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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Paso Robles Water Integrity Network PAC Vows to Continue Fight Against AB 2453 District

Paso Robles, CA, -Paso Robles Water Integrity Network PAC (PR-WIN PAC) would like to thank all who supported the effort to oppose the formation of the Paso Robles AB 2453 Water District. Despite overwhelming opposition from basin residents, the Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO) has decided to move the matter forward to a vote that will take place in March 2016.

Although we strenuously opposed the district, our voices were not heard. We spoke in opposition to the proposed water district and we submitted over 1,200 signed protests to LAFCO. Outrageously, LAFCO staff, which recommended approval of an incomplete application package for the proposed water district, dismissively referred to the protest letters as just a “number of protests” and did not include them as part of the public addenda.

From the beginning special interests have lobbied for the formation of the proposed water district. When the proponents of the district, PRAAGS and Pro Water Equity could not build local support and were not willing to risk the \$350,000 necessary to advance the petition (which they would forfeit if the application was unsuccessful), working with county staff and Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian, they drafted a one-off piece of special legislation, AB 2453, just for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin to get around their dilemma of lack of local support. AB 2453 was drafted to allow the County Board of Supervisors to bypass the standard LAFCO requirement of local petition by residents and submit an application directly to LAFCO for the district formation without public support.

Three members of the County Board of Supervisors, Supervisors Mecham, Gibson and Hill, using county staff, pushed the application through, authorized \$350,000 for the LAFCO process and instructed county staff to promote the district, all at taxpayer expense. All three Supervisors sit on the LAFCO board (Hill is an alternate). When we objected to this obvious conflict of interest and we believe misuse of tax payer dollars, we were told there is tenuous legal precedence for them to serve on both boards. None the less, when a representative body is charged with the fiduciary responsibility to represent the general interest of the public, yet acts to approve a special interest application against overwhelming public opposition, we believe there is something terribly wrong with their ethical conduct.

Our voices in objection to the district and our over 1,200 written protests is evidence of overwhelming opposition to this proposed water district. When you consider that the special interest groups could not even muster more than a handful of pro-formation letters versus more than 1,200 protests against formation, the actions of the three Supervisors as well as LAFCO is outrageous and an illustrative example of why government officials and politicians are held in such low esteem.

We may have lost this round, but the fight continues. Our strength and numbers are growing. PR-WIN PAC will continue to work vigorously to defeat the AB 2453 Water District formation. We will continue to collect protest forms to present at the Nov 10th. Board of Supervisors meeting when the Supervisors will vote on whether to move the district forward to a vote or not.

Vote NO for both the formation and funding of a water district in March 2016.

For a protest form and more information and how you can help defeat this district, visit our web site PR-WIN.ORG

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