

HEBER PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT

REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING DATE: September 19, 2019

FROM: Laura Fischer, General Manager

SUBJECT: Authorize the HPUD Board President to sign a letter of support for HR 358.

ISSUE: Shall the Heber PUD Board authorize the President to sign a letter of support for H.R. 358, Representative Juan Vargas (D-CA-51)

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

Approve.

FISCAL IMPACT:

NONE

BACKGROUND:

Introduced: 12/3/2018

Status: Introduced January 9, 2019

Location: to the Committee on Natural Resources and to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

H. R. 358 Summary: To direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a California New River restoration program to build on, and help coordinate funding for, restoration and protection efforts relating to the New River, and for other purposes.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the HPUD Board President to sign a letter of support H.R. 358 as presented.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Fischer, General Manager

Attachment: Letter of Support for H.R. 358

September 20, 2019

The Honorable Juan Vargas
United States Congressman
2244 Rayburn House Office
Building
Washington, DC 20151

RE: H.R. 358 California New River Restoration Act of 2019 - *SUPPORT*

Dear Congressman Vargas;

On behalf of the Heber Public Utility District, I am writing to inform you of our support of your bill H.R. 358 requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a California New River restoration program for the New River.

The New River starts in Mexicali, Mexico, flows north into the United States through the Imperial County and ultimately drains into the Salton Sea. The Imperial County includes several disadvantaged communities and is one of the poorest counties in the state, suffering from unhealthy living conditions due to the heavily polluted New River. Test show that the water and sediment from the New River has high levels of heavy metals including lead, copper and mercury.

For decades the Imperial County residents have suffered from living next to the New River, and the funding to clean up this toxic river has not been made available. H. R. 358 would require that the EPA implement projects, plans, and initiatives for the New River supported by the California-Mexico Border Relations Council. This bill further proves grants and technical assistance for coordinating restoration and protection activities.

For these reasons, the Heber Public Utility District is pleased to support H.R. 358. We look forward to working with your office on the passage of this bill. Should you have any questions regarding this letter or if you need any additional information, please contact our General Manager, Ms. Laura Fischer, at (760) 482-2440.

Sincerely,

Pompeyo Tabarez,
President