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**Rosanna Carvacho**  
Clear Advocacy

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March 22, 2022

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan  
Chair, Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 160  
Sacramento, CA 95814

#### RE: AB 2078 (Flora) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan,

On behalf of the California Groundwater Coalition (CGC), I write to express our support for AB 2078 (Flora) which would expand the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Atmospheric Rivers (AR) Research, Mitigation, and Climate Forecasting Program to include forecast-informed reservoir operations (FIRO) and integrate FIRO into DWR water supply operations and flood and hazard risk mitigation efforts. The bill would also advance DWR's AR forecast capabilities and include refined climate projections for various environmental conditions.

CGC was formed at the urging of California state and local officials who believed that increased efforts were needed to educate and inform policy makers and the public about California groundwater resources. CGC members include public and private groundwater management entities located throughout California and consist of experts with technical, legal, and professional groundwater and related expertise.

California's statewide annual precipitation is highly variable as up to 50 percent of California's total annual rainfall and 90 percent of flood impacts are caused by AR storms. Climate models indicate an additional increase in the variability and magnitude of these storm events.

As California continues to be regularly impacted by chronic and severe drought followed by extreme rain events, providing California water managers better forecasting tools will improve water management. AB 2078 broadens DWR's AR program to include research, development, and implementation of new observations, prediction models, and novel forecasting methods to continue improving AR prediction capabilities.

Initial state program investments activated federal resources and agency support to demonstrate the viability of FIRO as a flood risk mitigation and water supply management tool at Lake Mendocino. During Water Year 2020, the third driest water year on record, Lake Mendocino's water supply increased by 20 percent due to FIRO. Due to state and federal investment in observations, data collection and model development, skills in predicting ARs over one week in advance have been

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enhanced, including a 20 percent improvement in the five-day forecasts – an unprecedented forecast skill improvement that typically requires decades of development.

With improved precipitation and snow-level forecasting, full implementation of FIRO could allow the conservation of an additional 500,000 acre feet of water in some years throughout the state, significantly enhancing California’s water supply reliability while also mitigating flood risk. These promising water supply benefits would enhance community drought preparedness and support natural ecosystem management.

AB 2078 would require AR forecast integration with DWR operations, helping ensure the effective implementation of FIRO and improve California flood risk and water supply management. For these reasons, CGC is in support of AB 2078 and respectfully requests your “AYE” vote when this bill comes before you.

If you have questions about CGC’s position please contact our Legislative Advocate, Rosanna Carvacho Elliott at 916-479-7400 or [rosanna@clearadvocacy.com](mailto:rosanna@clearadvocacy.com).

Sincerely,



Ann DuBay  
President, California Groundwater Coalition

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee  
The Honorable Heath Flora

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

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