OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 08 2023

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 470 without my signature.

This bill would codify two grant programs within the Department of Water Resources established by the Budget Act of 2021: the Urban Water Community Drought Relief Program and the Small Community Drought Relief Program. It also authorizes these programs to fund benefits in addition to drought relief, including projects that reduce the risk of wildfire.

I thank the author for the commitment to support under-resourced communities most at risk of wildfire, and the intent of this bill is in line with work currently underway within my Administration. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) recently launched the Prepare California Initiative, a grant program focused on building community resilience amongst vulnerable individuals living in high hazard risk communities.

However, the two programs this bill seeks to expand have exhausted all funding appropriated in the 2021 Budget and as such, it is unnecessary to formally establish the programs in statute.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom