



March 24, 2016

The Honorable Das Williams
Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
State Capitol, Room 4005
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1882 (Williams) Groundwater Monitoring and Underground Injection Control Program Reform

Dear Assemblymember Williams:

The undersigned organizations strongly support AB 1882, which will protect groundwater from underground injection of oil and gas wastewater and help fix the "broken" underground injection control (UIC) program.

Groundwater resources play a vital role in maintaining California's economic and environmental sustainability. California's 515 alluvial groundwater basins and sub-basins provide close to 40 percent of the state's water supply in an average year. And in dry or drought years, groundwater accounts for as much as 60 percent of the state's water supply. Many disadvantaged communities rely on groundwater for 100% of their water supply.

The revelation that over 6,000 oil and gas wells were inappropriately permitted by the Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) to inject wastewater and other fluids into federally protected aquifers shows that action must be taken to protect California's groundwater. These injections violate the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and fail to protect groundwater that potentially could be used for drinking water, irrigation or other beneficial uses. Considering we are currently in our fifth year of extreme drought, the time to act is now.

AB 1882 enhances oversight and accountability within the UIC Class II program and requires that the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) or the appropriate regional water quality control board (RWQCB) ensure that, water that could be used as drinking water or irrigation, is not being contaminated by oil production.

Specifically, AB 1882 will:

1. Require DOGGR to provide an opportunity and the information necessary for SWRCB and/or the appropriate RWQCB to review, comment on, and propose additional requirements for UIC projects.
2. Require SWRCB or the appropriate RWQCB to review, comment on, and propose additional requirements it deems necessary for those projects to ensure that the injection of fluids will not affect the quality of water that is, or may reasonably be, used for any beneficial use.
3. Requires written concurrence from SWRCB or the appropriate RWQCB as part of the of UIC permitting process, which includes describing the rationale for the concurrence and explanation as to why additional requirements, such as groundwater monitoring, were or were not required for those projects.

The requirements of AB 1882 are a crucial step forward in protecting our groundwater resources from oil and gas production. For these reasons, our organizations strongly support AB 1882.

Sincerely,

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