



SAN GABRIEL BASIN WATER QUALITY AUTHORITY

1720 W. Cameron Ave., Suite 100, West Covina, CA 91790 • 626-338-5555 • info@wqa.com • wqa.com

**WQA LEGISLATIVE/PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.
AT
1720 W. CAMERON AVE., SUITE 100 IN WEST COVINA, CA**

Zoom Registration Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/EHGg-j-VRPGhR0QQL6JKdQ>

AGENDA

Committee Members: Bob Kuhn, Valerie Munoz and Robert Gonzales

Liaison Member: Lynda Noriega

- I. Call to Order
- II. Remote Participation Declaration - AB 2449
[Government Code Section 54953(f)]
 - a. Notification of Just Cause
 - b. Emergency Circumstances Requests
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Discussion Regarding Next Advertorial
- V. Discussion Regarding Support for AB 259 [enc]
- VI. Legislative Activities/Reports
 - a. State
 - b. Federal
- VII. Executive Director's Report
- VIII. Adjournment



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AGENDA SUBMITTAL

To: WQA Legislative/Public Information Committee
From: Randy Schoellerman, Executive Director
Date: March 11, 2025
Subject: **Letter and Resolution of Support for AB 259 (Rubio) – Sunset Elimination for Modified Brown Act Meeting Procedures**

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.

In 2022, the Three Valleys Municipal Water District sponsored AB 2449, that amended the Ralph M. Brown Act, which eliminated the previously existing concept of teleconference locations and revised notice requirements to allow for greater public participation in teleconference meetings of local agencies. Beginning in 2023, special districts and other local agencies began using the procedures established by AB 2449, successfully facilitating remote participation for officials that would otherwise be encumbered by illness, official travel, or medical emergency.

Summary

Currently AB 2449 has a sunset date of January 1, 2026. To preserve the flexibility provided by AB 2449, AB 259 would eliminate this sunset date, thereby preserving indefinitely the remote meeting procedures added by the earlier legislation. AB 259 would not otherwise change any other elements of the remote meeting provisions.

Recommendation / Proposed Action

Approve Letter of Support for AB 259 and Draft Resolution No. 25-002

Attachment:

CSDA Fact Sheet on AB 259
Draft Letter of Support
Draft Resolution No. 25-002

Assembly Bill 259 (Rubio)

Sunset Elimination for Modified Brown Act Meeting Procedures

Bill Summary

[Assembly Bill 259 \(Rubio\)](#) eliminates the sunset on provisions added to the Brown Act by [Assembly Bill 2449 \(Rubio, 2022\)](#), a bill that provided additional flexibility with alternative Brown Act meeting procedures able to be observed in the event of a board member's absence in connection with a "just cause" or "emergency circumstances," allowing for those members so-affected to participate in the meeting remotely consistent with the process detailed in the bill. The provisions of AB 2449 include restrictions on how often its provisions may be invoked and require that a majority of the board be present in-person in order to constitute a quorum.

Problem

Several special districts and other local agencies have utilized the procedures established by AB 2449, successfully facilitating remote participation for legislative policymakers that would otherwise been encumbered by illness, official travel, or medical emergency. Though the terms of AB 2449 have been amended since their passage, the sunset date associated with its terms has not been changed; the alternative Brown Act meeting procedures established by the bill expire at the end of 2025.

Solution

By removing the sunset, AB 259 preserves the additional flexibility for individual board members of local agencies looking to meet remotely to continue providing the public with essential services.

Background

In support of the original legislation, AB 2449, author Assembly Member Blanca Rubio remarked that remote meetings held over the last few years "demonstrated the value of remote participation options when individuals are unable to attend a physical gathering. The Brown Act ensures that officials and their constituents can have open and transparent meetings, which we now know can occur using modern technology. [...] AB 2449 would

provide an avenue for constituents to interact with their representatives in situations where they might have not previously been able to."

AB 2449 followed other legislation like [Assembly Bill 361 \(R. Rivas, 2021\)](#) related to the Brown Act. However, while bills like AB 361 were concerned with entire agencies and disaster emergency scenarios posing a threat to the general health and welfare of all attendees, AB 2449 is more limited in scope. AB 2449 is applicable to individual board members – rather than the entire agency – and is concerned with the specific "just cause" and "emergency circumstances" enumerated within the bill.

Support

- California Special Districts Association
- Three Valleys Municipal Water District
- Various local government associations
- Various counties, cities, special districts, and other local agencies

For More Information

Marcus Detwiler
California Special Districts Association
marcusd@csda.net



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DRAFT

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Blanca Rubio
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5250
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 259 (Rubio) – Support [As Introduced]

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

The San Gabriel Basin Water Quality (WQA) is pleased to support your Assembly Bill 259, related to the Ralph M. Brown Act. The WQA coordinates groundwater quality management programs to efficiently remediate groundwater contamination and assists in preventing future contamination.

Recognizing the evolving landscape of public meetings and the demonstrated value of remote participation options when members of governing bodies are unable to attend a physical gathering, your office introduced, and the Legislature passed, Assembly Bill 2449 in 2022, which amended the Ralph M. Brown Act. Beginning in 2023, special districts and other local agencies began using the procedures established by AB 2449, successfully facilitating remote participation for officials that would otherwise been encumbered by illness, official travel, or medical emergency. The provisions of that bill, having been negotiated by civil society groups and local government stakeholders, contained numerous safeguards and requirements, including the presence of an in-person quorum at the official meeting location. Members of the WQA Board have used AB 2449 to attend Board meetings when situations arose that prevented them from attending in person.

While the provisions added by AB 2449 were modified slightly by technical amendments made by subsequent legislation, the January 1, 2026 sunset included in the original bill remains. To preserve the flexibility provided by your AB 2449, Assembly Bill 259 would eliminate this sunset date, thereby preserving indefinitely the remote meeting procedures added by the earlier legislation. AB 259 would not otherwise change any other elements of the remote meeting provisions.

For these reasons, WQA is pleased to support your Assembly Bill 259. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Randy Schoellerman
Executive Director
San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority

CC: Senator Susan Rubio
Marcus Detwiler, Legislative Representative, California Special Districts Association
Kirk Howie, Three Valleys Municipal Water District

DRAFT

RESOLUTION NO. 25-002

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SAN GABRIEL BASIN WATER QUALITY AUTHORITY APPROVING THE ELIMINATION OF A SUNSET DATE UNDER BROWN ACT AB 2449

WHEREAS, as part of his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Newsom temporarily issued a series of Executive Orders to expand public access to meetings of local agencies by suspending some of the restrictions on teleconferencing; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, AB 2449 became law in 2023, modernizing the previously existing concept of teleconference locations under the Brown Act by revising notice requirements and allowing for greater public participation in teleconference meetings for local agencies; and

WHEREAS, AB 2449 has established a proven track record of utilization and support among public agencies, providing remote participation by members of an elected board arising in emergency circumstances or just cause incidents; and

WHEREAS, AB 2449 is scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2026.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that we, the Board of Directors of the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority, hereby express support for the introduction of new legislation in 2025, seeking the elimination of the sunset provision in AB 2449.

ADOPTED and **PASSED** at a meeting of the Three Valleys Municipal Water District's Board of Directors, on this 18th day of December 2024, by the following vote:

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 22nd DAY OF January 2025

Lynda Noriega
Chairwoman

Valerie Munoz
Secretary