

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

APRIL 24, 2018

Addressing Water Quality Concerns in Willowbrook and Compton

Sativa Water District (“Sativa”) is an independent water district comprised of an elected board with approximately 1,600 customers, providing service in the unincorporated Willowbrook community and the City of Compton.

In recent months, water customers of Sativa have raised complaints of brown water found running through their taps. While Sativa states this is a temporary discoloration, residents report continuing water quality issues. This is alarming. Sativa customers deserve full confidence that their water is safe and clean.

Although the California State Water Resources Control Board holds regulatory authority over Sativa, it is critical that all entities with regulatory authority relating to access to clean and safe drinking water are appropriately engaged to assess Sativa’s ability to deliver safe water to its customers in the short and long-term. Therefore, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health should take immediate action to ensure that there are no serious public health impacts to Sativa’s customers.

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Moreover, it is important to review Sativa's operating capacity to ensure its long-term ability to provide safe water to its customers. Sativa has been aware of its infrastructure challenges for some time. To that end, in 2016, Sativa was referred to the Department of Public Works for technical assistance in seeking grant dollars, specifically through the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, to upgrade their aging infrastructure. However, the Department of Public Works reports that Sativa has made no effort to partner with them to explore opportunities.

Given all of this, the County of Los Angeles should work diligently with the respective oversight entities to ensure there is proper management and infrastructure in place to prevent future water quality concerns.

BASED UPON THE FOREGOING FACTS, AND PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54954.2(b)(2), I MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DETERMINE THAT:

- 1) There is a need to investigate and address the water quality complaints raised by Sativa customers; and
- 2) The need to take this action came to the attention of the Board subsequent to the posting of the agenda for today's meeting.

I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

- 3) Direct the Directors of the Los Angeles County Departments of Public Health and Public Works to activate a strike team to analyze water samples in the Sativa jurisdiction, take all other actions necessary to appropriately

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characterize the conditions of Sativa's water system, and report back to the Board immediately with their findings; and

4) Direct County Counsel, in coordination with the Directors of the Departments of Public Health and Public Works as well as any other appropriate departments, to explore all viable opportunities in Sativa's short-term services to ensure clean and safe drinking water, and, if it is found that there are serious water quality concerns or it is determined that Sativa does not have the capacity to address its ongoing infrastructure needs, explore all viable long-term solutions to ensure that the appropriate management and governance are in place to appropriately provide water services in the area. This may include working with the Local Agency Formation Commission and the State Water Resources Control Board to explore options to dissolve Sativa and identify a more sustainable water purveyor for the area. County Counsel should report back to the Board of Supervisors bi-weekly in writing on these efforts.

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