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May 31, 2024

The Honorable Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3240
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2257 (Wilson): Property-related Water and Sewer Fees and Assessments:
Remedies
As Amended April 23, 2024 – SUPPORT
Referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee**

Dear Senator Umberg,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties, representing all 58 counties in California, I am pleased to support Assembly Bill (AB) 2257 by Assemblymember Wilson. This measure would provide new opportunities for ratepayers to participate in property-related water and sewer assessments and help local agencies avoid costly lawsuits related to Proposition 218 disputes.

AB 2257 would accomplish these goals by creating an administrative remedy process for water or sewer fee assessments, allowing ratepayers to raise an objection to a proposed special assessment before it is established. The bill imposes several requirements on local agencies to conduct the exhaustion of remedies process, providing necessary clarity for ratepayers on the process for objecting to proposed fees or assessments. By establishing this process, the measure would further encourage well-informed administrative decisions, benefiting both local agencies and the communities they serve.

The bill would also help local agencies avoid costly and time-consuming litigation by providing an administrative process to require the exhaustion of all remedies, a well-established principle in administrative law. This bill would also encourage local agencies to establish the remedies process by allowing agencies to narrow the basis for an objection and limiting the court's review to the record of proceedings before the agency through the remedy process.

Access to a clean, reliable water source is necessary not just for communities to thrive, but to exist at all. Financing water management opportunities is vital to ensuring that California's communities have access to a reliable water supply and to maintain water quality for public and environmental health. AB 2257 bill would improve transparency and accountability of water management financing for local agencies.

The Honorable Thomas Umberg

May 31, 2024

Page 2 of 2

For these reasons, CSAC supports AB 2257 in its current form and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org.

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer

Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Judiciary Committee
Margie Estrada, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee
Morgan Branch, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus