

November 25, 2015



To: Felicia Marcus, Chair  
California State Water Resources Control Board & Board Members of SWRCB

Subject: ACIL Response to Item 7 of the CA SWRCB Meeting to Consider  
Increasing ELAP Fee Schedules

ACIL is the national trade association for independent scientific, testing, and engineering firms, representing 150 laboratories with over 1,500 laboratory locations. Our member laboratories perform more than 60% of all the laboratory tests conducted for drinking water and regulatory compliance purposes in California.

ACIL completely opposes the 57% across the board increases in the ELAP laboratory accreditation fees. A more equitable and reasonable approach would be to significantly increase the base fee and apply a more modest increase in the fees for FOTs. As has been noted by ELAP staff and the Expert Review Panel, the majority of the operating budget is consumed by administrative overhead rather than laboratory audits and review of FOTs. Increasing the base fees spreads the burden of the program fairly between all laboratories. This is particularly important because ACIL laboratory members cannot get nationally recognized accreditation through the CA ELAP. California laboratories must pay additional fees outside the state to secure credible laboratory accreditation services.

ACIL completely supports the findings of the CA Expert Review Panel's recommendations to the state's ELAP Program. These are that ELAP should:

- (1) Establish a management system;
- (2) Adopt laboratory accreditation standards;
- (3) Ensure relevant analytical methods;
- (4) Expand resources and recognize 3rd party accreditation; and,
- (5) Enhance communications.

On the expanding resources portion of the Expert Review Panel's recommendations, particular attention should be paid to the fact that ELAP staff lack the qualifications and expertise to conduct on-site laboratory assessments. The laboratory community should not be saddled with the huge financial burden of educating and training staff and remediating a program that has been neglected so severely. ACIL further notes that skilled and competent lab accreditation

services can be obtained through a number of widely-recognized 3rd party non-governmental organizations. Imposing the financial burden of training ELAB staff on the laboratory community is completely unnecessary.

ACIL appreciates the opportunity to comment and looks forward to a favorable decision for the commercial laboratory community that financially supports the state ELAP program.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'MB' or 'M. Bush', written in a cursive style.

Milton Bush, JD, CAE  
Chief Executive Officer  
American Council of Independent Laboratories  
[mbush@acil.org](mailto:mbush@acil.org)