



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS March 27, 2026

ATTENDANCE

Members: Max Perrey (Chair); Scott Bauer (Vice Chair); Teresa Acosta; Paul Akinjo; Tess Albin-Smith; Brent Bartlett; Scott Bauer; Edward Belden; Christine Boles; Margaret Clark; Patti Garibay; Debra Garnes; Jennifer Gates; Miguel Guardado; Maika Gulata; Nancy Howze; Leslie Jordan; Eric Knight; Barbara Leary; Joe Lillio; Elaine Litster; Maika Llorens; Joe Lillio; Elaine Litster; Marijane Lopez-Taff; Joe Maloney; Sara Margulies; Julio Martinez; Conna McCarthy; John McCormick; Deborah McGarrey; David Newman; Jeff Nibert; Chuck Page; Randall Putz; Manny Ramirez; Candice Rankin-Mumby; Ariana Rodriguez; Julie Ryan; Cameron Sasai; Toyashi Sebbag; Jason Shykowski; Mike Silva; Amy Steward; Amanda Szakats; Toni Taber; Jennifer Torres-O'Callaghan; Igor Tregub

League Partners: Neeraj Bhatnagar

Staff: Melissa Sparks-Kranz, Legislative Affairs Lobbyist
Leila Romero, Policy & Legislative Affairs Analyst

I. Welcome and Introductions

Following the General Briefing, Chair Perrey and Vice Chair Bauer welcomed committee members and introduced themselves and Cal Cities staff. Committee members who were not present at the January policy committee meeting provided introductions.

II. Public Comment

Chair Perrey opened the floor for public comment, and no public comment was made.

III. Overview of California Global Biodiversity Alliance (CalGBA)

Chair Perrey introduced guest speakers Rosalind Helfand, Founder of PAJE Consulting and CalGBA Steering Committee Member, and Chance Cutrano, Director of Programs at the Resource Renewal Institute and CalGBA Steering Committee Member, who provided an overview of the California Global Biodiversity Alliance (CalGBA) and the role cities play in advancing biodiversity goals.

The presenters highlighted the importance of biodiversity in supporting public health, climate resilience, environmental justice, and local economies. They emphasized that local governments are already advancing biodiversity through planning, parks, restoration efforts, and climate initiatives, and discussed how these actions align with statewide and global efforts, including California's 30x30 initiative and the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Ms. Helfand and Mr. Cutrano shared case studies from the Town of Fairfax, Los Angeles County, and the Pit River Nation, demonstrating how local and regional partnerships can support conservation, land management, and restoration efforts. Committee members engaged in discussion regarding balancing biodiversity goals with housing development, collaboration with developers and agricultural stakeholders, and addressing gaps in biodiversity investment across different regions of the state.

IV. Bill Analyses

Cal Cities staff presented on AB 1642 (Harabedian), which would establish statewide, science-informed, health-based standards for post-wildfire contamination testing, remediation, and clearance to ensure safe re-occupancy of homes, schools, and workplaces. The committee engaged in a discussion on the bill's implications for cities, including concerns related to insurance availability, remediation practices, and public understanding of cleanup safety. Members also raised questions about how the new standards would be implemented and whether additional clarity is needed through the rulemaking process. An original motion to recommend a "Watch" position was made and seconded. An alternate motion to recommend a "Support" position was made and put to a vote. The motion to recommend a "Support" position passed with 25 in favor and 11 opposed.

Cal Cities staff presented SB 1417 (Pérez), which would address disaster preparedness requirements for public water systems and establishes new governance, transparency, and notice requirements for mutual water companies. The bill was amended several days before the committee met to no longer require disaster-impacted public water systems to conduct post-disaster assessments in coordination with counties as a condition of receiving state funding. The committee discussed that since the bill no longer applies to public water systems that there are generally less concerns with the bill. A motion to recommend a "Watch" position was made and put to a vote. The motion received 34 votes, with the remaining members not voting.

Cal Cities staff presented AB 2013 (Bennett), which would require water suppliers serving more than 100 customers in moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones to develop emergency preparedness plans for red flag warnings, extreme weather events, and power outages. The plans must include assessments of critical infrastructure needs, including water tank levels, pumps, backup power sources, and alternative water supplies necessary to maintain service and support firefighting. The committee engaged in a robust discussion on the potential fiscal impacts of the bill, including concerns about increased costs to ratepayers and the absence of a dedicated funding source. Members also discussed the importance of improving fire preparedness and reducing risk, while emphasizing the need for state support or amendments to address local cost burdens. A motion to recommend an "Oppose" position was made and seconded. An alternate motion to recommend a "Watch" position was made

and put to a vote. The motion to recommend a “Watch” position passed with 25 in favor and 11 opposed.

Cal Cities staff presented SB 1138 (Padilla), which would provide greater flexibility in meeting resource adequacy requirements by allowing load-serving entities to use short-term transactions with other entities to satisfy up to 25% of their compliance obligations, aligned with the same time increments used for resource adequacy requirements. The committee discussed the potential for improved efficiency, cost savings, and reduced need for additional energy infrastructure. Members also raised questions regarding long-term impacts on energy markets and cost allocation. A motion to recommend a “Support” position was made and put to a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Cal Cities staff presented AB 2266 (Schultz), which addresses resource adequacy compliance and reporting alignment among load-serving entities by requiring the use of a consistent capacity valuation method across procurement programs and consolidating compliance reporting processes. The committee discussed the bill's potential to streamline processes and improve consistency, while also raising questions about implementation details and impacts on local agencies and community choice aggregators. A motion to recommend a “Watch” position was made and put to a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

V. State Legislative Update & Discussion

[EQ legislative bill list](#) (bills with positions)

Cal Cities staff provided an overview of priority environmental quality legislation, including updates on wildfire recovery, disaster financing tools, fire hazard severity zone mapping, and water quality.

Committee members discussed several bills, including AB 1866 (disaster assistance), AB 2517 (fire hazard severity zones), and SB 1081 (waste discharge penalties), with a focus on fiscal impacts, implementation challenges, and opportunities for legislative engagement.

VI. Adjourn

The Chair formally adjourned the meeting at 2pm.

Next Meeting (Virtual): Friday, June 5, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.