
STOP SB 120

FOR WATER, FOR JOBS, FOR OUR FUTURE

FACTS

WWW.STOPSB120.COM

Background

Senate Bill 120 (Hueso) was introduced on August 25, 2018 through the controversial “gut and amend” process, just like its predecessor AB 1000 - held on Senate suspense in 2017. The measure seeks to create a new, undefined environmental permitting process, outside of CEQA, for water transportation projects, jeopardizing much-needed water and jobs for Southern California and chilling the community sectors that count on both. The bill directly targets the Cadiz Water Project, a public-private partnership that will create and support more than 5,900 jobs, generate over \$875 million in economic activity and create a new water supply that can serve up to 400,000 people a year. The Cadiz Project received a lengthy public review in accordance with CEQA, a separate County review and Court-approvals, but the bill seeks an end-run around this record. In doing so, it sets a dangerous precedent for all infrastructure projects in California.

Arguments Against SB 120

SB 120 Puts A Reliable Water Supply At Risk. SB 120 directly targets the Cadiz Water Project, a public-private partnership that would conserve 50,000 acre-feet of water a year that is now evaporating in the Mojave Desert and deliver it across Southern California, where it could serve up to 400,000 people a year.

SB 120 Puts Union and Veteran Jobs At Risk. The project that SB 120 is designed to kill is expected to create and support 5,900 family-supporting jobs, including jobs reserved for veterans and unions. By killing confidence in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, SB 120 also jeopardizes thousands more jobs that future projects could create.

SB 120 Undermines CEQA. CEQA is the most robust environmental protection law in the nation. Re-opening decisions made under CEQA at the request of special interests sets a precedent that threatens the strength of California's environmental protections.

SB 120 Creates Greater Uncertainty for Critical Infrastructure And Development Projects. By changing the rules of the game, SB 120 injects even more uncertainty for any project in California reviewed and approved under CEQA, including water infrastructure, transportation, school construction, hospital and affordable housing projects.

SB 120 Unjustly Moves the Goal Posts. SB 120 creates a new undefined environmental process for water conveyance projects controlled by Sacramento agencies with no experience or standing in water project regulation. Worse, SB 120 supplants the authority of locally elected officials, accountable to the local area where the project is located, who have already approved and established regulatory processes.

SB 120 Unjustly Targets A Single Project Already Deemed Safe for the Environment. The Cadiz Water Project has successfully completed the CEQA process, been heard and upheld by trial and appellate courts during a process that concluded the project is safe for the environment. SB 120 gives another unjust “bite at the apple” to agencies and opponents who already participated in the CEQA, Local and Court processes.

AB 1000 Opponents

AB 1000 is opposed by more than dozens of water providers, labor unions, business groups, municipalities and hydrologists, including the International Union of Operating Engineers, the Laborers International Union of Southern California, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Southern California Partnership for Jobs, Engineering Contractors Association and California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

STOP SB 120

FOR WATER, FOR JOBS, FOR OUR FUTURE

MYTHS & FACTS

WWW.STOPSB120.COM

Senate Bill 120 changes the rules of the game for water infrastructure projects in California, jeopardizing much-needed jobs and reliable water for Southern California – and ultimately the families who rely on both. In an effort to stop the Cadiz Water Project, proponents of SB 120 have perpetuated a number of myths and false claims about the project.

MYTH: SB 120 is needed to save the Mojave Desert.

FACT: The Cadiz Water Project is not a threat to the Desert. From the start, the Project has been committed to ensuring that it is safe for the environment. That commitment has been validated by the project's review and approval in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the most aggressive environmental protection law in the nation. Experts, public agencies and California courts agree this project has met the strictest environmental standards, and it presents no risk to the Mojave National Preserve or the surrounding ecosystem, including springs, flora, fauna and the aquifer.

MYTH: SB 120 is needed to protect a critical aquifer from being drained.

FACT: The aquifer is already draining under natural conditions, as billions of gallons of clean groundwater are flowing to salt sinks then becoming 10X saltier than the ocean and evaporating. Over 10 Billion gallons of fresh water are lost annually here to evaporation. The project will better manage this groundwater basin to reduce this loss and make water available to Southern California.

Moreover, the project will only be accessing one-half of one percent of the total groundwater in storage in the basin and could never fully "drain" all of the water presently in this aquifer system. San Bernardino County has enforcement authority in the project's approved groundwater management plan to halt pumping if groundwater levels fall below a certain level or if any other harm is anticipated. Checks are in place to ensure this project is always safe for the environment.

MYTH: SB 120 is needed to protect public lands.

FACT: The Cadiz Water Project will only be constructed on private land and within existing, permitted corridors. The project has been extensively reviewed and approved in accordance with CEQA, and its operations are limited by a stringent groundwater management plan overseen and approved by San Bernardino County. California's Courts have also independently reviewed this project and upheld findings that show the project will have no negative environmental impacts on surrounding lands

MYTH: SB 120 is needed to stop the Trump Administration's effort to circumvent environmental reviews.

FACT: The Cadiz Water Project is a California project, not a federal one and has gone through a thorough, transparent environmental review in accordance with CEQA, receiving public agency approvals. Numerous state, local and federal agencies participated in the CEQA review starting in 2011, and these approvals were upheld by the California Superior Court and the Court of Appeal.

The Cadiz Water Project has broad-based support because it creates and supports more than 5,900 jobs, generates more than \$878 million in economic activity in Southern California and creates a new water supply that can serve up to 400,000 people a year – all without any negative environmental impact. Project supporters include the International Union of Operating Engineers, the Laborers International Union of Southern California, the California Chamber of Commerce and close to 100 local, state and federal elected officials..