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SENATE PASSES NEW WATER DISTRICT BILL

SANTA CLARITA, CA (June 1, 2017) – The State Senate unanimously passed legislation Thursday that clears the way for creation of a new water district for the Santa Clarita Valley.

The legislation by Senator Scott Wilk involved extensive negotiations between Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) and Newhall County Water District (NCWD). Combining operations of the two agencies will save money, improve regional water management and end legal conflicts.

“Today is a great day for the Santa Clarita Valley,” said Maria Gutzeit, president of the NCWD’s Board of Directors. “Our region is on the cusp of extraordinary cost savings, more accessible water governance and better watershed management. Now is the time to realize these benefits for our customers and we are grateful for the Senate’s support.”

The two districts began talks in 2015 to find common ground after several legal conflicts, followed by 18 months of public engagement. Senator Wilk used public input to refine the proposal and ensure a consensus-based approach. The result was the introduction of Senate Bill 634 – the Santa Clarita Valley Water District Act – in February 2017.

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for our Valley,” said Bob DiPrimio, CLWA board president. “The unanimous vote from the Senate is testament to the painstaking work by local water leaders, engaged citizens and Senator Wilk to get this idea right.”

A comprehensive financial and governance study in 2016 found that the new district will save \$14 million in the first 10 years, increase water reliability and fire protection, and improve access through a by-district governance structure.

The legislation is supported by a diverse coalition of residents, businesses, environmental organizations and elected leaders, including State Assemblyman Dante Acosta, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, City of Santa Clarita, Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce, California Wilderness Coalition, Climate Resolve, L.A. County Business Federation, Association of California Water Agencies, San Gabriel Mountains Forever, Valley Industry Association and California Special Districts Association.

More information on the new water district can be found at www.YourSCVWater.com.

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