

County of Riverside

RIVERSIDE OFFICE:
4080 Lemon Street, 5th Floor
Riverside, CA 92502-1647
(951) 955-1040
Fax (951) 955-2194



DISTRICT OFFICE/MAILING ADDRESS
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 222
Palm Desert, CA 92260-2574
(760) 863-8211
Fax (760) 863-8905

SUPERVISOR V. MANUEL PEREZ
FOURTH DISTRICT

April 27, 2023

The Honorable Steve Padilla
1021 O Street, Suite 6640
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Padilla:

I am writing to respectfully raise strong objection to SB 583, which proposes to alter the governance of the Salton Sea Management Program by shifting planning away from local entities that have the knowledge and expertise to restore the Salton Sea.

Strengthening cooperation and consultation between the state and the local governments at the Salton Sea has long been a priority of my efforts on behalf of our local communities. I am concerned that this bill would undermine the proven successful partnership between local entities and the state to deliver state-funded projects at the Sea, and potentially sidestep the local priorities of the Salton Sea Authority and the County of Riverside.

The County of Riverside has land use authority and residents that are directly impacted by the Salton Sea. Unfortunately, we were not aware of the intent to craft a new governance structure for the Salton Sea through this proposed legislation. With only weeks of legislative session remaining, I am concerned that we don't have sufficient time to vet this proposal with the public.

As a State Assemblymember, I was proud to author Assembly Bill 71 (2013-2014), which directed the California Natural Resources Agency to work "in cooperation and consultation with the Salton Sea Authority." That established a successful partnership between the state and the local entities, including Tribal governments, to advance work at the Salton Sea.

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As the Fourth District County Supervisor, the County of Riverside and its partner agencies have other major concerns with SB 583:

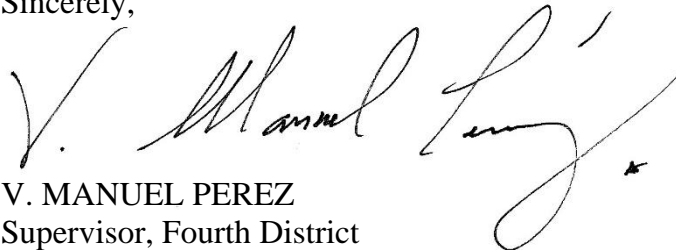
- Undefined definitions on who would be part of the “Salton Sea Conservancy Board”;
- Unclear how the new “Director” would work with the current California Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary on Salton Sea;
- A “Conservancy” empowered to run all the Salton Sea projects may conflict with Riverside and Imperial County Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts which would be financed with county resources requiring county oversight.

Our local governance and communities are dedicated to developing solutions for the Salton Sea that are created from thoughtful, inclusive, open, and transparent government.

As the Riverside County Fourth District Supervisor and a member of the Salton Sea Authority, I respectfully request that you work with the County of Riverside, the Salton Sea Authority, and our Tribal Nations to discuss the purpose of SB 583.

I appreciate the opportunity to strongly Oppose SB 583. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Pat Cooper, Deputy Chief of Staff at PCooper@rivco.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Manuel Perez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

V. MANUEL PEREZ
Supervisor, Fourth District

cc: The Honorable Eduardo Garcia