



Costa Mesa Sanitary District

...an Independent Special District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COSTA MESA SANITARY DISTRICT SEEKS FPPC INVESTIGATION OF MESA WATER BOARD'S USE OF PUBLIC MONEY FOR ELECTION PURPOSES

The Costa Mesa Sanitary District Board President is seeking an investigation by the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) of the latest efforts by Mesa Water District to unfairly bias voters regarding Advisory Measure TT on the November 8 ballot.

“Mesa Water District, in its ongoing effort to take over control of Costa Mesa Sanitary District, recently sent out two mail pieces to voters, paid for with public funds,” said CMSD Board President Michael Scheafer. “On top of that, late last week they paid \$1,500 for a full-page ad in *The Current* that we believe merits the FPPC’s investigation regarding potential violations of state law.”

As stated in the letter to the FPPC Enforcement Division’s Chief, the full-page ad in *The Current* shared much of the same information contained within the mail pieces, as well as an analysis from the Orange County Sample Ballot/Voter Information Pamphlet. However, verbiage within that excerpt related to purported savings from a proposed consolidation was in a bold font, clearly distinguishing it from the remainder of the text and contrary to how it appears in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

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“We believe this to be a clear violation of statute,” Scheafer wrote. “Government Code Section 54964 (a) states that ‘an officer of a local agency may not expend or authorize the expenditure of any funds to support or oppose a ballot measure’...(and) Section 54964 (c) ‘(d)oes not prohibit the expenditure of local funds to provide information to the public about the possible effects of the ballot measure on the activities, operations of the local agency **if the information is an accurate, fair and impartial presentation of the facts to the voters.**”

“We continue to be troubled by the manner in which Mesa Water is pursuing this effort, the hundreds of thousands of dollars they are spending to advance it and the reason as to why they are so opposed to studying potential consolidation through the normal LAFCO process.”

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