

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
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California State Senate

SENATOR
HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT

January 8, 2013



Steve Wickstrum, General Manager
Casitas Municipal Water District
1055 Ventura Avenue
Oak View, CA 93022

RE: Consideration of acquiring Golden State Water Company property to stave off drastic and unexplained rate increases

Dear Mr. Wickstrum:

I am writing to express my support as the Casitas Municipal Water District (CMWD) considers the best and most efficient way to provide water services to the Ojai Valley. As part of this process, I understand that there is interest in purchasing the Golden State Water Company system.

As the State Senator elected to represent the people of the district that includes the Casitas Municipal Water District service area, I feel this is a decision best left to those voters within the water service area. Prior to such a measure being placed on the ballot, it seems reasonable that the cost of such a purchase should be disclosed and that a feasibility study would help identify the needed factual information for a cost savings analysis.

Ideally, the people of the Ojai Valley would make the decision based on the factual information provided to them from CMWD. After all, they are the ratepayers and users of the District and should have the ability to determine the appropriate course of action for their community.

For more than four decades, the Golden State Water Company has managed the water system for parts of the Ojai Valley. That system currently supplies water to more than 5,000 residents. This private, for-profit company has averaged a 7.9 percent rate increase each year for the past 20 years.

Furthermore, I simply do not believe it is in the best interest of the public to privatize our scarce water resources. Given the critical commodity that water is for California's central coast, it is of vital importance that we maintain control of these rights at a local level with a focus on the statewide impact.

In addition, I find it unfortunate that my predecessor, with less than a week left in his term, used that lame duck opportunity to interject his thoughts on this issue when it is clearly an issue best left to the residents of Ojai who simply would like more control of their water rates and not be at the whim of unexplained and unjustified rate hikes.

How better to demonstrate democracy in action than to let a vote of the people determine the fate of their community's water system?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson".

Hannah-Beth Jackson
Senator, 19th District

Cc: Paul Clanon, Executive Director, CPUC
Edward Randolph, Governmental Affairs Director, CPUC