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Contact: Chris Wilson, District Director
chris.wilson@asm.ca.gov
(310) 324-6408

Sativa Water Quality Problems Trigger State Response

SACRAMENTO, Calif --- In light of ongoing community concerns regarding water quality within the Sativa Los Angeles County Water District (Sativa), Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson has created the Water Complaint Task Force and Clearinghouse under his office within the 64th Assembly District. Additionally, Asm. Gipson is calling on Sativa to act swiftly and work with the California State Water Resources Board (Water Board) to address this critical public health issue.

"Residents served by Sativa have been routinely complaining that brown water is coming from their kitchen faucets and bath tubs. This is unacceptable and our community deserves better than to become a mirror of the water disaster in Flint, Michigan. Sativa must be held accountable," said Asm. Gipson. "Since receiving word of this issue, I have had multiple meetings with the Water Board to ensure appropriate monitoring and local visits to conduct water samples. However, the Water Board also needs to hear directly from our community so they can be more targeted in their response. This is why I am creating the Water Complaint Task Force and Clearinghouse within my office to serve as a resource to our impacted constituents and facilitate information and communication between the community and the Water Board. The task force shall consist of members of my staff and our 64th Assembly District Water Commission. I have heard from the Water Board that although they are aware of the issue, there have only been a handful of people who have communicated their concerns. My goal is to bridge the gap, which is why I am launching this campaign today."

In 2017, Asm. Gipson introduced Assembly Bill (AB) 272, which would have created the Southeast Los Angeles County Water Relief Act. AB 272 sought to ensure struggling water agencies had a mechanism to develop partnerships with larger more sophisticated public water agencies to support their efforts to draw down state grant funds that were focused on disadvantaged communities. One of the key challenges small water districts face is their inability to draw down state funds as a result of not meeting the technical, managerial and financial sophistication that is required for state support. By linking small districts with a larger partner, they are able to collaborate in a way that preserves small district autonomy while borrowing from the larger districts technical capacity. Beyond this bill, Asm. Gipson has worked to engage the Water Board directly in order to get funding on behalf of Sativa but current grant applications from Sativa are still pending.

"We want to be as helpful to Sativa as possible, but we cannot bank on simply hoping for the best. I intend to continue to be aggressive on this issue and will not stop until this is resolved. Clean water is a basic necessity that all people are entitled to and I will not be silent while people in my district suffer."

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