

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2020

Eileen Sobeck  
Executive Director  
California State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Executive Director Sobeck:

We write to encourage the State Water Resources Control Board to increase data collection on the prevalence of water debt impacting California's low-income households, and to collect more data on the number of vulnerable small water systems who may be impacted by the pandemic.

Communities across California, but particularly low-income communities of color, are suffering because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic's financial and economic impacts make access to water less affordable for many. While a statewide moratorium on water utility shut offs is appreciated and has provided continued water access for many families, these costs pile up, leaving potentially large cumulative water bills due when the moratorium concludes.

Increasing data collection will provide critical information on the prevalence of water debt and identify the communities and small water systems that are most impacted. The more we can better understand how access to safe and affordable water is being impacted by the pandemic, the more we will be better positioned to proactively and thoughtfully respond before a crisis occurs such as mass water shutoffs for low-income families. The imperative of safe and affordable water has never been clearer than now.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We appreciate your leadership in providing Californians access to safe and affordable drinking water in this difficult time.

Sincerely,



TJ Cox  
Member of Congress

/s/

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



Josh Harder  
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



Harley Rouda  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

CC:

E. Joaquin Esquivel, Chair, SWRCB

Max Gomberg, Program Manager, Water Conservation