



COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

Established in 1918 as a public agency

GENERAL MANAGER
Jim Barrett

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Robert Cheng

CLERK OF THE BOARD
Sylvia Bermudez

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Dan Charlton

March 24, 2020

The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Ruiz:

As Congress develops “phase 3” economic stimulus legislation to respond to fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) urges you to support the inclusion of funding to help water and wastewater systems, and their customers, overcome the economic challenges of the crisis. CVWD provides domestic water and wastewater services to nearly 110,000 accounts in the Coachella Valley in Southern California.

Many community water systems across the country (including CVWD) have voluntarily suspended water service disconnections for nonpayment for the duration of the crisis, and many others are also reconnecting customers who are in arrears on their water bills. While these actions will deliver important public health benefits, they also carry ramifications for low-income customers who already face a daunting challenge to pay off outstanding balances.

In recognition of the essential role of water and wastewater systems during this crisis, CVWD asks you to support these inclusions in the next stimulus legislation:

- Federal assistance, made available directly to the agency, to ensure that low-income ratepayers do not fall behind on their water bills during the pandemic; and
- Grant or low interest loan funding to help support utility operations at a time when revenues are seriously impacted.

CVWD, along with thousands of other community water systems across the country, is on the front lines of the response to the coronavirus. Including federal assistance for water systems and their low-income ratepayers in the next stimulus legislation will help stabilize both municipal and family budgets during this unprecedented crisis.

Thank you for your assistance with this issue.

Sincerely,

J.M. Barrett
General Manager