

City of Palo Alto
Office of the Mayor and City Council

August 30, 2018

Governor Edmund G. Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **Veto request:** SB 998 (Dodd) Discontinuation of residential water service: urban and community water systems

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I write to respectfully ask for your veto on SB 998 (Dodd) regarding when a water utility may terminate residential service for nonpayment. This bill would significantly change our well established shut-off practices and protocols in a manner that does not appear to benefit our customers. We currently have written protocols, publicly available, that assist our water customers. We only discontinue water service as a last resort and after sending multiple notices, making phone calls, and where possible, sending emails. SB 998 is unnecessary and strives to fix a nonexistent problem. It is also problematic in that it:

- Takes from our City Council the ability to operate our public water utility in the manner that best meets the needs of our customers
- Limits reconnection fees for some customers that may not cover the reconnection cost, leaving other customer to subsidize those costs
- Allows an "adult in residence" to appeal a bill which prevents service termination, even while the bill remains unpaid, and with no definition of the term "in residence" or statement as to why such a person has the same authority as the accountholder
- Mandates we translate our written disconnection procedures, at taxpayer expense, into languages that may not be spoken by even a significant minority of our residents

For these and other reasons, we must respectfully ask that you veto SB 998.

Sincerely,



Liz Kniss
Mayor, City of Palo Alto

Cc: Senator Jerry Hill
Assemblyman Marc Berman
Palo Alto City Council
James Keene, Palo Alto City Manager
Ed Shikada, Utilities General Manager

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