

[Insert Date]

The Honorable Jim Beall
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SB 1301 (Beall) Permitting for Flood Protection & Dam Safety - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Beall:

On behalf of [insert entity name], I would like to express our support for SB 1301, which will help expedite state permits for flood protection and dam safety projects that protect life safety.

State agency environmental permits serve to protect our environment from pollution and human impacts on species. We strongly support these goals, but also see that flood protection and dam safety projects can be delayed by excessively long periods of permit processing. Those delays can put disadvantaged communities located in flood prone areas in danger, possibly with disastrous results.

SB 1301 seeks to improve efficiency in permit processing for flood protection and dam safety projects, without compromising on environmental protection. In recent years, the number of projects seeking permits have increased while understaffing at state permitting agencies remains an issue. SB 1301 would provide a mechanism for supplemental consultation and interagency collaboration on permit processing for flood protection and dam safety projects.

Under the bill, a project applicant would have to option to request supplemental consultation and interagency collaboration. Fees paid by the applicant would cover state costs and would enable enhanced engagement with the project applicant early in the project design phase and throughout the permitting process. This supplemental consultation would identify actions that could expedite the required permits, discuss environmental impacts and mitigation, provide feedback on environmental documents, and to resolve any conflicts between the various conditions proposed for permit approval.

This collaborative approach to vital flood protection and dam safety projects would help the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process work better for community stakeholders and project applicants. It also would help avoid permitting issues that lead to unanticipated costs such as late-phase project redesigns or significant mitigations for environmental impacts not contemplated in the CEQA process.

[Insert entity name] thanks you for authoring SB 1301 and urges your colleagues in the Legislature and Governor Brown to enact these important reforms to expedite flood protection and dam safety projects that protect life safety. If you or your staff have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
[Insert name]
[Insert title]

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