

Statement by C. Gibson SMWD Board 10-05-2016

Governor Brown's administration is moving quickly to implement his recent Executive Order B-37-16 "Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life." Local water districts, cities, environmental organizations and the public are given a brief period to comment on a new and complex framework for urban water conservation. Based on early reports from meetings with the state's staff, it appears they want to dictate the amount of water people can use, ignoring new water supplies that are created by recycling and ocean desalination. A framework for the state's new regulations is expected for public review November 4, 2016. After a ten-day comment period, and possible revisions, a final report will be issued January 10, 2017. The report will be the foundation for additional regulations, and I think additional legislation. The regulations will add to the cost of water, in my view and they are likely to usurp local control of water planning, unless there is strong opposition to this approach.

Conservation is important and the people of South Orange County have done a good job in conserving water, voluntarily. We do not need ongoing restrictions from the state beyond present guidelines. I seek to protect our local control and flexibility to provide water at a reasonable price by strongly opposing any top down, overly detailed and expensive state regulations.