

Carol Kwan, Board Member West Basin Municipal Water District
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September 18, 2020

The Honorable Eric Garcetti
Mayor of the City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

Subject: Support Adán Ortega for Chairman of the Metropolitan Water District

I write to recommend your support of Adán Ortega as Chair of the Board of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Adán and I have known each other since my election to the Board of Directors of the West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) in 1996; I was then and I remain, the first and only Asian American on the Board of Directors. Adán has continually impressed me with his intellect, integrity, and deep support for communities of color and disadvantaged minorities.

Adán served as Assistant General Manager of West Basin during a time when the District was building the West Basin Water Recycling Project. Adán helped our agency forge a strong relationship with the City of Los Angeles, the source of our water recycling project's effluent through its Hyperion Treatment Plant. Always working as a team with his colleagues and the board, we worked with community groups that remain active to this day through the water conservation and education programs Adán envisioned and implemented. Together, he and I also created a Harvest Festival to educate the public about the safety of recycled water, which has been emulated throughout Southern California.

Yesterday, at a special board meeting called on 24-hours' notice for a single purpose, the West Basin Board took the unusual action to vote to support Gloria Gray for a second term as Board Chair at MWD. My board colleague, Scott Houston, joined me in asking that both candidates be given an opportunity to be heard; however, the vote was taken and the action passed with Gloria herself casting the deciding vote.

This is the first time to my knowledge that any candidate for MWD Board Chair has chosen to "go around" her own board members in order to create political pressure for her candidacy. As an elected water board member, I think this is wrong because a board chair should be accountable to his or her own board members, who also possess the best information about a chair's leadership skills and performance. This is creating a dangerous precedent in my opinion that is unlikely to improve water supply planning for our ratepayers.

While I strongly believe diversity is a significant issue, Adán also is a minority who if elected would be the very first Latino board chair. As a minority myself, and based on Adán's qualifications and experience, spirit of cooperation, vast knowledge of California water policy and proven temperament, I strongly recommend your support for his candidacy as MWD Board Chair.

Sincerely,



cc: Metropolitan Water District Board of Directors rcastro@mwdh2o.com
The Fullerton City Council
The West Basin Board of Directors