MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY
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Water Resources Commission
Attention: Vandana Rao
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Director Rao:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), I am writing to formally withdraw the Authority's Regional Supplier Interbasin Transfer Act (IBTA) analysis currently under review by the Water Resources Commission.

MWRA has heard the concerns regarding the analysis and the process surrounding it. We take those concerns seriously. As stewards of an essential regional water resource, we recognize the importance of maintaining the confidence and trust of the Quabbin communities that have protected and supported the Quabbin watershed for generations.

MWRA's intention in using the regional supplier provisions of the IBTA regulations was to facilitate a full and transparent disclosure of the impacts of increasing withdrawals from the reservoir system. It is clear that the use of that regulatory option added to confusion and concern, rather than allaying it. Accordingly, the Authority believes that withdrawing the analysis is the appropriate course of action at this time.

MWRA will commit to returning to the traditional process under the Interbasin Transfer Act of considering the donor basin and receiving communities contemporaneously. Each community application for admission to the MWRA water system will include a specific donor basin analysis and a discussion of the demonstrated water needs of that community, providing the same meaningful consideration that has historically been provided when evaluating interbasin transfers. The analyses and technical information developed for the prior submission remain valuable and will inform subsequent submissions. This decision reflects our commitment to ensuring that the process moves forward in a manner that recognizes the interests of all stakeholders involved. Potential new MWRA communities have undertaken meaningful planning efforts and committed significant resources toward this effort. MWRA is committed to working directly with these cities and towns to ensure that the work already completed is not lost, that applicants have the information and assistance they need, and that this withdrawal does not result in unnecessary delays.

As you know, MWRA is in the midst of a leadership transition. This approach has been discussed with incoming Executive Director Jonathan Gulliver, who supports withdrawing the current analysis and pursuing a more focused submission that addresses the demonstrated needs of the communities currently seeking admission to the MWRA system. Respecting the concerns of the Quabbin watershed communities while also recognizing the demonstrated water supply needs of communities seeking to join the MWRA system is a balance he and we are working to achieve.

We thank the Water Resources Commission for its partnership throughout this process. We also extend our appreciation to the watershed communities, advocates, and all those who have engaged thoughtfully in this discussion. Their participation is an important part of ensuring that decisions affecting this critical regional resource are made with care and consideration for all stakeholders.

For these reasons, we withdraw the MWRA's Regional Supplier Interbasin Transfer Act analysis, without prejudice, and sincerely hope that this step will help establish a foundation for a more constructive dialogue and, ultimately, a better outcome.

Sincerely,



Stephen Estes-Smargiassi
Interim Executive Director

cc:

Senator Joanne M. Comerford
Senator Jacob R. Oliveira
Senator Peter J. Durant
Representative Aaron Saunders
Representative Susannah M. Whipps
Representative Todd M. Smola

MWRA Advisory Board