

June 11, 2020

The Honorable Juan Vargas
United States House of Representatives
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Vargas, Senator Feinstein and Senator Harris,

The Heber Public Utility District respectfully urges you and your colleagues to consider supporting Congressman John Garamendi's H.R. 7073, Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act.

As a provider of water, sewer, parks and recreation to 7,000 residents in Heber, access to resources to confront COVID-19, as well as relief to recover, is essential to continuing our operations and best serving our – and your – constituents.

COVID-19 has brought significant challenges to our community and our district. We are deferring maintenance in our water distribution and treatment system, wastewater collection and treatment processes and we have closed our parks. We are operating with only one person at each plant and at the office to conform with social distancing rules. We are not charging late fees and will not shut off water for non-payment.

As the Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act (H.R. 7073) moves through approval, I urge you and your colleagues to keep in mind these very serious issues. Independent special districts and the communities and regions that rely on our services across the nation will be further harmed should the pandemic continue and local special districts not be considered for inclusion in resources already provided to other entities. On behalf of our district and our mutual constituents, we request you:

- **Support H.R. 7073 “Special district Provide Essential Service Act”** to ensure that all local governments have the support they need to deliver the crucial quality of life services their communities rely on. The Special District Provide Essential Services Act will make special districts eligible for future federal assistance Congress provides to manage the COVID-19 pandemic.



We thank you for your leadership in securing significant relief for our nation in the previous COVID-19 relief bills. **But without the aforementioned fixes, special districts like ours, and thousands of others serving millions of Americans, will struggle to maintain the critical local infrastructure and continue the essential community services that our nation's businesses and families depend upon.**

Thank you for your consideration,

Moises Cardenas,
President, Heber Public Utility District

CC:

Steven Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
[via LegAffairs@do.treas.gov]

California Special Districts Association
[via advocacy@cda.net]



U.S. CONGRESSMAN
JOHN GARAMENDI
REPRESENTING CALIFORNIA'S 3RD DISTRICT



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Garamendi Introduces Bill to Support Special Districts in Future Coronavirus Relief Legislation

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June 2, 2020 | Press Release

Washington, DC—Today, Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) introduced the *Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act* ([H.R.7073](#)). Currently, special districts are ineligible for direct federal financial assistance under the “Coronavirus Relief Fund” established by the [CARES Act](#). Garamendi’s legislation would ensure that the 2,700 special districts in California and 30,000 special districts nationwide are eligible for any additional federal assistance provided by Congress to state, county, and local governments to aid in the fight against COVID-19.

Original Cosponsors: U.S. Representatives Derek Kilmer (WA-06), Barbara Lee (CA-13), Grace F. Napolitano (CA-32), Val Butler Demings (FL-10), TJ Cox (CA-21), Mike Thompson (CA-05), Ami Bera (CA-07), Jimmy Panetta (CA-20), Alcee L. Hastings (FL-20), Harley Rouda (CA-48), Charlie Crist (FL-13), Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18), Darren Soto (FL-09), Salud O. Carbajal (CA-24), Mark

Takano (CA-41), Alan S. Lowenthal (CA-47), Ro Khanna (CA-17), Jim Costa (CA-16), Jerry McNerney (CA-09)

Special districts are units of local government that provide public services cities and counties do not provide for residents.

Those services include first responders, firefighting, public health, transit, and more.

"Special districts provide critical services to the communities they serve," **Garamendi said**. "As our nation continues to grapple with the effects of COVID-19, Congress must ensure that all local governments have the support they need to deliver the crucial quality of life services their communities rely on. The 237 special districts I represent in Congress support the health care and public safety services that my constituents need to beat COVID-19 and maintain safety and security. The *Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act* will make special districts eligible for future federal assistance Congress provides to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation to ensure every American community has the resources they need to weather this storm," **Garamendi concluded**.

“Special districts in California and across the nation have been financially strained due to COVID-19 and have been excluded from much-needed federal relief,” **said Neil McCormick, CEO with the California Special Districts Association (CSDA)**. “The Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act will help thousands of these specialized, local governments to continue to provide important infrastructure, first response and other critical local services for millions of Americans through this pandemic. The aid will help special districts continue a focus on preparation for emergencies we know inevitably are ahead, like wildfires and Public Safety Power Shutoffs. CSDA proudly supports the bill and thanks Congressman Garamendi for spearheading this effort.”

Specifically, the “Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act”

([H.R.7073](#)) would provide:

- **Eligibility for Coronavirus Relief Fund and Future Federal Assistance:** Make special districts eligible for direct federal financial assistance appropriated by Congress in the future, along with state, county, and local governments and subject to the same oversight requirements. This would not apply retroactively to the \$150 billion provided under the CARES Act.
- **Access to Municipal Liquidity Facility:** Provide special districts access to the Federal Reserve's Municipal Liquidity Facility, which provides states, counties, and cities federally guaranteed “bridge financing” to offset unexpected short-term revenue shortfalls caused by the current pandemic. Like states, counties, and cities, many

special districts serve large populations and have the legal authority to issue short-term tax and revenue anticipation notes. However, special districts are not currently granted direct access to the Municipal Liquidity Facility.

Endorsements: California Special Districts Association, California

Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Districts Association of California,

California Municipal Utilities Association, Association of

California Healthcare Districts, California Association of

Resource Conservation Districts, Mosquito and Vector Control

Association of California, California Air Pollution Control Officers

Association, California Association of Recreation and Park

Districts

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Issues: [Health Care](#)

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