

The Honorable Doug Ducey
Governor
State of Arizona
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

March 9, 2016

RE: Senate Bill 1268 and 1400

I am a member of the Audubon Society's Western Rivers Action Network (WRAN), a group of over 35,000 Colorado River Basin residents dedicated to sustainable flow in the Colorado River and its tributaries. As an advocate for Arizona's rivers, I am very concerned about Senate Bills 1268 and 1400, both of which place uncertainty around our already dwindling water supplies by weakening the Arizona Department of Water Resources Adequate Water Supply Program. These bills go against Arizona's long tradition of careful water planning and stand in direct contradiction to the Arizona Water Initiative you announced last year.

While each of these bills attack the Adequate Water Supply Program from a different direction, the end result of both is the same – new loopholes that prevent the program from protecting Arizona's limited groundwater supplies. Senate Bill 1268 would achieve this by allowing municipalities to opt-out of their county's requirement to demonstrate adequate water supply. Senate Bill 1400 would do it by allowing adequate water supply requirements in rural counties to expire every five years unless their Board of Supervisors votes unanimously to extend it.

If passed, these bills would put the San Pedro River, a natural resource of international significance, at risk. In addition, these bills would add to uncertainty around water supplies – putting current business and property owners at risk and discouraging those seeking to do business in Arizona's rural counties in the future from doing so.

When you announced the Arizona Water Initiative in October of 2015, you said "...vulnerabilities and uncertainties remain, and we must continue to be pragmatic and proactive – just like those before us – in how we manage our water resources." Senate Bills 1268 and 1400 are big step backwards from our long history of careful water planning and sound water policy. Please stand by your word and consider the communities, economies and natural areas that are put at risk by these ill-conceived pieces of legislation.

Respectfully -

William Auberle, Board Chair



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