

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Supervisor John J. Benoit

SUBMITTAL DATE: March 26, 2013

SUBJECT: Support of Assembly Bill 71 (V. Manuel Pérez): Salton Sea Restoration Governance Act, as currently drafted

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Support Assembly Bill 71 (AB 71) which establishes the Salton Sea Authority partnership with the California Natural Resources Agency and authorizes funding for financial feasibility to restore the Salton Sea; and
- 2) Authorize the chairman of the Board to forward a letter of support to the bill's author and our Sacramento advocates; and
- 3) Pursue necessary advocacy in support of AB 71.

BACKGROUND: Assembly Bill 71, the Salton Sea Restoration Governance Act, would establish a partnership between the California Natural Resources Agency and the Salton Sea Authority and authorize funding to conduct a feasibility study for the restoration of the Salton Sea.

The state legislature formed the Salton Sea Restoration Council in 2010 to oversee the restoration of the Salton Sea. After never convening a meeting, Gov. Brown and the legislature disbanded the council last year.

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Supervisor John J. Benoit, Fourth District

BACKGROUND CONTINUED:

AB 71, introduced by Assemblyman V. Manuel Pérez, addresses the void created by the elimination of the council. It would require the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to lead restoration efforts in consultation and coordination with the Salton Sea Authority. It would also form a technical advisory group to provide guidance on evaluating, developing or proposing future restoration or economic development activities.

This bill ensures that the local member agencies of the Salton Sea Authority have a voice in full consultation and coordination as partners with the state, working together to restore the Salton Sea. The Salton Sea Authority, Coachella Valley Water District, County of Imperial and Imperial Irrigation District have all formally supported AB 71.

In addition, AB 71 authorizes funding from the Salton Sea Restoration Fund for the Salton Sea Authority to lead a restoration funding and feasibility study, in consultation with the California Natural Resources Agency and technical advisory group, to determine the financial resources available to implement a restoration plan.

Riverside County Economic Development Agency and Salton Sea Authority staff have reviewed this bill and recommend support. I respectfully request my colleagues' concurrence to support Assembly Bill 71, as currently drafted, and urge necessary advocacy in support of AB 71.