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Energy and Environment Committee
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Via Fax: 213-978-2250

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Re: Heal the Bay Support of Motion 14-1291, Graywater Systems/Promoting Water Conservation Opportunities

On behalf of Heal the Bay, an environmental non-profit organization with over 15,000 members, we write to express our support of motion 14-1291, Graywater Systems/Promoting Water Conservation Opportunities, introduced by Councilmember Koretz on September 23, 2014.

On January 17th with California facing water shortfalls in the driest year in recorded state history, Governor Brown proclaimed a State of Emergency and directed state officials to take all necessary actions to prepare for these drought conditions. Coupling drought with expected regional water shortages due to climate change and population growth, it is imperative that all local water resources be diversified to the fullest extent possible. The installation of graywater systems is an effective strategy that can reduce potable water demand and increase regional water self-reliance.

Graywater systems are one of the many strategies that need to be explored to offset future potable water demand. The majority of wastewater generated by residential buildings can be re-used for non-potable uses (e.g. toilet flushing, landscape irrigation). If 10 percent of Los Angeles' population installed graywater systems in their households and reduced potable water use by 10 gallons per person per day, approximately 4,250 acre-feet of potable water could be conserved annually.ⁱ This is enough water for approximately 8,500 households annually.ⁱⁱ

It is clear that California will continue to face an uncertain water future; promoting graywater systems would decrease potable water demand and reduce the amount of imported water demanded by Los Angeles. Thus we support Motion 14-1291.

Sincerely,

Kirsten James
Science and Policy Director, Water Quality

Peter Shellenbarger
Science & Policy Analyst

ⁱ City of Los Angeles population (approx.) = 3.8 million; 10 % of 3.8 million = 380,000; 10 gallons conserved per day per person = 3.8 million gallons; 3.8 million gallons * 365 = 1,387,000,000 gallons ~ 4250 acre-feet.

ⁱⁱ Assuming an average household in Los Angeles consumes 0.5 acre-feet per year.