

BOARD MEETING DATE: November 1, 2019

AGENDA NO. 9

**PROPOSAL:** Amend Contracts for Legislative Representation in Washington, D.C.

**SYNOPSIS:** The current contracts for legislative and regulatory representation in Washington D.C. with Kadesh & Associates, LLC, Cassidy & Associates, and Carmen Group Inc., expire on January 14, 2020. Each of these contracts includes an option for two one-year extensions. This action is to consider approval of the first one-year extension of the existing contracts for Calendar Year 2020 with Kadesh & Associates, LLC for \$226,400; Cassidy & Associates for \$216,000; and Carmen Group Inc. for \$222,090 as South Coast AQMD's legislative and regulatory representatives in Washington D.C., to further the agency's policy positions at the federal level. Sufficient funding is available in the Legislative, Public Affairs & Media FY 2019-20 Budget.

**COMMITTEE:** Legislative, October 11, 2019; Recommended for Approval

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

Authorize the Chairman to execute contract extensions with 1) Kadesh & Associates for \$226,400; 2) Cassidy & Associates, Inc. for \$216,000; and 3) Carmen Group, Inc. for \$222,090, for legislative consulting services in Washington, D.C. for one year beginning on January 15, 2020, with an option for up to one one-year renewal, upon satisfactory performance, at the Board's discretion.

Wayne Natri  
Executive Officer

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**Background**

After a competitive request for proposals process in 2018, the Board selected Kadesh & Associates, LLC, Cassidy & Associates, and the Carmen Group Inc., for legislative and regulatory representation in Washington, D.C. for one year beginning on January 15, 2019, with an option for up to two one-year renewals, upon satisfactory performance, at

the Board's discretion. Each of the three one-year contracts will expire on January 14, 2020; however, each agreement includes an option for two one-year extensions.

The firms have been effective in working with the Board and staff to maintain a continued and noticeable presence to advance the Board's agenda for federal legislative and regulatory issues. They have effectively organized meetings with the Administration, Congressional Members and staff, industry, environmental and health organizations and other stakeholders. These meetings have strengthened South Coast AQMD's presence and ability to provide information to policymakers in Washington, D.C. The consultants planned and helped facilitate Governing Board Member and staff trips to Washington, D.C. in February and September 2019. South Coast AQMD met with the Administration, key Congressional Members and staff, industry and health organizations on the Cleaner Trucks Initiative, rollback of Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards and the revocation of the California Waiver, as well as appropriations for the Diesel Emission Reduction Act program (DERA), Targeted Airshed Grants, Section 103/105 and other funding programs. The federal consultants also assisted in educating the South Coast AQMD Congressional Delegation and key Members of Congress on attainment issues related to the federal government doing its fair share to reduce emissions from mobile sources to improve public health for the residents of the South Coast region.

In June 2019, there was an effort to increase funding for the DERA program by redirecting funds from the Targeted Airshed Grants program. The consultants in coordination with South Coast AQMD Executive Management and staff were able to educate key Congressional offices on the importance of Targeted Airshed Grants which provide funding to extreme and severe nonattainment regions to reduce ozone and particulate matter. These efforts prevented a reduction in funding available through the Targeted Airshed Grants program. Further, the appropriations levels for DERA and Targeted Airshed Grants were increased in the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Senate Appropriations bill.

Additionally, the consultants have worked well to create well-rounded, strategic relationships for South Coast AQMD by consistently updating our Southern California Congressional Delegation, hosting Business Roundtables, and targeted meetings with health organizations and industry groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. These relationships have elevated South Coast AQMD's ability to communicate critical information to decisionmakers in Washington, D.C.

The consultants have represented South Coast AQMD well and continued representation in Washington, D.C. is necessary to further the agency's policy objectives in the future. The key items on the agenda for South Coast AQMD in 2020 are attainment issues related to the Clean Air Act and increased federal support in terms of funding and regulations to reduce emissions from federal sources of air pollution.

South Coast AQMD also must maintain a strong presence in Washington, D.C. because the Surface Transportation bill is on the horizon and discussions are ongoing.

It is critical that South Coast AQMD be involved in policy development relating to federal air quality legislation, federal Clean Air Act implementation, subvention funding, and special grants, and that all these issues and any other related matters are closely monitored. Therefore, staff recommends continued direct representation and advocacy of South Coast AQMD's policy positions on environmental issues in Washington, D.C.

**Proposal**

Staff recommends retaining Kadesh & Associates, LLC, Cassidy & Associates, and Carmen Group Inc., for Calendar Year 2020, given their successful efforts in 2019 and the ability to build upon them in the coming year. Continuity of representation will help build on past relationships and policy initiatives to increase the successful outcomes of South Coast AQMD policy objectives going forward.

Pursuant to the original contract, the Board has discretion to exercise options for the two one-year extensions. This proposal is to approve the first one-year extension for all three consulting contracts.

**Resource Impacts**

The Legislative, Public Affairs, and Media Budget for FY 2019-2020 has sufficient funds for legislative advocacy in Washington D.C.