



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 25 2024

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 828 without my signature.

This bill excludes small community water systems serving disadvantaged communities and managed wetlands from Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) extraction limits and fees.

Ensuring safe and reliable drinking water for disadvantaged communities remains a key priority for this Administration. In the last five years, we have distributed more than \$1 billion in grants to disadvantaged communities to rectify failing drinking water systems. While I appreciate the author's intent to address the needs of small water systems serving these communities, excluding some groundwater extractors from GSAs does not align with the goals of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) to analyze groundwater basins comprehensively to ensure future long-term sustainability.

Groundwater accounts for 40 to 60 percent of our water supplies, and many communities, especially in the Central Valley, are groundwater-dependent. SGMA serves as a critical buffer to protect drinking water supplies against the impacts of drought and climate change. Successful implementation of SGMA is also integral to protecting state infrastructure from the effects of subsidence.

On September 16th, we marked the 10-year anniversary of the enactment of SGMA. While I am proud of all the milestones we have met, and the investments my Administration has made, I also recognize there is still much we need to



accomplish. I believe we should continue to implement the SGMA framework as is without creating exceptions for certain groundwater extractors.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom