

**Testimony of Nancy Parent
City Council Member
City of Pittsburg, California
Before the House Committee on Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power
H.R. 1526**

**The Bay Area Regional Water Recycling Program Authorization Act of 2007
May 24, 2007**

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee, I too want to thank you for inviting me to testify on this much-needed and very important legislation.

My name is Nancy Parent and I am appearing today in my capacity as a member of the City Council of the City of Pittsburg, California, as well as a Board member of the Delta Diablo Sanitation District.

Let me begin by stating that while I will focus my remarks on the Pittsburg and Antioch Recycled Water Projects, I endorse everything Mr. Darling said in his statement. This legislation is not only critical to the Bay Area, but long overdue in anticipating the needs of its citizens. I also join with him in paying recognition to the Bay Area congressional delegation for sponsoring the bill. Their support, and yours, Madam Chairwoman, are key to the bill's success.

I do want to pay special recognition to Congressman Miller, and I do so for two reasons: first, because of his leadership on this issue, both with H.R. 1526 and in the last Congress; and secondly, because he is "Pittsburg's Congressman" and he has always been there for us. As with other issues of concern to Pittsburg, Congressman Miller's vision and commitment have been second to none.

Members of the Subcommittee, Pittsburg is a city of both progress and promise located at the point where the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers meet. From a struggling settlement dating back to 1839 to an industrial center, Pittsburg has grown into a pleasant community of parks, recreational facilities, shopping centers, affordable housing and exciting business and commercial re-development.

Pittsburg is advancing into the future, each day more prosperous than the one before. New homes, renovated older homes, new businesses, and a revitalized historic district are all signs of even better times to come. Additionally, the parks system has expanded, roads have been improved, and commerce and employment continue to increase. Working together, we will keep moving forward.

In this regard, it is important to note the mission statement of the City: "To provide responsive and high quality public services in partnership with our citizens celebrating our community's rich history, cultural diversity, and pride in its prosperous future." And nothing can be more important to Pittsburg's future and the assurance of the highest

quality of life for its citizens than making sure that our Nation's most precious resource – water – is available. Water is often taken for granted, but it is a key ingredient in making Pittsburg's, and the Bay Area's, future so bright. Many would be surprised to learn the extent to which the vagaries of weather or climate could reduce precious water supplies, and few are aware of the implications for regional economic growth of frequent or severe water supply shortages.

The City of Pittsburg has become increasingly aware of the need for a more diverse water supply portfolio. That is why, in June of 2004, the City embarked upon an effort to assess the full potential of the recycled water market in the Pittsburg area. It identified a recommended urban reuse water project involving construction of recycled water distribution infrastructure to facilitate delivery of recycled water to various municipal landscape customers.

The Pittsburg Recycled Water Project addresses several water management issues, including: reducing dependence on potable water supplies for non-potable uses; improving water supply reliability for irrigation; reducing wastewater discharges; increasing water use efficiency; restoring and protecting sensitive Bay-Delta environments; and optimizing use of existing recycled water facilities. In this regard, recycled water is unique in its ability to simultaneously address multiple water management objectives.

Section 2 of H.R. 1526 authorizes \$1.4 million for the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning and construction of the Pittsburg Project. Under the Project, the City would extend the recycled water pipeline, using existing pipeline and installing new pipeline, to establish recycled water service for various uses.

The City of Pittsburg, in cooperation with the Delta Diablo Sanitation District, has been aggressively pursuing a federal project partnership through the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI program for over 2 years. As a result, on December 18, 2006, the Pittsburg Project became the first project in the history of the Title XVI program to fully meet all nine of Reclamation's rigorous feasibility requirements, including NEPA compliance.

To date, the City has invested over \$800,000 in the planning and design of the project, which has also received a State of California grant funding commitment of \$1.25 million. This state grant requires that the project proceed into construction by July 15th, 2007 – just a few weeks away. It is for this reason that we are seeking an urgent authorization, followed by a timely appropriation of \$1.4 million early in the 2008 fiscal year. If this authorization and subsequent appropriation is not promptly approved, the State share will be lost and, most likely, the project will not be built.

A Federal partnership on this project is critical. The City's multi-million dollar commitment is being provided through redevelopment funds, which are being used judiciously to invest in the most critical improvements necessary to further the economic vitality and quality of life in Pittsburg.

Madam Chairwoman, in addition to serving on the Pittsburg City Council, I am also, as I stated, a member of the Board of Directors of the Delta Diablo Sanitation District (DDSD) which has jurisdiction over, and particular interest in, two of the projects included in the bill: Antioch and Pittsburg. I'd like to briefly address the Antioch Project.

The Antioch Recycled Water Project, listed for authorization on the bill, would provide 530 acre-feet of recycled water irrigation supply to seven municipal parks and the Lone Tree Gold Course. The project requires construction of nearly four miles of recycled water pipeline, 1.1 million gallons of storage, and a recycled water pump station. The Project will cost approximately \$8.9 million to complete.

DDSD and the City of Antioch are committed to working with the Bureau of Reclamation to ensure that the Antioch Recycled Water Project is not just technically, economically, and institutionally feasible, but that it also offers nationwide benefits and is worthy of federal sponsorship. The Antioch Project has only NEPA compliance remaining to meet all Federal criteria, and we are working with USBR to complete the final requirements.

Section 2 of H.R. 1526 authorizes \$2.25 million for the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning and construction of the Antioch Project. Under the Project, the City would extend the recycled water pipeline, using existing pipeline and installing new pipeline, to establish recycled water service for various uses. This project is also moving along quickly. The City and DDSD have asked Congresswoman Tauscher to request an appropriation for this next fiscal year.

Members of the Subcommittee, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of these projects to our local communities and the Bay Area. I commend you on addressing this issue in the legislation. On behalf of the City of Pittsburg as well as the Delta Diablo Sanitation District, I urge its expeditious consideration.

Thank you.