



April 11, 2022

Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
Chair, Local Government Committee
1020 N Street, Room 157
Sacramento, CA 94249

RE: Assembly Bill 2449 (Rubio) – Support [As Introduced]

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of the public agencies and business organizations noted below, we support your Assembly Bill 2449, related to enhancing public access through teleconferencing in a public meeting setting.

As part of his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Newsom originally issued a series of Executive Orders to expand public access to meetings of local agencies by suspending some of the restrictions on teleconferencing. The effect was an expanded use of teleconferencing for meetings of the legislative body, resulting in enhanced public access and increased participation by the public.

The expiration of the Executive Orders immediately gave way to AB 361, essentially allowing for the teleconference provisions detailed in the Executive Orders to continue during a period of emergency declaration. However, once an emergency declaration has ended, local agencies will again be required to comply with antiquated provisions of existing law, making it potentially more difficult to hold meetings of the legislative body by teleconference. While current law does allow for “teleconference locations” under normal circumstances, it requires various actions to be taken at the teleconference locations and fails to recognize in the digital age that a teleconference location is wherever there is a person with a computer, a tablet, or even a mobile phone.

AB 2449 will modernize the previously existing concept of teleconference locations and will revise notice requirements to allow for greater public participation in teleconference meetings of local agencies. The bill does not require teleconferencing, it modernizes existing law to ensure greater public participation in meetings of the legislative bodies of local agencies who choose to utilize teleconferencing. Similarly, in acknowledgement of the critical importance of maintaining transparency and accountability, the bill requires that a quorum of the governing body be physically present at a clearly identified meeting location for all public meetings.

For these reasons, we urge your AYE vote, and those of your committee members, on Assembly Bill 2449 (Rubio) when the bill comes before the Assembly Local Government Committee. If you have questions, you may contact Matthew Litchfield from Three Valleys Municipal Water District at 909-621-5568 or via email at mlitchfield@tvmwd.com.

Sincerely,

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Three Valleys MWD

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Executive Legislative Representative
Metropolitan Water District of So. California

Anthony Duarte
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cc: Members, Assembly Local Government Committee
Assembly Members Calderon, Chen, Holden, Rodriguez, Rubio
Senators Archuleta, Leyva, Newman, Portantino, Rubio
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