



**OFFICERS**

**President**

Chuck Washington  
Riverside County

**1st Vice President**

Bruce Gibson  
San Luis Obispo County

**2nd Vice President**

Jeff Griffiths  
Inyo County

**Past President**

Ed Valenzuela  
Siskiyou County



**CEO**

Graham Knaus

July 7, 2023

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 412  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 345 (Wilson) Habitat Restoration: flood control: advance payments  
As Amended June 26, 2023-- Support  
Set for hearing—July 10, 2023**

Dear Chair Portantino,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is pleased to support AB 345 (Wilson) which will provide the Department of Water Resources (DWR) with discretionary authority to utilize an advanced payment option when funding local projects that restore vital habitat and/or improve flood protection. AB 345 limits any single advanced payment to no more than 25% of the total project cost. Further, funds will not be advanced by DWR until they are needed by the local agency partner and the authority does not require DWR to fund any particular project.

As California faces increases in both the frequency and intensity of flood-producing weather, long-term flood control projects are necessary to provide improved flood protection and minimize future damages. Matching funding can be a challenge for many county flood projects, particularly in areas with lower income and at-risk communities. AB 345 is necessary for local agencies with limited funding to develop larger-scale flood protection and/or habitat restoration projects.

In many cases, DWR cannot provide funds to local agencies until after the local agency has paid project expenses. This means the local agency not only pays for their share of these projects, but also finances the State share until the State provides a reimbursement. These types of financial challenges stifle the development of much-needed flood protection and restoration projects. The discretion offered by AB 345 will enable DWR to resolve these issues when it determines necessary and appropriate to do so.

DWR and the California Natural Resources Agency have allowed for advance payments when specifically authorized in bond language. The State has successfully used advanced funding under the Urban Flood Risk Reduction Program, The Coastal Watershed Flood Risk Reduction Program, the Protecting California's Rivers, Stream and Watershed Program, and other State grants to provide billions of dollars to projects that significantly reduced Statewide flood risk and advance other critical state policies and objectives. The impact of advanced payments has already been tested and proven as beneficial.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your AYE vote on AB 345. Should you have any questions, please contact me at [cfreeman@counties.org](mailto:cfreeman@counties.org) or (916) 662-6400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Freeman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Catherine Freeman  
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Assemblymember Lori Wilson  
The Honorable Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee  
Emilye Reeb, Fiscal Consultant, Senate Republican Staff