



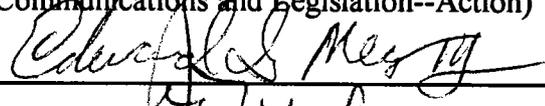
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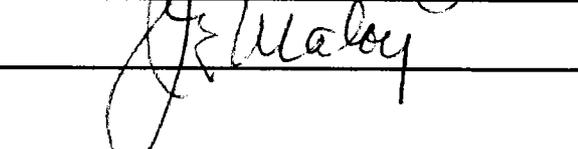
METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

7-12

April 22, 1998

**To:** Board of Directors (Executive Committee--Action)  
(Committee on Communications and Legislation--Action)

**From:** *ba* General Manager   
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**Submitted by:** Jack R. Maloy  
Chief of Communications   
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**Subject:** Ratification of the First Amendment to Agreement No. 13611 with Sloat Higgins and Associates

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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It is recommended that the Board of Directors ratify the General Manager's execution of the First Amendment to Agreement No. 13611 with Sloat Higgins and Associates.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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In August 1997, Metropolitan's Board directed a reorganization of all legislative activities and public affairs functions into a unified Communications Division, and articulated specific expectations with respect to the achievement of Metropolitan's legislative objectives.

To supplement staff efforts on these legislative activities, Metropolitan continues to retain specialized consultants to assure that Board expectations are realized.

To ensure that the Board is fully informed with respect to these consultant activities, it is staff's intention to present all contracts for public affairs and legislative consultants to the Board for ratification.

Agreement No. 13611, with the Sacramento firm of Sloat Higgins and Associates, is the first of several contracts staff is presenting to the Board under this process, which will take place over the next few months. Metropolitan has contracted with Sloat Higgins and Associates since 1997.

The firm provides strategic counsel on relations with legislators and their staffs, as well as with regulatory authorities, and assists Metropolitan with its coalition development efforts.

### **DETAILED REPORT**

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In August 1997, Metropolitan's Board directed a reorganization of all legislative activities, as well as traditional public affairs functions, into a unified Communications Division. At that time, the Board articulated to staff its specific expectations with respect to the achievement of

Metropolitan's legislative objectives. To supplement staff efforts on these legislative activities, Metropolitan has continued to retain consultants with particular expertise in legislative process and/or water policy to assure that Board expectations are realized.

To ensure that the Board is fully informed with respect to these consultant activities, it is staff's intention to present all contracts for public affairs and legislative consultants to the Board for ratification. Agreement No. 13611, with the Sacramento firm of Sloat Higgins and Associates, is the first of several contracts that staff will present to the Board under this process, which will take place over the next few months.

Metropolitan's Sacramento Office has contracted with Sloat Higgins and Associates since March 1997. Agreement No. 13611 was awarded as a sole source contract with a maximum payable of \$120,000 for the initial 12-month period. The Agreement is currently on its first amendment which has increased the maximum payable to \$244,000. This First Amendment will remain in effect until March 1999.

Sloat Higgins and Associates provides services in the following areas:

1. Strategic counsel on relations with legislators and their staffs, as well as with regulatory authorities; and
2. Assisting Metropolitan in its coalition development efforts.

Kevin Sloat, principal of the firm is the primary Metropolitan contact. Mr. Sloat is uniquely qualified to perform these services in support of Metropolitan's outreach effort.

Mr. Sloat's background includes nearly two decades of experience in State government, including serving as Governor Pete Wilson's Chief Legislative Advisor and primary liaison to the Legislature. Prior to this, he was the Chief of Staff for former State Senator Marian Bergeson, and he has also worked as senior consultant to the State Senate's Local Government Committee.

Specific project areas that are now underway with the assistance of the Sloat Higgins team include:

1. Water Transfers - providing strategic counsel and message development with respect to pending legislation; and monitoring other developments affecting the law and practice of water transfers in California;
2. California Plan for Colorado River - including assistance with preparing materials emphasizing Metropolitan's commitment to the Plan and the importance of devising an implementation strategy which will meet the need of all communities within Metropolitan's service area;
3. Legislative Portfolio - development of specific policy initiatives for Metropolitan, including new methods of communicating these positions to Metropolitan's various constituencies.

Staff anticipates that the activities outlined above will require increased and ongoing attention for Metropolitan to meet its water supply and operational goals, and protect the interests of its member agencies. Staff requests the Board reaffirm its support for these activities by ratifying the First Amendment to Agreement No. 13611.

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