coexistence including maintaining a statewide wildlife incident reporting tool. It would also provide resources relating to wolves and livestock. Allows dogs who are guarding livestock or crops to pursue wolves if the dogs remain in reasonable proximity to the livestock or crops being guarded. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Natural Resources Committee – Pass – 5-11; Senate Appropriations Committee – Pass – 6-1-0; Senate Floor – 29-2-9
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass – 8-2-3
Assembly Appropriations Committee – Pass – 11-4-0
Assembly Floor – Pass – 58-17-4
Concurrence in Assembly Amendments – Pass – 31-9-0
Chapter 820, Statutes of 2026

SB 1139 - Laird – Monterey Peninsula Water Management District: nonfunctional turf
Gives Monterey Peninsula Water Management District authority to enforce an existing prohibition against the use of potable water for the irrigation of nonfunctional turf located on commercial, industrial, and institutional properties, and, on properties of homeowners' associations, common interest developments, and community service organizations, as specified. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee – Pass – 7-0-0; Senate Floor – Pass – 38-0-2
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – Pass - 11-0-1
Assembly Floor – Pass – 71-0-8
Chapter 88, Statutes of 2026

SB 1417 – Perez – Mutual water companies: assessments and water charges: notice
Requires mutual water companies that propose to raise rates by more than 20% to comply with new notice and public meeting requirements at least 30 days before it seeks to collect the

assessment or increase the water charge. Water companies would also be required to provide a written proposal to collect the assessment. Position: **WATCH**

Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee – Pass – 13-2-2; Senate Floor – Pass – 30-9-1

Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee- Pass – 14-0-4

Assembly Floor – Pass – 66-6-7

Concurrence in Assembly Amendments -Pass – 30-7-3

Chapter 1038, Statutes of 2026
