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June 23, 2014

The Honorable Kevin De León, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1043 (Chau) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator De León:

On behalf of the California Groundwater Coalition (CGC), I write to express our support for AB 1043 (Chau) which allows local agencies that receive Proposition 84 grants or loans for groundwater projects to receive the money that they are able to recover from responsible parties if it is used to fund additional groundwater cleanup activities.

The CGC was formed to increase the effort to educate and inform policy makers and the public about California groundwater resources. CGC members include public and private groundwater management entities located throughout California and consist of experts with technical, legal, and professional groundwater and related expertise.

Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act, was passed by the voters in 2006. Proposition 84 authorized \$60 million to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) for loans and grants for projects to prevent or reduce contamination of groundwater that serves as a source of drinking water.

Currently, the CDPH requires the repayment of money that is subsequently recovered from parties responsible for the groundwater contamination. Unfortunately, the requirement for repayment to CDPH serves as a disincentive for local agencies to pursue potentially responsible parties. This places the financial burden of groundwater cleanup on the state and not on the responsible parties, who should be paying for the cleanup. AB 1043 will remove this disincentive for local agencies to go after potentially responsible parties by allowing a local agency to receive back the money that they recover from responsible parties as long as that money is used to fund additional groundwater cleanup activities.

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By allowing local agencies to receive the money that they recover for cleanup costs from a responsible party, AB 1043 will provide more funding for cleanup activities necessary to restore contaminated groundwater and expand our water supply. We respectfully ask for your “Aye” vote when this bill comes before you for consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth Manning', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kenneth Manning
President, California Groundwater Coalition

cc: Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Assemblymember Ed Chau