



Greater Phoenix
Chamber of
Commerce

STATEMENT OF TODD SANDERS

PRESIDENT AND CEO, GREATER PHOENIX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

IN OPPOSITION TO ROOSEVELT IRRIGATION DISTRICT'S PROPOSED

EARLY RESPONSE PLAN

ADEQ WEST VAN BUREN WQARF PUBLIC MEETING

MARCH 23, 2010 6:00 P.M.

Good evening, my name is Todd Sanders and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.

The Phoenix Chamber and its predecessor organizations have existed in the Valley since at least 1888. Today, we have more than 3,100 members, with over 80 percent of the membership representing small business. Our members own and operate businesses in the West Van Buren WQARF area, pay property taxes there and employ local residents. Our mission, dating back to the early days of the formation of our organization, is the same today - - to help area businesses, large and small, succeed in order to make the Valley a better place to live, work and do business.

We are here tonight to register our concern that the Roosevelt Irrigation District's Proposed Early Response Action and associated litigation conflicts directly with our Chamber's mission and will negatively impact a significant number of our members, particularly our smaller members. Our members have sent us a clear message - - they are gravely concerned with the RID proposal and believe that ADEQ's approval of that proposal will fuel existing litigation and result in the potential failure of business entities during these difficult economic times. We

therefore respectfully request that ADEQ not approve the RID proposal and work with Phoenix Chamber members and other stakeholders to develop a focused, targeted and cost effective remedy for the West Van Buren WQARF area.

RID has characterized its proposal as a response action which will address contamination in the West Van Buren WQARF Study area in a necessary and cost-effective manner. Our members emphatically disagree.

The RID proposal contemplates the pumping of groundwater from a number of existing wells to a large and costly treatment facility. Groundwater at many of these wells does not exceed applicable standards. Thus, a significant amount of groundwater would be treated under the RID proposal even though it is not necessary to treat this water.

RID also proposes to pump any treated groundwater via a costly pipeline, to West Valley cities - - thus, creating a water infrastructure project to satisfy RID's future business goals. RID's concurrent filing of a lawsuit appears to be a scheme by RID to have its water business funded with money extracted from Phoenix Chamber members, many of them small "Mom & Pop" businesses with little or no culpability, and certainly no funds. The Phoenix Chamber fears that RID will use an approval by ADEQ of the RID proposal to advance its litigation theories in its action against Chamber members, and to fund its future business plans.

Keeping businesses operating in the West Van Buren area should be a consideration in the approval of any cleanup mechanism for this area. To be clear, the Phoenix Chamber and its members are committed to a reasonable, regional solution to the groundwater contamination in the West Van Buren WQARF area. However, the Phoenix Chamber and its members believe that a more sensible, remedial approach exists - - one which will work through existing processes and rules, involve all appropriate stakeholders, be protective of human health and the

environment, and importantly, be necessary and cost effective, without having the potential to desecrate small business.

We therefore ask the Department to disapprove of RID's plan and consider other alternative, effective remedies, created with the input of affected stakeholders, which will result in a regional solution to the West Van Buren WQARF site.