

- **Board of Directors**  
**Communications and Legislation Committee**

June 10, 2008 Board Meeting

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**8-13**

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**Subject**

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Approve membership in the Southern California Leadership Council

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**Description**

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Metropolitan's Administrative Code Section 11202 authorizes each department head to join organizations whose purposes serve the interest of Metropolitan. Memberships in organizations with annual dues of \$3,000 or more must be approved by the Board. Also, existing memberships must be brought back to the Board for approval if: (a) annual dues increase by 10 percent, or (b) the increase amounts to \$3,000 or more.

**APPROVE MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LEADERSHIP COUNCIL:**

Approval is recommended for membership in the Southern California Leadership Council (SCLC). The Council is a business-led-and-sponsored public policy partnership for the Southern California region that provides proactive leadership for a strong economy, a vital business environment and a better quality of life for everyone who lives in Southern California. Founded in 2005, its objective is to help enable public sector officials, policy makers and other civic leaders to address and solve public policy issues critical to the region's economic vitality and quality of life. The Council focuses on shaping public policy in the selected arenas including business vitality, resources (including water, energy and the environment) and transportation (for both goods and people). The annual membership fee is \$25,000. Staff will cover the costs of membership in the SCLC within the existing budget.

Staff recommends active participation in the SCLC at this time because the SCLC has chosen water as one of its key initiatives for the next two years. In doing so, the SCLC will prepare a white paper with Metropolitan input on the importance of sound water management policies for Southern California for distribution to elected officials and business leaders, engage with the Governor and elected officials on water policy and legislation and write opinion editorials on water issues such as the piece signed by former Governors Davis, Wilson and Deukmejian ([Attachment 1](#)). Because of the critical nature of water policy at this juncture in California, staff believes working with the SCLC on water could be very beneficial in advancing Southern California's interests.

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**Policy**

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Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11202: Payment of Dues

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11203: Participation in Projects or Programs Serving District Purposes

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**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

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CEQA determination for Option #1:

Funding for the proposed membership is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which 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). For future, and not yet known, proposed projects associated with the Southern California Leadership Council, the appropriate lead agencies will be responsible for complying with all applicable federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

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**

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**Option #1**

Adopt the CEQA determination and

- a. Approve Metropolitan’s membership in the Southern California Leadership Council; and
- b. Authorize the General Manager to pay the annual dues of \$25,000.

**Fiscal Impact:** \$25,000

**Business Analysis:** Participation in the Southern California Leadership Council will provide valuable opportunities to cooperate with a wide-range of business and public sector officials for the advancement of Metropolitan’s goals in regional and statewide issues that benefit Southern California.

**Option #2**

Adopt the CEQA determination and

- a. Do not approve Metropolitan’s membership in the Southern California Leadership Council; and
- b. Do not authorize the General Manager to pay the annual dues of \$25,000.

**Fiscal Impact:** Savings of \$25,000

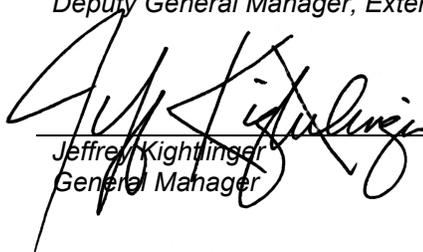
**Business Analysis:** Loss of opportunity to partner with the SCLC on water issues

**Staff Recommendation**

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Option # 1

  
 Linda Waade 6/3/2008  
 Deputy General Manager, External Affairs Date

  
 Jeffrey Kightlinger 6/3/2008  
 General Manager Date

**Attachment 1 – Los Angeles Times 5/8/08 opinion editorial**

BLA #6223



## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CLIPSHEET

Publication: Los Angeles Times – Article # 7

Date: May 8, 2008

Page 1 of 1

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### **A new water strategy**

*Without one, the entire California economy is at risk.*

By George Deukmejian, Pete Wilson and Gray Davis

The Times' recent story, "[Water shortage worst in decades](#)," illustrates an often forgotten fact. Southern California is really a semi-arid desert -- brought to life by water supplies from the Colorado River, the Owens Valley and the State Water Project to supplement our local supplies. Our reliance on this imported water to meet the region's future needs puts us at ever greater risk. Future water supply reliability will increasingly depend on local self-help measures such as conservation, reuse, more below-ground storage of surplus supplies and even desalination.

But more important and far more urgent is the serious threat we face today of real water shortages for much of the state because of the crisis in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Collapse of its strained ecosystem and its labyrinth of unstable levees from flood or earthquake could gravely reduce, or even suspend, deliveries from the State Water Project serving not only Southern California but users in the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley and the Central Coast. California's entire economy is at risk.

How do we address these threats to the viability of our quality of life and our economy? First, we offer our support for a statewide solution for the delta, which would address ecosystem concerns and stabilize the water supply. Such a solution must include a new water conveyance infrastructure, funded by those who benefit from the system improvement. Second, we must move forward on Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's call for a statewide 20% "across the board" water conservation effort. The business community can demonstrate its leadership in this effort. Third, Southern California's Metropolitan Water District, local water agencies and the private water sector should begin to explore new strategic efforts in addition to their conservation and reuse initiatives. They should maximize local water resources by partnering -- employing transportation and exchange arrangements -- to use the extensive pipeline network and underground storage facilities throughout Southern California. Other regions should consider similar plans.

Finally, our state leaders need to reach agreement on a comprehensive statewide water infrastructure plan, including bond funds for a delta solution and local water reliability projects.

All this will cause our water service to cost more in the future. But going without a critically needed water supply is simply not an option.

*George Deukmejian, Pete Wilson, and Gray Davis are former governors of California and charter members of the [Southern California Leadership Council](#).*