



June 2, 2021

Honorable Gloria Gray, Chair
Honorable Board Members
Metropolitan Water District
700 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2944
(via email)

Dear Chairwoman Gray and Board Members:

Congratulations on your selection of Mr. Adel Hagekhalil as the next General Manager for the Metropolitan Water District. We could not agree more that he will be the best person for the job and appreciate the opportunity to detail why that is the case.

We write as Councilmembers (including a former MWD Board member) who have worked with Mr. Hagekhalil for many years, in some cases for more than a decade, while he was the Assistant General Manager/Director in our Bureau of Sanitation, and, for the past nearly three years, while he was the Director & General Manager (GM) of the Bureau of Street Services.

While it would be bittersweet to lose our visionary GM, we agree that Mr. Hagekhalil's unique skill set would be a perfect fit at MWD, where his holistic view of water issues and expertise can benefit communities across Southern California. He has successfully led the way on a wide variety of the City's interconnected water-related initiatives including the 2040 One Water Plan and the implementation of our enhanced watershed management plans (EWMPs). He oversaw the updating and upgrading of the City's street network, prioritizing an increasingly vital urban forest while developing and emphasizing new climate cooling, green infrastructure, and multi-benefit, cost-effective strategies.

In addition, Mr. Hagekhalil's leadership skills are second-to-none. On his first day as GM of the Bureau of Street Services, he had his door removed to convey that he would always be open and available to his employees, to the Council, and to the greater LA community. Where, in the past, the City had ongoing legal conflicts with environmental and community groups, Mr. Hagekhalil built bridges, mended fences, and established strong collaborative partnerships that continue to benefit the City to this day. His understanding of and leadership in environmental justice and racial equity issues has advanced and deepened the City's work in these arenas.



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Mr. Hagekhalil is already an internationally recognized leader on water issues. As President of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), as the federally-appointed chair of the study group on water resiliency for the National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC), and as a leader of UNESCO's global conference on Water in Mega Cities, among many other roles, he has blazed a trail on "One Water" and "Green Infrastructure" issues, policies that are essential for the future of safe, effective global water management.

Nothing could be more important for the future of the MWD than to have a leader who truly values transparency, open communication, and holistic planning. Mr. Hagekhalil is a conciliatory, transformational leader who builds meaningful partnerships, leads through innovation, and creates a safe, inclusive work culture. These are the skills sorely needed today to guide the Metropolitan Water District into an uncertain, climate-disrupted future. He is a man of solid character, possessing a strong moral compass, and deep genuine affection for his employees.

It is time to forge a new water future for Southern California. Adel Hagekhalil is the right person, at the right time, with the right skill set to lead us forward at the Metropolitan Water District.

Sincerely,

PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District
Former MWD Director

MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilwoman, 7th District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Councilmember, 10th District

MARQUEECE HARRIS DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District

GIL CEDILLO
Councilmember, 1st District

MIKE BONIN
Councilmember, 11th District