



Media Release

E. Joaquin Esquivel confirmed to second term on California's State Water Board

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SACRAMENTO - The California State Senate has confirmed Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel for a second four-year term on the five-member State Water Resources Control Board, the California agency responsible for protecting the state's water quality and water supplies.

Esquivel was first appointed to the State Water Board's public seat by Governor Jerry Brown in March 2017, designated by Governor Gavin Newsom as its Chair in February 2019, and reappointed to a second term in July 2020. His Senate confirmation extends his tenure to January 15, 2025.

"I'm grateful for the trust placed in me to continue managing the state's water resources on behalf of all Californians, and humbled by the seriousness of the circumstances we face as drought, wildfires, and other threats are accelerated by climate change," said Esquivel. "Rising to these challenges together can make us more resilient as a state through investments in our infrastructure, biodiversity, access to clean water, and equity among communities. I am fortunate for the dedication, passion, partnership and leadership of the public servants at the Water Boards and that of the communities we serve and work for."

During his first term, Esquivel promoted inclusiveness in the agency's stakeholder engagement, which encompasses a range of constituencies across the state. His approach earned him strong bipartisan support during the Senate's Sept. 7 confirmation vote, with former California Secretary of Natural Resources and current State Senator John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) bringing Esquivel's confirmation to a vote and State Senators Bill Dodd (D-Napa), Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield), and Mike McGuire (D-North Coast) all rising to speak in favor.

Speaking in support, Senator Grove called Chair Esquivel "consider[ate] and thoughtful," with Senator Dodd echoing those sentiments and stating that the Chair has been "incredibly responsive and engaging."

Senator McGuire also stated that, "The Chair has been active, engaged and involved, in trying to find solutions in what has become one of the state's most pressing crises... [I] share my appreciation for him being so expedient in dealing with some of the toughest challenges that are facing communities in Northern California."

As chair, Esquivel has championed access to safe, affordable drinking water for all Californians. His tenure has seen the State Water Board's launch and implementation of the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) program, which provides funding and builds partnerships among communities, water systems and other stakeholders to ensure that the estimated 1 million Californians who lack safe drinking water receive it as quickly as possible.

Previously, Esquivel served as assistant secretary for federal water policy at the California Natural Resources Agency in the governor's Washington, D.C. office. For more than eight years prior to that he worked in Washington, D.C. for U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer of California as the legislative assistant responsible for agriculture, Native American, water, oceans, and nutrition portfolios, in addition to filling the director of information and technology role.

Esquivel was born and raised in California's Coachella Valley. He holds a bachelor's degree in English from University of California, Santa Barbara.