

Statement of Christopher L. Bowman
Before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors'
Public Safety and Neighborhood Services
Opposed to the SFPUC's Groundwater Supply Project
Wednesday, May 24, 2017

Good morning (afternoon).

Madam Chair, Committee members, and visiting Supervisors, I want to thank you, and particularly Supervisor Norman Yee, in conjunction with his colleagues Supervisors Jeff Sheehy, Ahsha Safai, and Mark Farrell for calling for this hearing today. Frankly, it's a hearing that should have taken place ten years ago. Had the PUC's Groundwater Supply Project never have gotten off the ground, the monies wasted on the project could have been spent on productive projects in keeping with the letter and the spirit of Proposition A – the 1.628 billion dollar Water System Improvement Revenue Bonds paid for by trebling the water rates of every San Franciscan.

When San Francisco voters narrowly passed by a 6.6 point margin Prop. A, which set four goals, the second of which called for “water quality improvements”, little did the voters know that 66 million dollars of the bond monies would be used by the PUC to add lower quality and minimally treated groundwater to the City's pristine, and rigorously treated water from the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System. How does degrading our tap water comport with Prop A's second goal of “water quality improvements”?

Nowhere in the text of Prop. A was groundwater ever mentioned, nor was it mentioned anywhere else in the Voter Information Pamphlet as an additional source of our drinking water.

Had the PUC been honest to the voters in the text of Prop.A about its long-term intentions to add groundwater to our drinking water, the measure would have gone down to inglorious defeat.

The SFPUC owes the voters of San Francisco an apology for violating their trust, and needs to immediately suspend its pumping groundwater into the taps of 460,000 San Franciscans.

Thank you very much for your attention.