



San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority

1720 W. Cameron Avenue, Suite 100, West Covina, CA 91790 • 626-338-5555 • Fax 626-338-5775

**WQA LEGISLATIVE/PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
AND SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021 AT 11:00 A.M.
AT
1720 W. CAMERON AVE., SUITE 100 IN WEST COVINA, CA**

With passage and signing of AB 361 and in light of the ongoing Statewide State of Emergency originally declared by Governor Newsom on March 4, 2020, WQA Board Meetings will continue to be conducted via remote teleconferencing, subject to the requirements of Government Code Section 54953(e). Members of the public can participate remotely via Zoom following the instructions provided below. Members of the public may also submit comments in writing to stephanie@wqa.com which comments will be distributed to the members of the Board, provided such written comments are received prior to the meeting start time. To address the Board during the meeting you may use the "raise hand" feature and you will be called up on when appropriate.

To attend the meeting please register in advance at:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ijhtZef1RNCfbCi8cPPUvw

A confirmation email will be sent to you with instructions on how to join the meeting virtually or call-in option

**The Legislative/Public Information Committee meeting is noticed as a joint committee meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of compliance with the Brown Act. Members of the Board that are not assigned to the Legislative/Public Information Committee may attend and participate as members of the Board, whether or not a quorum of the Board is present. In order to preserve the function of the Committee as advisory to the Board, members of the Board who are not assigned to the Legislative/Public Information Committee will not vote on matters before the Committee*

AGENDA

Committee Members: Valerie Munoz, Bob Kuhn and Robert Gonzales

Liaison Member: Lynda Noriega

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Discussion Regarding Next Advertorial
- IV. Discussion Regarding AB 2163 (Rubio) – San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority Act [enc]
- V. Discussion Regarding AB 2449 (Rubio) – Enhancing Public Access Through Teleconferencing [enc]
- VI. Legislative Activities/Reports
 - a. State
 - b. Federal
- VII. Executive Director's Report
- VIII. Adjournment

Background Sheet

AB 2449 (Rubio, B)

Enhancing Public Access Through Teleconferencing

BACKGROUND

As part of his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Newsom 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 the expanded use of teleconferencing for meetings of a legislative body, resulting in enhanced meeting access and increased participation by the public.

PROBLEM

Recently enacted AB 361 allows 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 be taken at the teleconference locations and fails to recognize in the modern digital age that a teleconference location is wherever there is a person with a computer, a tablet, or even a mobile phone.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

AB 2449 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 2449 would require that a quorum of the governing body be physically present at a clearly identified meeting location for all public meetings. The bill also expresses legislative intent to improve and enhance public access to local agency meetings, consistent with the digital age, by allowing broader access through the teleconferencing options relevant to AB 361, on a consistent, ongoing basis outside of a declared emergency.

SPONSOR

- Three Valleys Municipal Water District

SUPPORT

- Three Valleys Municipal Water District
- Public Water Agency Group
- San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
- Southern California Water Coalition

OPPOSITION

- None on File

CONTACT

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[DATE]

Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
California State Assembly
1021 O Street
State Capitol, Suite 5140
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0048

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

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

[Your agency/association name] is pleased to support your Assembly Bill 2449, related to enhancing public access through teleconferencing in a public meeting setting. **[If appropriate, include brief background about your agency].**

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 the new 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 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. 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, **[Your agency/association name]** is pleased to support your Assembly Bill 2449 (Rubio). If you have questions about our position or would like to discuss further, you may contact me at **[Your contact information – phone/email].**

Sincerely,

cc: **[Your Assembly Members]**
Kirk Howie, Three Valleys Municipal Water District (khowie@tvmwd.com)
Kristi Foy, Mike Arnold & Associates (kfoy@mjarnold.com)