

# MID MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT

September 20, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

I am writing to offer the support of Merced Irrigation District for AB 313. I respectfully request you sign this important bill into law for California. As I'm sure you are well aware, the legislation is supported by the California Association of Water Agencies, of which MID is a member, as well as many others. AB 313 marks a significant and important step toward ensuring fairness to water rights disputes throughout the State of California. As you know, water is vital to the health of any community and provides multiple benefits, from water to supply to environmental stewardship.

According to analysis from the California Senate, AB 313:

- Establishes a Water Rights Division within the Office of Administrative Hearings consisting of four full-time Administrative Law Judges with no less than eight years' experience as an attorney dealing with water rights matters. The Administrative Law Judges would have experts available to them.
- Provides that if an alleged violator requests a hearing to respond to a complaint from the executive director of the State Water Board alleging violations of water use laws, and if the complaint seeks to impose either administrative civil liability or a cease and desist order based on those allegations, then the hearing shall take place before the Water Rights Division within the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- Specifies that decisions made by the Administrative Law Judges in the Water Rights Division are recommendations which may be accepted, modified, or rejected by the State Water Board before becoming final.

This would seem to be a tremendous benefit to all in our state and ensure fairness in certain types of water rights disputes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John Sweigard