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March 23, 2015

The Honorable Lois Wolk
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for SB 552 – Drinking Water for Disadvantaged Communities

Dear Senator Wolk,

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) supports SB 552, legislation that would require the State Water Resources Control Board with development of a plan to ensure that disadvantaged communities have water systems that are in compliance with state and federal drinking standards. The plan would identify strategies and solutions to ensure that all Californians have access to safe, clean, affordable and accessible drinking water.

CPFA is a statewide, policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious, affordable food. We envision a healthy and food-secure California where all Californians have the physical, social and economic access to the foods necessary for a nutritious diet and where healthful foods are the predominant, affordable options. This includes access to healthful beverages, specifically water.

Drinking water as an alternative to other beverages such as soda, fruit drinks, and sports drinks is essential to ensuring overall health and well-being. Encouraging water consumption, especially in place of sugar sweetened beverages, can improve overall health outcomes. Yet, in communities without access to safe, clean, affordable and accessible drinking water, encouraging water consumption can be a challenge. That is why it is essential that we ensure the right to safe, clean, affordable and accessible drinking water across California.

Some disadvantaged communities struggle to provide an adequate supply of drinking water. The reasons for this are numerous, but should not stand in the way of drinking water access. SB 552 tasks the state board with identifying solutions and ensuring that all Californians, do in fact, have access to safe, clean, affordable and accessible drinking water. SB 552 takes a critical step toward improving water access and allowing for the promotion of water consumption in all communities.

For this reason, CFPA supports SB 552 and thanks you for introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexis Fernandez".

Alexis Fernandez
Director of Legislation
California Food Policy Advocates