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Matthew H. Litchfield, P.E.

February 22, 2021

Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5175
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0048

RE: Assembly Bill 703 (Rubio) – Support [As Introduced]

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

The Three Valleys Municipal Water District (TVMWD) is pleased to have you introduce Assembly Bill 703, related to enhancing public access through teleconferencing in a public meeting setting.

As part of his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20 in March 2020 to expand public access to meetings of local agencies by suspending some of the restrictions on teleconferencing. Allowing local agencies to utilize teleconferencing for meetings of the legislative body has enhanced public access and increased participation by the public.

When the Governor's Executive Order expires one day, local agencies will again be required to comply with antiquated provisions of existing law which make it much more difficult to hold meetings of the legislative body by teleconference. Current law refers to "teleconference locations" and requires various actions to be taken at "teleconference locations" by local governments wishing to teleconference meetings. Current law does not recognize that a teleconference location is now wherever there is a person with a computer, a tablet, or even a mobile phone.

AB 703 will eliminate 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, rather it modernizes existing law to ensure greater public participation in meetings of the legislative bodies of local agencies who choose to utilize teleconferencing.

AB 703 also expresses legislative intent to improve and enhance public access to local agency meetings, consistent with the digital age, by allowing broader access through teleconferencing options consistent with the Governors Executive Order.

For these reasons, TVMWD is pleased to join you in support Assembly Bill 703 (Rubio) and would like to thank you for taking on this important bill. We also hope to garner support from your fellow Members in the months ahead. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you may contact me at 909-621-5568 or via email at mlitchfield@tvmwd.com, or reach out to Kirk Howie at khowie@tvmwd.com.

Sincerely,



Matthew Litchfield
General Manager

Assembly Members Lisa Calderon, Phillip Chen, Chris Holden, Freddie Rodriguez
Senators Bob Archuleta, Connie Leyva, Josh Newman, Anthony Portantino, Susan Rubio