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Assembly California Legislature



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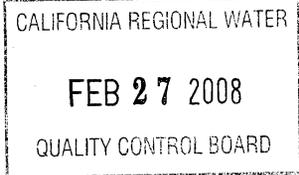
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February 22, 2008

John Muller, Chair
Bruce Wolfe, Executive Officer
San Francisco Bay
Regional Water Quality Control Board
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400
Oakland, California 94612



Dear Chairman Muller and Members of the Board:

I am writing to express my concern with the Water Board's pending Municipal Regional Permit (MRP) in its current form.

While trash in our creeks and Bay is a serious problem that requires effective action now, several local officials who would be charged with enforcing the requirements in the draft MRP feel it is too prescriptive. Cities and counties throughout the Bay Area have won numerous awards for their excellent and innovative stormwater programs. Their success depends on their ability to address stormwater issues in a way that is most appropriate for their individual jurisdictions.

Reducing trash on our streets, in our creeks and Bay will require a joint effort on the part of our State and local governments as well as the public. Local government should play a significant role in this effort. However, there are significant differences among the jurisdictions within the Bay Area. The extent of urbanization, the significance and sources of litter, and available resources vary tremendously. As you revise the MRP, please allow sufficient flexibility and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens on local jurisdictions.

Additionally, the potential financial burden to local governments to meet MRP requirements must be adequately considered. Of the nine slots on the Regional Water Quality Control Board, there are three vacancies—including two meant to represent local governments. A decision of this magnitude should not be made without local government being represented on the Board.

Our local governments in the Bay Area have demonstrated a commitment to serving their constituents while protecting the environment. Please allow our public servants to continue to use their ingenuity and creativity to tackle this difficult problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Guy S. Houston".

Guy Houston
Assemblyman, 15th District