

March 26, 2004

The Honorable Wilma Chan
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Chan:

Waterfront Action is pleased to express support for AB 1876. This important legislation will close the gap in existing law requiring water quality monitoring at California's coastal beaches to also require monitoring at San Francisco Bay beaches and recreation areas.

As the population in the Bay Area continues to grow, the need for clear, clean and safe access to Bay beaches are necessary the Bay Area's quality of life. The San Francisco Bay is not just a visual asset, it provides that needed rejuvenation that only clean and safe water access can provide. The Bay water is vulnerable to unfiltered runoff after a storm. The runoff can carry bacteria and contaminants into the Bay, sometimes posing a serious public health threat to those who use the Bay for pleasure and recreation.

Existing state law, created by the passage of AB 411 (Wayne) in 1997, mandates regular water quality monitoring at coastal beaches in California, but this requirement does not apply to San Francisco Bay. Bay beaches should receive the same stringent protection and oversight mandated for coastal beaches.

AB 1876 will ensure that counties along the Bay monitor their beaches effectively and consistently to protect the health of Bay Area residents that recreate on and in the Bay. By including San Francisco Bay in the beach monitoring law, this legislation will also make Bay Area counties eligible for state funds designated for beach monitoring to support and enhance their monitoring programs.

Keeping Bay beaches clean and safe is essential to protecting public health. Consistent, uniform, required monitoring at all San Francisco Bay beaches is key to ensuring that all Bay Area residents can safely swim in and recreate on the Bay with confidence.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Sandra Threlfall
Executive Director