

- **Board of Directors**
Desalination Subcommittee
Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee

May 13, 2003 Board Meeting

8-2

Subject

Approve payment of \$25,000 for annual membership dues for U.S. Desalination Coalition

Description

At its Feb. 25, 2003 meeting, the Desalination Subcommittee approved Metropolitan joining the U.S. Desalination Coalition. The U.S. Desalination Coalition is comprised of five water agencies in California -- city of Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, Municipal Water District of Orange County, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, San Diego County Water Authority, and West Basin Municipal Water District. Membership in the coalition is \$25,000 per year.

The U.S. Desalination Coalition's day-to-day activities will be managed through an agreement with The Furman Group. The Coalition's purpose and main objective will be to legislatively advocate on behalf of its members for a significantly increased federal role in encouraging desalination. Additionally, the Coalition will seek to add members from other states with critical interests in desalination, such as New Mexico, Texas and Florida. Coalition members see desalination as a viable, cost-effective means of making seawater and brackish groundwater reliable sources to supplement national drinking water supplies. Specifically, membership dues will fund the efforts by the Coalition to ask Congress to approve legislation aimed at providing financial incentives and grants for the development of desalination facilities.

Metropolitan's objectives for participation in the U.S. Desalination Coalition will be to support the objectives of the member agencies that have proposed seawater desalination projects, and to maintain consistency between those objectives and Metropolitan's other legislative priorities in areas such as CALFED and the Colorado River.

Policy

Metropolitan's Administrative Code § 11202 authorizes each department head to join organizations whose purposes serve the interests of Metropolitan, provided that new memberships with annual dues of \$3,000 or more be approved by the Board.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

Funding for the proposed membership is not defined as a project under CEQA, because it involves government fiscal activities that do not involve any commitment to any specific project that may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment (Section 15378 (b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed action in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA (Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

The CEQA determination is: Determine that the proposed action is not subject to the provisions of CEQA, pursuant to Sections 15378(b)(4) and 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Board Options/Fiscal Impacts

Option #1

Adopt the CEQA determination and approve payment of membership dues for participation in U.S. Desalination Coalition.

Fiscal Impact: \$25,000 per year

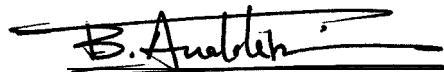
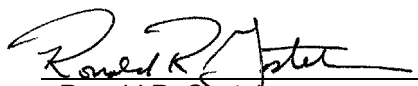
Option #2

Do not approve payment of membership dues for participation in U.S. Desalination Coalition and decline membership.

Fiscal Impact: None

Staff Recommendation

Option #1

 B. Anatole Falagan for Stephen N. Arakawa Manager, Water Resource Management	4/14/2003 Date
 Ronald R. Gastelum Chief Executive Officer	4/14/2003 Date

BLA #2289