



TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Michelle Greene, City Manager

CONTACT: Deborah S. Lopez, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Designation of City Council Delegates for the League of California Cities Annual Conference and Consideration of the Resolutions for the Business Meeting

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Appoint a voting delegate and up to two alternates to represent the City at the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Business Meeting; and
- B. Provide direction to the voting delegate regarding whether to vote in favor of or against adoption of policy resolutions being considered at the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Business Meeting.

BACKGROUND:

This year's League of California Cities Annual Conference will be held October 16-18 in Long Beach. Central to the annual conference is the policy development that takes place through the Conference of Resolutions process. During the business meeting, city officials have the opportunity to participate in the process by considering and taking action on resolutions that establish League policy. The resolutions guide the League's advocacy efforts to address issues faced by local governments throughout California. The annual business meeting is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. on Friday, October 18, at the Long Beach Convention Center.

DISCUSSION:

Voting Delegates

To represent the city and vote at the business meeting, each city is asked to designate a voting delegate and at least one alternate. Councilmembers Aceves, Kasdin and Kyriaco are registered to attend this conference. It is recommended that Council discuss the interest of those members attending the conference in participating in the business meeting at the League conference, and appoint a delegate and an alternate for this event. The City is required to notify the League of the voting delegate and alternates no later than Friday, October 4, 2019 (Attachment 1).

League Resolutions

This year two resolutions have been introduced for consideration during the business meeting (Attachment 2). These resolutions were submitted to the General Assembly with the concurrence of more than five cities/city officials. The resolutions are scheduled to be considered by the League's Policy Committees and, if approved, will be forwarded for consideration at the Annual Business Meeting's General Assembly.

Resolution No. 1:

RESOLUTION OF THE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES CALLING ON THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION TO AMEND RULE 20A TO ADD PROJECTS IN VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES TO THE LIST OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND TO INCREASE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR RULE 20A PROJECTS

Source: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Concurrence of five or more cities/city officials

Cities: City of Hidden Hills, City of La Cañada Flintridge, City of Laguna Beach, City of Lakeport, City of Malibu, City of Moorpark, City of Nevada City, City of Palos Verdes Estates, City of Rolling Hills Estates, City of Rolling Hills, City of Ventura

Referred to: Environmental Quality Policy Committee; Transportation, Communications, and Public Works Policy Committee

League Summary of Resolution No. 1

This Resolution, in response to intensifying fire seasons and hazards associated with exposed energized utility lines, proposes that the League of California Cities (League) call upon the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to amend the Rule 20A program by expanding the criteria for undergrounding overhead utilities to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ). This Resolution also proposes that the League call upon the CPUC to increase utilities' funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

Fiscal Impacts: The costs to the State associated with this Resolution will be related to the staff and programmatic costs to the CPUC to take the necessary measures to consider and adopt changes to Rule 20A to include projects in VHFHSZ to the list of criteria for eligibility.

This Resolution calls for an unspecified increase in funding for Rule 20A projects, inferring that portions of increased funds will go toward newly eligible high fire hazard zones. While the Resolution does not request a specific amount be allocated, it can be assumed that these increased costs will be supported by utility ratepayers. According to the CPUC, the annual allocations towards Rule 20A are \$95.7 million.

The CPUC currently reports a cumulative credit surplus valued at roughly \$1 billion that in various regions, given the approval of expanded eligibility called for by this Resolution, could be used to supplement and reduce the level of new dollars needed to make a

significant impact in VHFHSZ. The CPUC follows that overhead conversion projects range from \$93,000 per mile for rural construction to \$5 million per mile for urban construction.

The Resolution states that “California is experiencing fire seasons of worsening severity” which is supported by not only the tremendous loss of property and life from recent wildfires, but also in the rising costs associated with clean up, recovery, and other economic losses with high estimates in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

Recommendation: Staff recommends the City Council give direction to the voting and alternate delegates to support this resolution. In Section 3.C.9 the City’s Legislative Platform states “Support legislation that improves the reliability and consistency of electrical supply and improve transmission of electricity to local governments and their communities.” Though it does not call out fire risk or high fire zones specifically, this segment of the Platform appears to align with the intent of the League of Cities resolution.

Resolution No. 2:

A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS TO ADDRESS THE DEVASTATING IMPACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSBOUNDARY POLLUTION FLOWS INTO THE SOUTHERNMOST REGIONS OF CALIFORNIA AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Source: San Diego County Division

Concurrence of five or more cities/city officials

Cities: Calexico; Coronado; Imperial Beach; San Diego

Individual City Officials: City of Brawley: Mayor Pro Tem Norma Kastner-Jauregui; Council Members Sam Couchman, Luke Hamby, and George Nava. City of Escondido: Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez. City of La Mesa: Council Member Bill Baber. City of Santee: Mayor John Minto, City of Vista: Mayor Judy Ritter and Council Member Amanda Young Rigby

Referred to: Environmental Quality Policy Committee

League Summary of Resolution No. 2

This Resolution states that the League of California Cities should call upon the State and Federal governments to restore and ensure proper funding for the U.S. – Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) and work bi-nationally to address water quality issues resulting from transboundary flows from Mexico’s Tijuana River into the United States containing untreated sewage, polluted sediment, and trash.

Background

The League of California Cities’ San Diego County Division is sponsoring this resolution to address their concerns over the contaminated flows from the Tijuana River into California that have resulted in the degradation of water quality and water recreational areas in Southern California.

The Tijuana River flows north through highly urbanized areas in Mexico before it enters the Tijuana River Estuary and eventually the Pacific Ocean via waterways in San Diego County in California. Urban growth in Tijuana has contributed to a rise in rates of upstream flows from water treatment facilities in Mexico. These treatment facilities have raised the amount of untreated sewage and waste in the Tijuana River due to faulty infrastructure and improper maintenance. The federal government refers to the river as an “impaired water body” because of the presence of pollutants in excess, which pose significant health risks to residents and visitors in communities on both sides of the border.

Fiscal Impacts: California’s economy is currently the sixth largest in the world, with tourism spending topping \$140.6 billion in 2018. In the past five years, San Diego’s Border Field State Park has been closed for over 800 days because of pollution from the Tijuana River. A decline in the State’s beach quality and reputation could carry macroeconomic effects that could ripple outside of the San Diego County region and affect coastal communities throughout California.

Recommendation: Staff recommends Council consider giving direction to the voting and alternate delegates to support this resolution. Section 3.B.4 of the Legislative Platform states “Support policy development, “watershed based” solutions, funding and research for addressing urban runoff and beach closures, which identify the sources of bacterial, viral and other contaminants as well as human pathogens.” This segment of the Platform appears to align with the intent of the League of Cities resolution.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

There is no cost associated with the designation of a voting and alternate delegates. Supporting these resolutions will have no direct fiscal impact on the City.

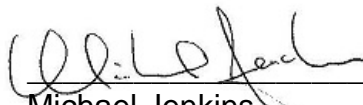
ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council may elect not to appoint a voting delegate and alternates; however, taking no action will result in Councilmembers being unable to vote at the annual business meeting. The City Council may choose to oppose any of the proposed policy resolutions or take no action.

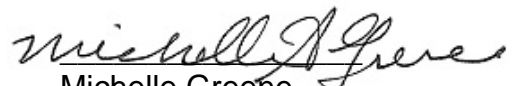
Reviewed By:


Kristine Schmidt
Assistant City Manager

Legal Review By:


Michael Jenkins
City Attorney

Approved By:


Michelle Greene
City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2019 Voting Delegate Letter and Form
2. 2019 Annual Conference Resolutions Packet

ATTACHMENT 1:

2019 Voting Delegate Letter and Form



CITY: _____

**2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
VOTING DELEGATE/ALTERNATE FORM**

Please complete this form and return it to the League office by Friday, October 4, 2019. Forms not sent by this deadline may be submitted to the Voting Delegate Desk located in the Annual Conference Registration Area. Your city council may designate one voting delegate and up to two alternates.

In order to vote at the Annual Business Meeting (General Assembly), voting delegates and alternates must be designated by your city council. Please attach the council resolution as proof of designation. As an alternative, the Mayor or City Clerk may sign this form, affirming that the designation reflects the action taken by the council.

Please note: Voting delegates and alternates will be seated in a separate area at the Annual Business Meeting. Admission to this designated area will be limited to individuals (voting delegates and alternates) who are identified with a special sticker on their conference badge. This sticker can be obtained only at the Voting Delegate Desk.

1. VOTING DELEGATE

Name: _____

Title: _____

2. VOTING DELEGATE - ALTERNATE

Name: _____

Title: _____

3. VOTING DELEGATE - ALTERNATE

Name: _____

Title: _____

PLEASE ATTACH COUNCIL RESOLUTION DESIGNATING VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATES.

OR

ATTEST: I affirm that the information provided reflects action by the city council to designate the voting delegate and alternate(s).

Name: _____

Email: _____

Mayor or City Clerk _____
(circle one) (signature)

Date _____ Phone _____

Please complete and return by Friday, October 4, 2019

League of California Cities
ATTN: Darla Yacub
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

FAX: (916) 658-8240
E-mail: dyacub@cacities.org
(916) 658-8254

ATTACHMENT 2:

2019 Annual Conference Resolutions Packet



Annual Conference Resolutions Packet

2019 Annual Conference Resolutions



*Long Beach, California
October 16 – 18, 2019*

INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

RESOLUTIONS CONTAINED IN THIS PACKET: The League bylaws provide that resolutions shall be referred by the president to an appropriate policy committee for review and recommendation. Resolutions with committee recommendations shall then be considered by the General Resolutions Committee at the Annual Conference.

This year, two resolutions have been introduced for consideration at the Annual Conference and referred to League policy committees.

POLICY COMMITTEES: Two policy committees will meet at the Annual Conference to consider and take action on the resolutions referred to them. The committees are: Environmental Quality and Transportation, Communication & Public Works. The committees will meet from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 16, at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach. The sponsors of the resolutions have been notified of the time and location of the meeting.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE: This committee will meet at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 17, at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, to consider the reports of the policy committees regarding the resolutions. This committee includes one representative from each of the League's regional divisions, functional departments and standing policy committees, as well as other individuals appointed by the League president. Please check in at the registration desk for room location.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON/BUSINESS MEETING/GENERAL ASSEMBLY: This meeting will be held at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, October 18, at the Long Beach Convention Center.

PETITIONED RESOLUTIONS: For those issues that develop after the normal 60-day deadline, a resolution may be introduced at the Annual Conference with a petition signed by designated voting delegates of 10 percent of all member cities (48 valid signatures required) and presented to the Voting Delegates Desk at least 24 hours prior to the time set for convening the Annual Business Meeting of the General Assembly. This year, that deadline is 12:30 p.m., Thursday, October 17. Resolutions can be viewed on the League's Web site: www.cacities.org/resolutions.

Any questions concerning the resolutions procedures may be directed to Carly Shelby cshelby@cacities.org 916-658-8279 or Nick Romo nromo@cacities.org 916-658-8232 at the League office.

GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

Policy development is a vital and ongoing process within the League. The principal means for deciding policy on the important issues facing cities is through the League's seven standing policy committees and the board of directors. The process allows for timely consideration of issues in a changing environment and assures city officials the opportunity to both initiate and influence policy decisions.

Annual conference resolutions constitute an additional way to develop League policy. Resolutions should adhere to the following criteria.

Guidelines for Annual Conference Resolutions

1. Only issues that have a direct bearing on municipal affairs should be considered or adopted at the Annual Conference.
2. The issue is not of a purely local or regional concern.
3. The recommended policy should not simply restate existing League policy.
4. The resolution should be directed at achieving one of the following objectives:
 - (a) Focus public or media attention on an issue of major importance to cities.
 - (b) Establish a new direction for League policy by establishing general principles around which more detailed policies may be developed by policy committees and the board of directors.
 - (c) Consider important issues not adequately addressed by the policy committees and board of directors.
 - (d) Amend the League bylaws (requires 2/3 vote at General Assembly).

LOCATION OF MEETINGS

Policy Committee Meetings

Wednesday, October 16, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Hyatt Regency Long Beach

200 South Pine Avenue, Long Beach

The following committees will be meeting:

1. Environmental Quality 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
2. Transportation, Communication & Public Works 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

General Resolutions Committee

Thursday, October 17, 1:00 p.m.

Hyatt Regency Long Beach

200 South Pine Avenue, Long Beach

Annual Business Meeting and General Assembly Luncheon

Friday, October 18, 12:30 p.m.

Long Beach Convention Center

300 East Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach

KEY TO ACTIONS TAKEN ON RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions have been grouped by policy committees to which they have been assigned.

Number	Key Word Index	Reviewing Body Action		
		1	2	3
		1 - Policy Committee Recommendation to General Resolutions Committee		
		2 – General Resolutions Committee		
		3 - General Assembly		

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY COMMITTEE

		1	2	3
1	Amendment to Rule 20A			
2	International Transboundary Pollution Flows			

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC WORKS POLICY COMMITTEE

		1	2	3
1	Amendment to Rule 20A			

Information pertaining to the Annual Conference Resolutions will also be posted on each committee's page on the League website: www.cacities.org. The entire Resolutions Packet is posted at: www.cacities.org/resolutions.

KEY TO ACTIONS TAKEN ON RESOLUTIONS (*Continued*)

Resolutions have been grouped by policy committees to which they have been assigned.

KEY TO REVIEWING BODIES

1. Policy Committee
2. General Resolutions Committee
3. General Assembly

KEY TO ACTIONS TAKEN

- | | |
|-----|---|
| A | Approve |
| D | Disapprove |
| N | No Action |
| R | Refer to appropriate policy committee for study |
| a | Amend+ |
| Aa | Approve as amended+ |
| Aaa | Approve with additional amendment(s)+ |
| Ra | Refer as amended to appropriate policy committee for study+ |
| Raa | Additional amendments and refer+ |
| Da | Amend (for clarity or brevity) and Disapprove+ |
| Na | Amend (for clarity or brevity) and take No Action+ |
| W | Withdrawn by Sponsor |

ACTION FOOTNOTES

- * Subject matter covered in another resolution
- ** Existing League policy
- *** Local authority presently exists

Procedural Note:

The League of California Cities resolution process at the Annual Conference is guided by League Bylaws. A helpful explanation of this process can be found on the League's website by clicking on this link: [Guidelines for the Annual Conference Resolutions Process](#).

League of California Cities Resolution Process

REGULAR RESOLUTIONS

Policy Committee Action	General Resolutions Committee Action	Calendar
Approve	Approve	Consent Calendar ¹
Approve	Disapprove or Refer	Regular Calendar ²
Disapprove or Refer	Approve	Regular Calendar
Disapprove or Refer	Disapprove or Refer	Does not proceed to General Assembly

PETITION RESOLUTIONS

Policy Committee Action	General Resolutions Committee Action	Calendar
Not Heard in Policy Committee	Approve	Consent Calendar
Not Heard in Policy Committee	Disapprove or Refer	Regular Calendar
Not Heard in Policy Committee	Disqualified per Bylaws Art. VI	Does not proceed to General Assembly

Resolutions

- Submitted 60 days prior to conference *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 4(a)*
- Signatures of at least 5 supporting cities or city officials submitted with the proposed resolution *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 2*
- Assigned to policy committee(s) by League president *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 4(b)(i)*
- Heard in policy committee(s) and report recommendation, if any, to GRC *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 4(b)(ii)*
- Heard in GRC
 - Approved by policy committee(s) and GRC, goes on to General Assembly on consent calendar *2006 General Assembly Resolution Sec. 2(C)*
 - If amended/approved by all policy committee(s) to which it has been referred and disapproved by GRC, then goes on to General Assembly on the regular calendar. If not all policy committees to which it has been referred recommend amendment or approval, and the GRC disapproves or refers the resolution, the resolution does not move to the General Assembly *2006 General Assembly Resolution Sec. 2(A),(C); 1998 General Assembly Resolution, 1st Resolved Clause*
 - If disapproved by all policy committees to which it has been referred and disapproved by the GRC, resolution does not move to the General Assembly *2006 General Assembly Resolution Sec. 2(C)*
- Heard in General Assembly

¹ The consent calendar should only be used for resolutions where there is unanimity between the policy committees and the GRC that a resolution should be approved by the General Assembly, and therefore, it can be concluded that there will be less desire to debate the resolution on the floor.

² The regular calendar is for resolutions for which there is a difference in recommendations between the policy committees and the GRC.

Petitioned Resolutions

- Submitted by voting delegate *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5 (a)*
- Must be signed by voting delegates representing 10% of the member cities *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5 (c)*
- Signatures confirmed by League staff
- Submitted to the League president for confirmation 24 hours before the beginning of the General Assembly. *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5 (d)*
- Petition to be reviewed by Parliamentarian for required signatures of voting delegates and for form and substance *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5(e)*
- Parliamentarian's report is presented to chair of GRC
- Will be heard at GRC for action (GRC cannot amend but may recommend by a majority vote to the GA technical or clarifying amendments) *2006 General Assembly Resolution sec. 6(A), (B)*
- GRC may disqualify if:
 - Non-germane to city issues
 - Identical or substantially similar in substance to a resolution already under consideration *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5(e), (f)*
- Heard in General Assembly
 - General Assembly will consider the resolution following the other resolutions³ *Bylaws Article VI, Sec. 5(g)*
 - Substantive amendments that change the intent of the petitioned resolution may only be adopted by the GA *2006 General Assembly Resolution sec. 6(C)*

Voting Procedure in the General Assembly

Consent Calendar: Resolution approved by Policy Committee(s) and GRC. Petitioned resolution approved by GRC)

- GRC Chair will be asked to give the report from the GRC and will ask for adoption of the GRC's recommendations
- Ask delegates if there is a desire to call out a resolution for discussion
- A voting delegate may make a motion to remove a resolution from the consent calendar for discussion
- If a motion is made to pull a resolution, the General Assembly votes on whether to pull the resolution from the consent calendar.
- If a majority of the General Assembly votes to pull the resolution, set "called out" reso(s) aside. If the motion fails, the resolution remains on the consent calendar.
- If reso(s) not called out, or after 'called out' reso is set aside, then ask for vote on remaining resos left on consent
- Move on to debate on reso(s) called out
- After debate, a vote is taken
- Voting delegates vote on resolutions by raising their voting cards.⁴

³ Petitioned Resolutions on the Consent Calendar will be placed after all General Resolutions on the Consent Calendar. Petitioned Resolutions on the Regular Calendar will be placed after all General Resolutions on the Regular Calendar.

⁴ Amendments to League bylaws require 2/3 vote

Regular Calendar: Regular resolutions approved by Policy Committee(s)⁵, and GRC recommends disapproval or referral; Regular resolutions disapproved or referred by Policy Committee(s)⁶ and GRC approves; Petitioned resolutions disapproved or referred by the GRC.

- Open the floor to determine if a voting delegate wishes to debate a resolution on the regular calendar.
- If no voting delegate requests a debate on the resolution, a vote to ratify the recommendation of the GRC on the resolution is taken.
- Upon a motion by a voting delegate to debate a resolution, a debate shall be held if approved by a majority vote of the General Assembly. If a majority of the General Assembly to debate the resolution is not achieved, then a vote shall be taken on whether to ratify the GRC's recommendation. If a majority of the General Assembly approves of the motion to debate the resolution, debate will occur. After debate on the resolution, a vote is taken based upon the substitute motion that was made, if any, or on the question of ratifying the GRC's recommendation.
- Voting delegates vote by raising their voting cards.

⁵ Applies in the instance where the GRC recommendation of disapproval or refer is counter to the recommendations of the policy committees.

⁶ Applies in the instance where the GRC recommendation to approve is counter to the recommendations of the policy committees.

1. RESOLUTION OF THE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES CALLING ON THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION TO AMEND RULE 20A TO ADD PROJECTS IN VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES TO THE LIST OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND TO INCREASE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR RULE 20A PROJECTS

Source: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Concurrence of five or more cities/city officials

Cities: City of Hidden Hills, City of La Cañada Flintridge, City of Laguna Beach, City of Lakeport, City of Malibu, City of Moorpark, City of Nevada City, City of Palos Verdes Estates, City of Rolling Hills Estates, City of Rolling Hills, City of Ventura

Referred to: Environmental Quality Policy Committee; Transportation, Communications, and Public Works Policy Committee

WHEREAS, the California Public Utilities Commission regulates the undergrounding conversion of overhead utilities under Electric Tariff Rule 20 and;

WHEREAS, conversion projects deemed to have a public benefit are eligible to be funded by ratepayers under Rule 20A; and

WHEREAS, the criteria under Rule 20A largely restricts eligible projects to those along streets with high volumes of public traffic; and

WHEREAS, the cost of undergrounding projects that do not meet Rule 20A criteria is left mostly or entirely to property owners under other parts of Rule 20; and

WHEREAS, California is experiencing fire seasons of worsening severity; and

WHEREAS, undergrounding overhead utilities that can spark brush fires is an important tool in preventing them and offers a public benefit; and

WHEREAS, brush fires are not restricted to starting near streets with high volumes of public traffic; and

WHEREAS, expanding Rule 20A criteria to include Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones would facilitate undergrounding projects that would help prevent fires; and

WHEREAS, expanding Rule 20A criteria as described above and increasing funding allocations for Rule 20A projects would lead to more undergrounding in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones; and now therefore let it be,

RESOLVED that the League of California Cities calls on the California Public Utilities Commission to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility and to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

Background Information on Resolution No. 1

Source: City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Background:

Rancho Palos Verdes is the most populated California city to have 90 percent or more of residents living in a Cal Fire-designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Over the years, the Palos Verdes Peninsula has seen numerous brush fires that were determined to be caused by electrical utility equipment.

Across the state, some of the most destructive and deadly wildfires were sparked by power equipment. But when it comes to undergrounding overhead utilities, fire safety is not taken into account when considering using ratepayer funds to pay for these projects under California's Electric Tariff Rule 20 program. The program was largely intended to address visual blight when it was implemented in 1967. Under Rule 20A, utilities must allocate ratepayer funds to undergrounding conversion projects chosen by local governments that have a public benefit and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead lines;
- Involve a street or road with a high volume of public traffic;
- Benefit a civic or public recreation area or area of unusual scenic interest; and,
- Be listed as an arterial street or major collector as defined in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Guidelines.

As we know, brush fires are not restricted to erupting in these limited areas. California's fire season has worsened in severity in recent years, claiming dozens of lives and destroying tens of thousands of structures in 2018 alone.

Excluding fire safety from Rule 20A eligibility criteria puts the task of undergrounding power lines in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones squarely on property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill.

The proposed resolution calls on the California Public Utilities Commission to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the proposed resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

If adopted, utilities will be incentivized to prioritize undergrounding projects that could potentially save millions of dollars and many lives.

League of California Cities Staff Analysis on Resolution No. 1

Staff: Rony Berdugo, Legislative Representative, Derek Dolfie, Legislative Representative, Caroline Cirrincione, Legislative Policy Analyst
Committees: Environmental Quality; Transportation, Communications, and Public Works

Summary:

This Resolution, in response to intensifying fire seasons and hazards associated with exposed energized utility lines, proposes that the League of California Cities (League) call upon the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to amend the Rule 20A program by expanding the criteria for undergrounding overhead utilities to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ). This Resolution also proposes that the League call upon the CPUC to increase utilities' funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

Background

California Wildfires and Utilities

Over the last several years, the increasing severity and frequency of California's wildfires have prompted state and local governments to seek urgent prevention and mitigation actions. Record breaking wildfires in Northern and Southern California in both 2017 and 2018 have caused destruction and loss of life. This severe fire trend has local officials seeking solutions to combat what is now a year-round fire season exacerbated by years of drought, intense weather patterns, untamed vegetation and global warming.

These conditions create a dangerous catalyst for wildfires caused by utilities as extreme wind and weather events make downed power lines more of a risk. In response to recent catastrophic wildfires, Governor Newsom established a Strike Force tasked with developing a "comprehensive roadmap" to address issues related to wildfires, climate change, and utilities. [The Strike Force report](#) acknowledges that measures to harden the electrical grid are critical to wildfire risk management. A key utility hardening strategy: undergrounding lines in extreme high-fire areas.

Governor Newsom's Wildfire Strike Force program report concludes, "It's not a question of "if" wildfire will strike, but "when."

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

This Resolution seeks to expand the undergrounding of overhead utility lines in VHFHSZ. California [Government Code Section 51178](#) requires the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE) to identify areas in the state as VHFHSZ based on the potential fire hazard in those areas. VHFHSZ are determined based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors. These zones are in both local responsibility areas and state responsibility areas. Maps of the statewide and county by county VHFHSZ can be found [here](#).¹

¹ <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/wildfire-prevention-planning-engineering/wildland-hazards-building-codes/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps/>

More than 25 million acres of California wildlands are classified under very high or extreme fire threat. Approximately 25 percent of the state's population, 11 million people, live in those high-risk areas. Additionally, over 350,000 Californians live in cities that are nearly encompassed within Cal Fire's maps of VHFHSZ. Similar to the proponents of this Resolution, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, over 75 communities have 90 percent or more of residents living in a VHFHSZ.

CPUC Rule 20 Program

The CPUC's Rule 20 program lays out the guidelines and procedures for converting overhead electric and telecommunication facilities to underground electric facilities. Rule 20 funding and criteria is provided at four levels. Levels A, B, and C, reflect progressively diminishing ratepayer funding for undergrounding projects. Recently added Rule 20D is a relatively new program that is specific to San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E), which was created in response to the destructive 2007 wildfires. Each of these levels will be discussed below:

Rule 20A

The first California overhead conversion program, Rule 20A, was created in 1967 under then Governor Ronald Reagan. The program was created to provide a consistent and structured means of undergrounding utility lines throughout the state with costs covered broadly by utility ratepayers.

Each year, Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs) propose their Rule 20A allocation amounts to the CPUC during annual general rate case proceedings. In this process, IOUs propose revised utility customer rates based on expected service costs, new energy procurement and projects for the following year, including Rule 20 allocations. The CPUC then reviews, amends, and approves IOU rates. Currently, the cumulative budgeted amount for Rule 20A for Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE), and San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) totals around \$95.7 million.

The funding set aside by IOUs for Rule 20A is allocated to local governments through a credit system, with each credit holding a value to be used solely for the costs of an undergrounding project. The credit system was created so that local governments and IOUs can complete undergrounding projects without municipal financing. Through Rule 20A, municipalities that have developed and received city council approval for an undergrounding plan receive annual credits from the IOU in their service area. At the last count by the CPUC, over 500 local governments (cities and counties) participate in the credit system.

While these credits have no inherent monetary value, they can be traded in or banked for the conversion of overhead lines. Municipalities can choose to accumulate their credits until their credit balance is sufficient to cover these conversion projects, or choose to borrow future undergrounding allocations for a period of up to five years. Once the cumulative balance of credits is sufficient to cover the cost of a conversion project, the municipality and the utility can move forward with the undergrounding. All of the planning, design, and construction is performed by the participating utility. Upon the completion of an undergrounding project, the utility is compensated through the local government's Rule 20A credits.

At the outset of the program, the amount of allocated credits were determined by a formula which factored in the number of utility meters within a municipality in comparison to the utilities' service territory. However, in recent years the formula has changed. Credit allocations for IOUs, except for PG&E, are now determined based on the allocation a city or county received in 1990 and is then adjusted for the following factors:

- 50% of the *change from the 1990* total budgeted amount is allocated for the ratio of the number of overhead meters in any city or unincorporated area to the total system overhead meters; and
- 50% of the *change from the 1990* total budgeted amount is allocated for the ratio of the number of meters (which includes older homes that have overhead services, and newer homes with completely underground services) in any city or the unincorporated area to the total system meters.

As noted, PG&E has a different funding formula for their Rule 20A credit allocations as they are not tied to the 1990 base allocation. Prior to 2011, PG&E was allocating approximately five to six percent of its revenue to the Rule 20A program. The CPUC decided in 2011 that PG&E's Rule 20A allocations should be reduced by almost half in an effort to decrease the growing accumulation of credits amongst local governments. Since 2011, PG&E's annual allocations for Rule 20A have been around \$41.3 million annually, which is between two and three percent of their total revenue.

Criteria for Rule 20A Projects

For an undergrounding project to qualify for the Rule 20A program, there are several criteria that need to be met. The project must have a public benefit and:

1. Eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead lines
2. Involve a street or road with a high volume of public traffic
3. Benefit a civic or public recreation area or area of unusual scenic interest,
4. Be listed as an arterial street or major collector as defined in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Guidelines

Notably, fire safety is excluded from the list of criteria that favors aesthetic and other public safety projects.

Rule 20A Credit System Imbalance Threatens Program Effectiveness

Allocations are made by utilities each year for Rule 20A credits. These current budget allocations total \$95.7 million a year. Currently, the cumulative balance of credits throughout the state totals over \$1 billion dollars. The Rule 20A cumulative balances aggregated by region can be found [here](#).²

² Program Review, California Overhead Conversion Program, Rule 20A for Years 2011-2015, "The Billion Dollar Risk," California Public Utilities Commission.
[https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUC_Public_Website/Content/About_Us/Organization/Divisions/Policy_and_Planning/PPD_Work_Products_\(2014_forward\)\(1\)/PPD_Rule_20-A.pdf](https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUC_Public_Website/Content/About_Us/Organization/Divisions/Policy_and_Planning/PPD_Work_Products_(2014_forward)(1)/PPD_Rule_20-A.pdf)

Note: The existing credit allocation formulas do not consider a municipality's need or plans for overhead conversion projects, resulting in large credit balances in some jurisdictions.

Cities and counties are, however, able to trade or sell unallocated Rule 20A credits if they will not be used to fund local undergrounding projects. There have been several cases where one agency has sold their unused credits, often for less than the full dollar value of the credits themselves to another agency.

Rule 20B

Rule 20B projects are those that do not fit the Rule 20A criteria, but do, however, involve both sides of the street for at least 600 feet. These projects are typically done in conjunction with larger developments and are mostly paid for by the developer or applicant. Additionally, the applicant is responsible for the installation.

Rule 20C

Rule 20C projects are usually small projects that involve property owners. The majority of the cost is usually borne by the applicants. Rule 20C applies when the project does not qualify for either Rule 20A or Rule 20B.

Rule 20D--Wildfire Mitigation Undergrounding Program

Rule 20D was approved by the CPUC in January of 2014 and only applies to SDG&E. The Rule 20D program was established largely in response to the destructive wildfires that occurred in San Diego in 2007 as a wildfire mitigation undergrounding program. According to SDG&E, the objective of the Rule 20D undergrounding is exclusively for fire hardening as opposed to aesthetics. The program is limited in scope and is restricted to communities in SDG&E's Fire Threat Zone (now referred to as the [High Fire Threat District or HFTD](#)). As of this time, the program has yet to yield any projects and no projects are currently planned.

For an undergrounding project to qualify for the Rule 20D program, a minimum of three of the following criteria must be met. The project must be near, within, or impactful to:

- Critical electric infrastructure
- Remaining useful life of electric infrastructure
- Exposure to vegetation or tree contact
- Density and proximity of fuel
- Critical surrounding non-electric assets (including structures and sensitive environmental areas)
- Service to public agencies
- Accessibility for firefighters

Similar to Rule 20A, SDG&E must allocate funding each year through their general rate case proceedings to Rule 20D to be approved by the CPUC. This funding is separate from the allocations SDG&E makes for Rule 20A. However, the process of distributing this funding to localities is different. The amount of funding allocated to each city and county for Rule 20D is based on the ratio of the number of miles of overhead lines in SDG&E Fire Threat Zones in a city or county to the total miles of SDG&E overhead lines in the entire SDG&E fire zone. The

Rule 20D program is administered by the utility consistent with the existing reporting, engineering, accounting, and management practices for Rule 20A.

The Committee may want to consider whether Rule 20D should instead be expanded, adapted, or further utilized to support funding for overhead conversions within VHFHSZ throughout the state.

Fiscal Impact:

The costs to the State associated with this Resolution will be related to the staff and programmatic costs to the CPUC to take the necessary measures to consider and adopt changes to Rule 20A to include projects in VHFHSZ to the list of criteria for eligibility.

This Resolution calls for an unspecified increase in funding for Rule 20A projects, inferring that portions of increased funds will go towards newly eligible high fire hazard zones. While the Resolution does not request a specific amount be allocated, it can be assumed that these increased costs will be supported by utility ratepayers. According to the CPUC, the annual allocations towards Rule 20A are \$95.7 million.

The CPUC currently reports a cumulative credit surplus valued at roughly \$1 billion that in various regions, given the approval of expanded eligibility called for by this Resolution, could be used to supplement and reduce the level of new dollars needed to make a significant impact in VHFHSZ. The CPUC follows that overhead conversion projects range from \$93,000 per mile for rural construction to \$5 million per mile for urban construction.

The Resolution states that “California is experiencing fire seasons of worsening severity” which is supported by not only the tremendous loss of property and life from recent wildfires, but also in the rising costs associated with clean up, recovery, and other economic losses with high estimates in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

The Committee may wish to consider the costs associated with undergrounding utility lines in relation to the costs associated with past wildfires and wildfires to come.

Comments:

CPUC Currently Exploring Revisions to Rule 20

In May 2017, the CPUC issued an Order Instituting Rulemaking to Consider Revisions to Electric Rule 20 and Related Matters. The CPUC will primarily focus on revisions to Rule 20A but may make conforming changes to other parts of Rule 20. The League is a party in these proceedings will provide comments.

Beyond Rule 20A: Additional Options for Funding Undergrounding Projects

There are various ways in which cities can generate funding for undergrounding projects that fall outside of the scope of Rule 20A. At the local level, cities can choose to forgo the Rule 20A process and opt to use their own General Fund money for undergrounding. Other options are also discussed below:

Rule 20D Expansion

The City of Berkeley in a 2018 study titled [“Conceptual Study for Undergrounding Utility Wires in Berkeley.”](#) found that the city could possibly qualify for Rule 20D funding if they actively pursued this opportunity in partnership with PG&E and the CPUC.

One of the study’s recommendations is to advocate for release of 20D funds (now earmarked exclusively for SDG&E) to be used for more aggressive fire hardening techniques for above-ground utility poles and equipment, for undergrounding power lines, and for more aggressive utility pole and vegetation management practices in the Very High Hazard Fire Zone within Berkeley’s city limits.

As an alternative to changing the criteria for Rule 20A, the Committee may wish to consider whether there is the opportunity to advocate for the expansion of Rule 20D funding more broadly, expanding its reach to all IOU territories.

Franchise Surcharge Fees

Aside from Rule 20 allocations, cities can generate funding for undergrounding through franchise fee surcharges. For example, SDG&E currently operates under a 50-year City franchise that was granted in 1970. Under the franchises approved by the San Diego City Council in December 1970, SDG&E agreed to pay a franchise fee to the City equivalent to 3% of its gross receipts from the sales of both natural gas and electricity for 30 years.

These fees were renegotiated in 2000 and in 2001 an agreement was between the City of San Diego, SDG&E, and the CPUC to extend the existing franchise fee to include revenues collected from surcharges. SDG&E requested an increase of 3.88% to its existing electric franchise fee surcharge. The bulk, 3.53% of this increase is to be used for underground conversion of overhead electric wires.

Based on SDG&E's revenue projections, the increase would result in an additional surcharge revenue amount of approximately \$36.5 million per year. SDG&E estimates that this would create a monthly increase of approximately \$3.00 to a typical residential customer's electric bill. These surcharge revenues would pay for additional undergrounding projects including those that do not meet the Rule 20A criteria. The City of Santa Barbara has also adopted a similar franchise surcharge fee.

Having this funding source allows the City of San Diego to underground significantly more miles of above ground utility lines than other municipalities. However, the surcharge is currently being challenged in court, as it is argued that the City had SDG&E impose a tax without a ballot measure.

Utility Bankruptcy and Undergrounding Funding

In considering this Resolution, it is important to understand that Rule 20A allocations have been more substantial in the past. As mentioned earlier, prior to 2011, PG&E was allocating approximately 5% to 6% of its revenue to the Rule 20A program. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to encourage an increase in Rule 20A allocations as history shows that utilities had the capacity to do so in the past.

However, in a time where IOUs such as PG&E are facing bankruptcy as the result of utility caused wildfires, there is the possibility that expanding rule 20A funding will generate more costs for the ratepayers.

Questions to Consider:

- 1) Is Rule 20A or Rule 20D the more appropriate program to advocate for such an expansion?
- 2) Are there any wildfire risks outside of VHFHSZ that could be mitigated by undergrounding projects?

Existing League Policy:

Public Safety:

The League supports additional funding for local agencies to recoup the costs associated with fire safety in the community and timely mutual aid reimbursement for disaster response services in other jurisdictions. (pg. 43)

The League supports the fire service mission of saving lives and protecting property through fire prevention, disaster preparedness, hazardous-materials mitigation, specialized rescue, etc., as well as cities' authority and discretion to provide all emergency services to their communities. (pg. 43)

Transportation, Communication, and Public Works:

Existing telecommunications providers and new entrants shall adhere to local city policies on public utility undergrounding. (pg. 54)

The League supports protecting the additional funding for local transportation and other critical unmet infrastructure needs. (pg. 51)

The League supports innovative strategies including public private partnerships at the state and local levels to enhance public works funding. (pg. 52)

Environmental Quality

The League opposes any legislation that interferes with local utility rate setting authority and opposes any legislation that restricts the ability of a city to transfer revenue from a utility (or other enterprise activity) to the city's general fund. (pg. 9)

Cities should continue to have the authority to issue franchises and any program should be at least revenue neutral relative to revenue currently received from franchises. (pg. 9)

The League is concerned about the impacts of escalating energy prices on low income residents and small businesses. The League supports energy pricing structures and other mechanisms to soften the impacts on this segment of our community. (pg. 10)

2019 Strategic Goals

Improve Disaster Preparedness, Recovery and Climate Resiliency.

- Provide resources to cities and expand partnerships to better prepare for and recover from wildfires, seismic events, erosion, mudslides and other disasters.
- Improve community preparedness and resiliency to respond to climate-related, natural and man-made disasters.

Support:

The following letters of concurrence were received:

The City of Hidden Hills

The City of La Cañada Flintridge

The City of Laguna Beach

The City of Lakeport

The City of Malibu

The City of Moorpark

The City of Nevada City

The City of Palos Verdes Estates

The City of Rolling Hills Estates

The City of Rolling Hills

The City of Ventura

LETTERS OF CONCURRENCE

Resolution No. 1

Amendment to Rule 20A



City of Hidden Hills

6165 Spring Valley Road * Hidden Hills, California 91302
(818) 888-9281 * Fax (818) 719-0083

August 14, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Hidden Hills supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Larry G. Weber
Mayor



City Council
Leonard Pieroni, Mayor
Gregory C. Brown, Mayor Pro Tem
Jonathan C. Curtis
Michael T. Davitt
Terry M. Walker

August 14, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of La Cañada Flintridge supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The City of La Cañada Flintridge is one of the few Southern California cities in which 100% of the community within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The City, in 1987, committed 100% of its 20A allocation for forty-five years from this year for a major downtown undergrounding project. Therefore, the only way our City can directly benefit from this Resolution is if there is an additional annual increased allocation for this purpose. Due to the extreme threat the City experienced at the time of the Station Fire, the City is keenly aware of the damage a fire may potentially cause, whether from utility issues or from natural causes. The City strongly supports any effort, including this Resolution, to reduce fire danger for the City's residents.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly with the City of La Cañada Flintridge in support.

Sincerely,

Leonard Pieroni
Mayor



July 25, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Laguna Beach supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. Ten to the Top 20 most destructive fires in California were caused by electrical sources. The California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for undergrounding of utilities costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it. We also believe that this program should redirect unused Rule 20A allocations from cities who have no undergrounding projects planned to the cities in Very High Fire Hazard Severity zones.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects. The City of Laguna Beach recommends that the resolution also be amended to call on the CPUC to redirect unused Rule 20A allocations from cities who have no undergrounding projects planned to the cities in Very High Fire Hazard Severity zones.

Nearly 90% of the City of Laguna Beach land area is designated under State Law and local ordinance as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. While the City has used Rule 20A and 20B funding in the past to underground more than half of its overhead utilities, sufficient funding is not available to underground the remaining parts of the City.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

July 25, 2019
Page 2

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bob Whalen", with a stylized, cursive script.

Bob Whalen
Mayor

CITY OF LAKEPORT

*Over 125 years of community
pride, progress and service*



August 7, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Lakeport supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Tim Barnes
Mayor
City of Lakeport

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Barnes", is written over a faint, larger signature that appears to read "Arbuckle".



City of Malibu

Jefferson Wagner, Mayor

23825 Stuart Ranch Road · Malibu, California · 90265-4861
Phone (310) 456-2489 · Fax (310) 456-3356 · www.malibucity.org

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: City of Rancho Palos Verdes Proposed Resolution to Amend California Public Utilities Commission Rule 20A – SUPPORT

Dear Ms. Arbuckle:

At its Regular meeting on August 12, 2019, the Malibu City Council unanimously voted to support the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state, but California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, as well as willing and able to foot the bill. The City of Malibu agrees with Rancho Palos Verdes that Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects. As a recent series of news stories on wildfire preparedness in California pointed out, there are more than 75 communities across the state with populations over 1,000, including Rancho Palos Verdes and Malibu, where at least 90 percent of residents live in a Cal Fire-designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

It is well-known that electric utility equipment is a common fire source, and has sparked some of the most destructive blazes in our state's history. Moving power lines underground is, therefore, a critical tool in preventing them. Currently, Rule 20A primarily addresses visual blight, but with fire seasons worsening, it is key that fire safety also be considered when local governments pursue Rule 20A projects, and that annual funding allocations for the program be expanded.

It is worth noting that the State does have a program, Rule 20D, that factors in fire safety for funding undergrounding projects. However, this is limited to San Diego Gas & Electric Company projects in certain areas only. This needs to be expanded to include projects in all projects within designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Rancho PV League Resolution
Amend Rule 20A
August 15, 2019
Page 2 of 2

The proposed resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, the City of Malibu strongly concurs that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,



Jefferson Wagner
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Members of the Malibu City Council
Reva Feldman, City Manager
Megan Barnes, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, mbarnes@rpvca.gov



CITY OF MOORPARK

799 Moorpark Avenue, Moorpark, California 93021
Main City Phone Number (805) 517-6200 | Fax (805) 532-2205 | moorpark@moorparkca.gov

July 24, 2019

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR RANCHO PALOS VERDES RESOLUTION RE: POWER LINE
UNDERGROUNDING

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Moorpark supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

All cities in Ventura County, including Moorpark, have wildfire prevention fresh in our memories following the highly destructive 2017-2018 Thomas Fire, which was caused by above-ground power lines. The 2018 Woolsey Fire similarly affected Ventura County, and lawsuits have been filed alleging it was also caused by above-ground power lines. Each of these fires caused billions of dollars in damages and highlight the importance of undergrounding power lines.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janice Parvin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janice" and last name "Parvin" clearly distinguishable.

Janice Parvin
Mayor

cc: City Council
City Manager



Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Nevada City supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The City of Nevada City would also like to add that the local agency be given the power to use private firms to do design, inspect and construct Rule 20A projects in local jurisdiction rather than be required to use the designated local utility. In addition, the City of Nevada City wants the CPUC to allow local jurisdictions to transfer excess funds between agencies to better serve projects in high fire hazard severity zones.

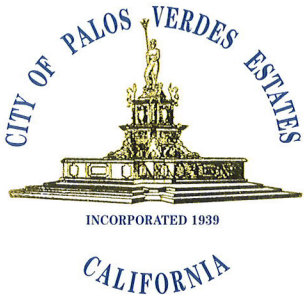
The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reinette Senum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Reinette" being more prominent and the last name "Senum" following in a similar style.

Reinette Senum
Mayor
City of Nevada City



CITY OF
Palos Verdes Estates

July 25, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Palos Verdes Estates supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's current Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Mayor Kenneth J. Kao
City of Palos Verdes Estates

cc: PVE City Council
PVE Interim City Manager Petru
RPV City Manager Willmore



**City of
Rolling Hills Estates**

Judith Mitchell
Mayor

Velveth Schmitz
Mayor Pro Tem

Britt Huff
Council Member

Frank V. Zerunyan
Council Member

Steven Zuckerman
Council Member

August 14, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Rolling Hills Estates supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,


Judith Mitchell
Mayor



City of Rolling Hills

INCORPORATED JANUARY 24, 1957

NO. 2 PORTUGUESE BEND ROAD
ROLLING HILLS, CALIF. 90274
(310) 377-1521
FAX: (310) 377-7288

August 14, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Board of Directors:

The City of Rolling Hills supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Leah Mirsch
Mayor

July 29, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St., Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

The City of Ventura supports the City of Rancho Palos Verdes' effort to bring a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.


Undergrounding power lines is an important tool in preventing destructive wildfires that have devastated communities across our state. But California's Rule 20A program, which allows local governments to pay for these costly projects with ratepayer funds, does not factor in fire safety for eligibility. Unless projects meet the program's limited eligibility criteria, they are left to be funded by property owners who are proactive, willing and able to foot the bill. We believe Rule 20A offers an important opportunity for fire prevention and that the California Public Utilities Commission should expand this program so more communities can utilize it.

The resolution calls on the CPUC to amend Rule 20A to include projects in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to the list of criteria for eligibility. To facilitate more undergrounding projects in these high-risk zones, the resolution also calls on the CPUC to increase funding allocations for Rule 20A projects.

The resolution is also in line with one of the League's 2019 Strategic Goals of improving disaster preparedness, recovery and climate resiliency.

For these reasons, we concur that the resolution should go before the General Assembly.

Sincerely,



Alex D. McIntyre
City Manager

2. A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS TO ADDRESS THE DEVASTATING IMPACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSBOUNDARY POLLUTION FLOWS INTO THE SOUTHERNMOST REGIONS OF CALIFORNIA AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Source: San Diego County Division

Concurrence of five or more cities/city officials

Cities: Calexico; Coronado; Imperial Beach; San Diego

Individual City Officials: City of Brawley: Mayor Pro Tem Norma Kastner-Jauregui; Council Members Sam Couchman, Luke Hamby, and George Nava. City of Escondido: Deputy Mayor Consuelo Martinez. City of La Mesa: Council Member Bill Baber. City of Santee: Mayor John Minto, City of Vista: Mayor Judy Ritter and Council Member Amanda Young Rigby

Referred to: Environmental Quality Policy Committee

WHEREAS, international transboundary rivers that carry water across the border from Mexico into Southern California are a major source of sewage, trash, chemicals, heavy metals and toxins; and

WHEREAS, transboundary flows threaten the health of residents in the United States and Mexico, harm important estuarine land and water of international significance, force closure of beaches, damage farmland, adversely impact the South San Diego County and Imperial County economy; compromise border security, and directly affect U.S. military readiness; and

WHEREAS, a significant amount of untreated sewage, sediment, hazardous chemicals and trash have been entering southern California through both the Tijuana River Watershed (75 percent of which is within Mexico) and New River flowing into southern California's coastal waterways and residential and agricultural communities in Imperial County eventually draining into the Salton Sea since the 1930s; and

WHEREAS, in February 2017, an estimated 143 million gallons of raw sewage flowed into the Tijuana River and ran downstream into the Pacific Ocean and similar cross border flows have caused beach closures at Border Field State Park that include 211 days in 2015; 162 days in 2016; 168 days in 2017; 101 days in 2018; and 187 days to date for 2019 as well as closure of a number of other beaches along the Pacific coastline each of those years; and

WHEREAS, approximately 132 million gallons of raw sewage has discharged into the New River flowing into California through communities in Imperial County, with 122 million gallons of it discharged in a 6-day period in early 2017; and

WHEREAS, the presence of pollution on state and federal public lands is creating unsafe conditions for visitors; these lands are taxpayer supported and intended to be managed for recreation, resource conservation and the enjoyment by the public, and

WHEREAS, the current insufficient and degrading infrastructure in the border zone poses a significant risk to the public health and safety of residents and the environment on both

sides of the border, and places the economic stress on cities that are struggling to mitigate the negative impacts of pollution; and

WHEREAS, the 1944 treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding *Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande* allocates flows on trans-border rivers between Mexico and the United States, and provides that the nations, through their respective sections of the International Boundary Water Commission shall give control of sanitation in cross border flows the highest priority; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, the United States and Mexico entered into the *Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States Concerning the Establishment of a North American Development Bank* which created the North American Development Bank (NADB) to certify and fund environmental infrastructure projects in border-area communities; and

WHEREAS, public concerns in response to widespread threats to public health and safety, damage to fish and wildlife resources and degradation to California's environment resulting from transboundary river flow pollution in the southernmost regions of the state requires urgent action by the Federal and State governments, and

WHEREAS, Congress authorized funding under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act and established the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) program for the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) in 1996 to provide grants for high-priority water, wastewater, and storm-water infrastructure projects within 100 kilometers of the southern border; and

WHEREAS, the EPA administers the STAG and BWIP programs, and coordinates with the North American Development Bank (NADB) to allocate BWIP grant funds to projects in the border zone; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the BWIP program has provided funding for projects in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas that would not have been constructed without the grant program; and

WHEREAS, the BWIP program was initially funded at \$100 million per year, but, over the last 20 years, has been continuously reduced to its current level of \$10 million; and

WHEREAS, in its FY 2020 Budget Request, the Administration proposed to eliminate the BWIP program; and

WHEREAS, officials from EPA Region 9, covering California, have identified a multitude of BWIP-eligible projects along the southern border totaling over \$300 million; and

WHEREAS, without federal partnership through the BWIP program and state support to address pollution, cities that are impacted by transboundary sewage and toxic waste flows are

left with limited resources to address a critical pollution and public health issue and limited legal remedies to address the problem; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties, (NACo) at their Annual Conference on July 15, 2019 and the U.S. Conference of Mayors at their Annual Conference on in July 1, 2019 both enacted resolutions calling on the federal and state governments to work together to fund and address this environmental crisis; and

WHEREAS, local governments and the public support the State's primary objectives in complying with environmental laws including the Clean Water Act, Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and Endangered Species Act and are supported by substantial public investments at all levels of government to maintain a healthy and sustainable environment for future residents of California, and

WHEREAS, League of California Cities policy has long supported efforts to ensure water quality and oppose contamination of water resources; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED at the League General Assembly, assembled at the League Annual Conference on October 18, 2019 in Long Beach, that the League calls upon the Federal and State governments to restore and ensure proper funding to the U.S- Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) and recommit to working bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, that result in significant health, environmental, and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.

Background Information on Resolution No. 2

Source: San Diego County Division

Background:

Along California's southern border with Mexico, the New River in Imperial County and the Tijuana River in San Diego County are a major sources of raw sewage, trash, chemicals, heavy metals, and toxins that pollute local communities. Sewage contaminated flows in the Tijuana River have resulted in significant impacts to beach recreation that includes the closure of Border Field State Beach for more than 800 days over the last 5-years. Similarly, contaminated flows in the New River presents comparable hazards, impacts farm land, and contributes to the ongoing crisis in the Salton Sea. These transboundary flows threaten the health of residents in California and Mexico, harms the ecosystem, force closures at beaches, damage farm land, makes people sick, and adversely affects the economy of border communities. The root cause of this cross border pollution is from insufficient or failing water and wastewater infrastructure in the border zone and inadequate federal action to address the problem through existing border programs.

The severity of cross border pollution has continued to increase, due in part to the rapid growth of urban centers since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). While economic growth has contributed to greater employment, the environmental infrastructure of the region has not kept pace, which is why Congress authorized the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) in 1996. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the BWIP and coordinates with the North American Development Bank (NADB) to provide financing and technical support for projects on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border. Unfortunately, the current BWIP funding at \$10 million per year is only a fraction of the initial program budget that shares funding with the entire 2,000 mile Mexican border with California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. EPA officials from Region 9 have identified an immediate need for BWIP projects totaling over \$300 million just for California. Without federal partnerships through the BWIP and state support to address cross border pollution, cities that are impacted by transboundary sewage and toxic waste flows are left with limited resources to address a critical pollution and public health issue.

The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) is another important federal stakeholder that, under the Treaty of 1944 with Mexico, must address border sanitation problems. While IBWC currently captures and treats some of the pollution generated in Mexico, it also redirects cross border flows without treatment directly into California.

Improving environmental and public health conditions for communities along the border is essential for maintaining strong border economy with Mexico. The IBWC, EPA, and NADB are the important federal partners with existing bi-national programs that are able to immediately implement solutions on cross border pollution. California is in a unique position to take the lead and work with local and federal partners to implement real solutions that will addresses the long standing and escalating water quality crisis along the border.

For those reasons, the cities of Imperial Beach and Coronado requested the San Diego County Division to propose a resolution at the 2019 League Annual Conference calling upon the federal

and state governments to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the waterways of the southernmost regions of California, San Diego and Imperial Counties and the Pacific Ocean.

On August 12, 2019 at the regularly scheduled meeting of the San Diego County Division, the membership unanimously endorsed submittal of the resolution, with close to 75% membership present and voting.

The Imperial County Division does not have a schedule meeting until after the deadline to submit proposed resolutions. However, the City of Calexico, which is most directly impacted by initial pollution flow of the New River from Mexicali, sent a letter in concurrence of this resolution as well as numerous city official from cities within Imperial County and the Imperial County Board of Supervisors. The League Imperial County Division will place a vote to support this resolution on the agenda of their September 26, 2019 meeting.

League of California Cities Staff Analysis on Resolution No. 2

Staff: Derek Dolfie, Legislative Representative
Carly Shelby, Legislative and Policy Development Assistant
Committees: Environmental Quality

Summary:

This Resolution states that the League of California Cities should call upon the State and Federal governments to restore and ensure proper funding for the U.S. – Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) and work bi-nationally to address water quality issues resulting from transboundary flows from Mexico’s Tijuana River into the United States containing untreated sewage, polluted sediment, and trash.

Background:

The League of California Cities’ San Diego County Division is sponsoring this resolution to address their concerns over the contaminated flows from the Tijuana River into California that have resulted in the degradation of water quality and water recreational areas in Southern California.

The Tijuana River flows north through highly urbanized areas in Mexico before it enters the Tijuana River Estuary and eventually the Pacific Ocean via waterways in San Diego County in California. Urban growth in Tijuana has contributed to a rise in rates of upstream flows from water treatment facilities in Mexico. These treatment facilities have raised the amount of untreated sewage and waste in the Tijuana River due to faulty infrastructure and improper maintenance. The federal government refers to the river as an “impaired water body” because of the presence of pollutants in excess, which pose significant health risks to residents and visitors in communities on both sides of the border.

Federal Efforts to Address Pollution Crisis

To remedy the Tijuana River’s low water quality, the United States and Mexico entered into a Treaty in 1944 entitled: *Utilization of Waters of the Colorado River and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande – the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC)*. The IBWC was designed to consist of a United States section and a Mexico section. Both sections were tasked with negotiating and implementing resolutions to address water pollution in the area, which includes overseeing the development of water treatment and diversion infrastructure.

After the formation of the IBWC, the U.S. and Mexico entered into a treaty in 1993 entitled: *Agreement Concerning the Establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank*. This agreement established the North American Development Bank (NADB), which certifies and funds infrastructure projects located within 100 kilometers (62 miles) of the border line. The NADB supports federal programs like the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP), which was initially funded at \$100 million, annually.

The degradation of existing water treatment infrastructure along the border coincides with the federal government’s defunding of the BWIP, which has steadily decreased from \$100 million in 1996 to \$10 million today. The Federal FY 2020 Budget proposes eliminating BWIP funding

altogether. EPA's regions 6 and 9 (includes U.S. states that border Mexico) have identified a number of eligible projects that address public health and environmental conditions along the border totaling \$340 million.

The NADB has funded the development of water infrastructure in both the U.S. and Mexico. Water diversion and treatment infrastructure along the U.S – Mexico border includes, but is not limited to, the following facilities:

- *The South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP)*. This facility was constructed by the U.S. in 1990 and is located on the California side of the border and is operated under the jurisdiction of the IBWC. The SBIWTP serves as a diversion and treatment sewage plant to address the flow of untreated sewage from Mexico into the United States.
- *Pump Station CILA*. CILA was constructed by Mexico in 1991 and is located along the border in Mexico. This facility serves as the SBIWTP's Mexican counterpart.

Both the SBIWTP and CILA facilities have had a multitude of overflows containing untreated sewage and toxic waste that spills into the Tijuana River. The cause of overflows can be attributed to flows exceeding the maximum capacity that the infrastructure can accommodate (this is exacerbated during wet and rainy seasons) and failure to properly operate and maintain the facilities. Much of the existing infrastructure has not had updates or repairs for decades, causing overflows to become more frequent and severe. The most notable overflow occurred in February 2017, wherein 143 million gallons of polluting waste discharged into the Tijuana River; affecting the Tijuana Estuary, the Pacific Ocean, and Southern California's waterways.

State Actions

In response to the February 2017 overflow, the San Diego Water Board's Executive Officer sent a letter to the U.S. and Mexican IBWC Commissioners which included recommendations on how to improve existing infrastructure and communications methods between both nations.

In September of 2018, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra submitted a lawsuit against IBWC for Violating the Clean Water Act by allowing flows containing sewage and toxic waste to flow into California's waterways, posing a public health and ecological crisis. The cities of Imperial Beach, San Diego, Chula Vista, the Port of San Diego, and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Board have also filed suit against the IBWC. The suit is awaiting its first settlement conference on October 19, 2019. If parties are unable to reach a settlement, the case will go to trial.

Fiscal Impact:

California's economy is currently the sixth largest in the world, with tourism spending topping \$140.6 billion in 2018. In the past five years, San Diego's Border Field State Park has been closed for over 800 days because of pollution from the Tijuana River. A decline in the State's beach quality and reputation could carry macroeconomic effects that could ripple outside of the San Diego County region and affect coastal communities throughout California.

Existing League Policy

The League of California Cities has extensive language on water in its Summary of Existing Policy and Guiding Principles. Fundamentally, the League recognizes that beneficial water quality is essential to the health and welfare of California and all of its citizens. Additionally, the League advocates for local, state and federal governments to work cooperatively to ensure that water quality is maintained.

The following policy relates to the issue of water quality:

- Surface and groundwater should be protected from contamination.
- Requirements for wastewater discharge into surface water and groundwater to safeguard public health and protect beneficial uses should be supported.
- When addressing contamination in a water body, water boards should place priority emphasis on clean-up strategies targeting sources of pollution, rather than in stream or end-of-pipe treatment.
- Water development projects must be economically, environmentally and scientifically sound.
- The viability of rivers and streams for instream uses such as fishery habitat, recreation and aesthetics must be protected.
- Protection, maintenance, and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat and resources.

Click here to view the [Summary of Existing Policy and Guiding Principles 2018](#).

Comments:

1. Water quality issues are prevalent across California and have been a constant priority of the State's legislature and residents. In 2014, California's voters approved Proposition 1, which authorized \$7.5 billion in general obligation bonds to fund water quality improvement projects. In 2019, the Legislature reached an agreement to allocate \$130 million from the State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to address failing water infrastructure and bad water qualities for over one million of California's residents in rural communities. Water quality is not an issue unique to the County of San Diego and communities along the border.
2. Tijuana River cross-border pollution has caught national attention. Members of Congress have proposed recent funding solutions to address the pollution crisis, including:
 - In February of 2019, California Congressional Representatives Vargas, Peters, and Davis helped secure \$15 million for the EPA to use as part of its BWIP.
 - *H.R. 3895 (Vargas, Peters, 2019), The North American Development Bank Pollution Solution Act*. This bill seeks to support pollution mitigation efforts along the border by increasing the NADB's capital by \$1.5 billion.
 - *H.R. 4039 (Levin, 2019), The Border Water Infrastructure Improvement Act*. This bill proposes increasing funding to the BWIP from the existing \$10 million to \$150 million as a continuous appropriation until 2025.Additionally, the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors enacted resolutions in support of increased funding for U.S. – Mexico border water infrastructure to address the environmental crisis in 2019.

3. The border pollution problem has sparked action from local, state, and federal actors. Should this resolution be adopted, League membership should be aware that future action will be adapted by what is explicitly stated in the resolution's language. In current form, the resolution's resolve clause cites the BWIP as the only program that should receive reinstated and proper funding. League staff recommends the language be modified to state:

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED at the League General Assembly, assembled at the League Annual Conference on October 18, 2019 in Long Beach, that the League calls upon the Federal and State governments to restore and ensure proper funding for environmental infrastructure on the U.S. – Mexico Border, including to the U.S.–Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP), and recommit to working bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, that result in significant health, environmental, and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.”

Modifying the language would ensure enough flexibility for the League to support funding mechanisms outside of the prescribed federally-operated BWIP.

4. It remains unclear if there is an appetite in Washington to fund border-related infrastructure projects that address environmental quality. Given the high probability of another overflow containing waste and sewage from the existing infrastructure operated by the IBWC, League membership should consider the outcome if no resolution is reached to address the issue.

Support:

The following letters of concurrence were received:

Cities:

The City of Calexico

The City of Coronado

The City of Imperial Beach

The City of San Diego

In their individual capacity:

Amanda Young Rigby, City of Vista Council Member

Bill Baber, City of La Mesa Council Member

Consuelo Martinez, City of Escondido Deputy Mayor

George A. Nava, City of Brawley Council Member

John Minto, City of Santee Mayor

Judy Ritter, City of Vista Mayor

Luke Hamby, City of Brawley Council Member

Norma Kastner-Jauregui, City of Brawley Mayor Pro-Tempore

Sam Couchman, City of Brawley Council Member

LETTERS OF CONCURRENCE

Resolution No. 2

International Transboundary
Pollution Flows



CITY OF CALEXICO

608 Heber Ave.
Calexico, CA 92231-2840
Tel: 760.768.2110
Fax: 760.768.2103
www.calexico.ca.gov

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts Of International Transboundary River
Pollution Flow Resolution**

President Arbuckle:

The city of Calexico strongly supports the San Diego County Division's effort to submit a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

The Division's resolution calls upon the Federal and State governments to restore and ensure proper funding of the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the waterways of the southernmost regions of California (San Diego and Imperial Counties) and the Pacific Ocean.

Local government and the public support the State's water and environmental quality objectives and League policy has long supported efforts to ensure water quality and oppose contamination of water resources. This resolution addresses the critical need for the federal and state governments to recommit to work bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, that result in significant health, environmental and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.

As members of the League, our city values the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. We appreciate your time on this issue.

Viva Calexico!

If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 760/768-2110.

Sincerely,

CITY OF CALEXICO

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Dale". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Dale
City Manager

Cc: Honorable Mayor Bill Hodge

Viva Calexico!



CITY OF CORONADO

1825 STRAND WAY
CORONADO, CA 92118

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
(619) 522-7335
FAX (619) 522-7846

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts of International Transboundary River Pollution Flows Resolution

This letter is written on behalf of and with the support of the Coronado City Council. The City of Coronado wholeheartedly supports the resolution adopted by the San Diego County and Imperial County Division of the California League of Cities.


The San Diego County Division's resolution calls upon the federal and state governments to restore and ensure proper funding of the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the waterways of the southernmost regions of California (San Diego and Imperial Counties) and the Pacific Ocean.

The City has been working closely with the Environmental Protection Agency and other federal partners on the matter since early 2018. City leaders are committed to finding long-term, sustainable solutions to this problem. Through its advocacy and education efforts, the City of Coronado has raised national awareness of the problem among legislators, political appointees and career staff at federal agencies. These efforts have been successful. However, the City along with our coalition partners, look forward to more action to swiftly resolve this issue.

Local government and the public support the state's water and environmental quality objectives and League policy has long supported efforts to ensure water quality and oppose contamination of water resources. This resolution addresses the critical need for the federal and state governments to recommit to work bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, that result in significant health, environmental and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.

As members of the League, Coronado values the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. We appreciate your time on this issue. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Blair King
Coronado City Manager

cc: Coronado Mayor and City Council
Bill Baber, President, San Diego County Division
c/o Catherine Hill, Regional Public Affairs Manager, San Diego County Division chill@cacities.org



City of Imperial Beach, California

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

825 Imperial Beach Blvd., Imperial Beach, CA 91932 Tel: (619) 423-8303 Fax: (619) 628-1395

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K St. Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts Of International Transboundary River
Pollution Flow Resolution

President Arbuckle:

The city of Imperial Beach appreciates and supports the San Diego County Division's effort to submit a resolution for consideration by the full membership of the League of California Cities.

The Division's resolution calls on Federal and State government to address the impacts of transboundary pollution flows into the Southwestern regions of California. The pollution in these areas is an environmental disaster that threatens the health and general welfare of residents near the Mexican border in Imperial and San Diego Counties.

I encourage all voting delegates and elected officials in attendance at the 2019 Annual League of California Cities Conference in Long Beach to support this important resolution as it addresses the critical need for the federal and state government to recommit to work bi-nationally to address the serious contamination issues and to develop and implement long-term solutions.

I am available for any questions or additional information related to this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Andy Hall
City Manger

Cc: Honorable Mayor Serge Dedina
Honorable Mayor Pro Tem Robert Patton
Honorable Councilmember Paloma Aguirre
Honorable Councilmember Ed Spriggs
Honorable Councilmember Mark West



City of Imperial Beach, California

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

825 Imperial Beach Blvd., Imperial Beach, CA 91932 Tel: (619) 423-8303 Fax: (619) 628-1395

August 16, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts Of International Transboundary River Pollution Flow Resolution

President Arbuckle:

The city of Imperial Beach strongly supports the San Diego County Division's effort to submit a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

The Division's resolution calls upon the Federal and State governments to restore and ensure proper funding of the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the waterways of the southernmost regions of California (San Diego and Imperial Counties) and the Pacific Ocean.

Local government and the public support the State's water and environmental quality objectives and League policy has long supported efforts to ensure water quality and oppose contamination of water resources. This resolution addresses the critical need for the federal and state governments to recommit to work bi-nationally to develop and implement long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharges of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows originating from Mexico, that result in significant health, environmental and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.

As members of the League, our city values the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. We appreciate your time on this issue. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 619-423-8303.

Sincerely,

Serge Dedina
Mayor



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

KEVIN L. FAULCONER

Mayor

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts of International Transboundary River
Pollution Flow Resolution**

President Arbuckle:

The City of San Diego supports the San Diego County Division in their effort to submit a resolution to the General Assembly at the League of California Cities' 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

To suppress the flow of pollution between the Mexico and Southern California's water channels, the Division requests for the Federal and State governments to give proper funding to the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP).

The City of San Diego and its citizens have expressed their concerns about untreated sewage, polluted sediment and trash flowing from Mexico, into California, causing health, environmental and safety concerns. The State's water and environmental quality objectives and League policy has long supported efforts to ensure water quality and oppose contamination of water resources. With the Division's resolution, the great need for federal and state governments to reconsider working together, will help in developing a long-term solution to address serious water quality and contamination issues.

As members of the League, our City values the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. We appreciate your time on this issue.

Please contact me at (619)453-9946 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Denice Garcia
Director of International Affairs

Cc: Honorable Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer





AMANDA YOUNG RIGBY

CITY COUNCILWOMAN

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Border Sewage Issues

Dear President Arbuckle;

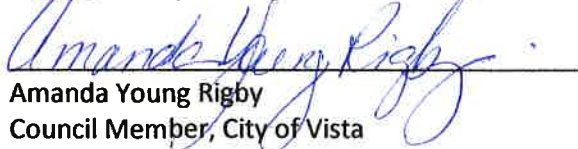
As a Council Member in the City of Vista, and solely in my individual capacity as such, I write in **support** of the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Conference Resolution proposed by the San Diego County Division to address the constant sewage pollution issues at the international border with Mexico.

This Resolution requests that the federal and state governments recognize the paramount importance of this issue and address the devastating impacts that this constant contamination has on the southernmost regions of California and the Pacific coastline by requesting the necessary funding to develop and implement effective and long term solutions to the raw sewage contamination coming into San Diego and Imperial Counties from Mexico.

Although I have lived in Vista for 27 years now, I grew up in Imperial Beach and know well the severe health and environmental impact that this situation has had on our border communities for the **decades**.

As a member of the League, I value the League's ability to effectively advocate on behalf of not only our cities but in effect, our citizens, and this is an important issue for our entire state. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me at the number below. Thank you for your consideration.

Most Sincerely,


Amanda Young Rigby
Council Member, City of Vista

cc: Vista City Council
Vista City Manager
Vista City Attorney
City of Imperial Beach
City of Coronado
City of Calexico
City of San Diego



**CITY OF
LA MESA**
JEWEL of the HILLS

August 16, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Environmental and Water Quality Impacts Of International Transboundary River Pollution Flows Resolution

President Arbuckle:

As a Council Member for the City of La Mesa and in my individual capacity, not on behalf of the full La Mesa City Council as a body or the City, I am writing you in support of the San Diego County Division's effort to submit a resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at the League's 2019 Annual Conference in Long Beach.

The Division's resolution calls upon the Federal and State governments to restore and ensure proper funding of the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the waterways of the southernmost regions of California (San Diego and Imperial Counties) and the Pacific Ocean.

As San Diego County Division President and a member of the League, I value the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. I appreciate your time on this issue. Please feel free to contact me at 619-667-1106, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

BILL BABER
COUNCIL MEMBER CITY OF LA MESA
PRESIDENT, LEAGUE SAN DIEGO COUNTY DIVISION

August 16, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

As one Council Member of the city of Escondido, and in my individual capacity and not on behalf of the Council as a body or the City, I write in support of the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Conference Resolution proposed by the San Diego County Division to address the transboundary river flow pollution impacting cities in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

This resolution calls upon the federal and state governments to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the southernmost regions of California and the Pacific Ocean by requesting the necessary funding to develop solutions for pollution coming into San Diego County and Imperial County waterways through the Tijuana River and New River, respectively.

The passage of the proposed resolution by the San Diego County Division would provide support for the restoration of much needed funding and development and implementation of long-term solutions to address serious water quality and contamination issues, such as discharge of untreated sewage and polluted sediment and trash-laden transboundary flows that result in significant health, environmental, and safety concerns in communities along California's southern border impacting the state.

As a member of the League, I value the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. I appreciate your time on this issue. Please feel free to contact me at cmartinez@escondido.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Consuelo Martinez
Deputy Mayor

cc: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
Jeffrey R. Epp, City Manager



CITY OF BRAWLEY

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

383 Main Street
Brawley, CA 92227
Phone: (760) 351-3048
FAX: (760) 351-3088

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

As one Council Member of the City of Brawley, and in my individual capacity and not on behalf of the Council as a body or the City, I write in support of the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Conference Resolution proposed by the San Diego County Division to address the transboundary river flow pollution impacting cities in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

This resolution calls upon the federal and state governments to address the devastating impacts of international transboundary pollution flows into the southernmost regions of California and the Pacific Ocean by requesting the necessary funding to develop solutions for pollution coming into San Diego County and Imperial County waterways through the Tijuana River and New River, respectively.

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As a member of the League, I value the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. I appreciate your time on this issue. Please feel free to contact me at (City email) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

George A. Nava
City Council Member
City of Brawley

MAYOR
John W. Minto



CITY OF SANTEE

CITY COUNCIL
Ronn Hall
Stephen Houlahan
Laura Koval
Rob McNelis

August 15, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

As Mayor of the city of Santee, and in my individual capacity and not on behalf of the Council as a body or the City, I write in support of the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Conference Resolution proposed by the San Diego County Division to address the transboundary river flow pollution impacting cities in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

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Sincerely,

JOHN W. MINTO
Mayor
City of Santee



JUDY RITTER

MAYOR

August 16, 2019

Jan Arbuckle, President
League of California Cities
1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear President Arbuckle:

As Mayor of the city of Vista, and in my individual capacity and not on behalf of the Council as a body or the City, I write in support of the League of California Cities 2019 Annual Conference Resolution proposed by the San Diego County Division to address the transboundary river flow pollution impacting cities in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

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As a member of the League, I value the policy development process provided to the General Assembly. I appreciate your time on this issue. Please feel free to contact me at jritter@cityofvista.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Judy Ritter
Mayor
City of Vista



CITY OF BRAWLEY

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

383 Main Street
Brawley, CA 92227
Phone: (760) 351-3048
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August 15, 2019

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1400 K Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Sincerely,

Luke Hamby
City Council Member
City of Brawley



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August 15, 2019

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Sincerely,

Norma Kastner-Jauregui
Mayor Pro-Tempore
City of Brawley



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August 15, 2019

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Sincerely,

Sam Couchman
City Council Member
City of Brawley