



CITY OF PALM DESERT

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September 11, 2025

Honorable Steve Padilla
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7630
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Scott Wiener, Chair
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Benjamin Allen, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee #2
1021 O Street, Suite 6610
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Steve Bennett, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4
1021 O Street, Suite 4710
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Proposition 4 – Salton Sea Funding Allocation

Dear Chairs and Honorable Legislators:

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, we urge an equitable allocation of funding included in Proposition 4 to support essential and ongoing activities in and around the Salton Sea. Specifically, we propose that the funds provided under Section 91033(b) be allocated as follows:

- **\$5 million to the Salton Sea Authority** to continue its work relating to the Salton Sea Management Program, including in partnership with the Department of Water Resources (together as “joint local sponsors”) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the continued pursuit of a comprehensive ecosystem restoration plan. Once completed, this plan will facilitate access to 65% matching funds for all subsequent work. Additional efforts include collaboration with the State, in accordance with AB 71 (2013, Pérez), on the creation and implementation of the Salton Sea Conservancy, as well as related environmental, public safety, and economic revitalization initiatives.
- **\$5 million to the California Natural Resources Agency** to fund the creation of the Salton Sea Conservancy, established through the 2024 statute.

The newly formed Salton Sea Conservancy provides a critical tool for ensuring future sustainable management and revitalization of the Sea. However, the Conservancy is still in its formative stage and requires a solid foundation to effectively launch and carry out its mission. At the same time, the Salton Sea Authority continues its invaluable work in collaborating with the State on the Salton Sea Management Program, spearheading initiatives that address environmental degradation, public health concerns, and the economic disinvestment plaguing our region.

These efforts are essential to securing an equitable and sustainable future for the Salton Sea and for the frontline communities most impacted by its decline. Equally important, the Authority's efforts to address current and future impacts on the Sea and adjacent communities resulting from increased conservation are critical to long-term water security for California and the West.

Consistent with the bill text and preceding negotiations, we strongly believe that the limited funding available through Proposition 4 must be equitably shared between the Authority and the Conservancy to enable complementary efforts. Without adequate resources, the progress made toward environmental and public health improvements in the region would be at risk, perpetuating inequities that disproportionately burden the most vulnerable populations in the Coachella Valley.

Our communities deserve a robust, coordinated effort to address the complex challenges posed by the Salton Sea. We urge you to prioritize a balanced funding approach for both the Salton Sea Authority and the Salton Sea Conservancy.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. The City of Palm Desert stands ready to support this effort in any way possible, and we look forward to working together to strengthen the health and resilience of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jan C. Harnik". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jan C. Harnik
Mayor, City of Palm Desert