

Bill to ban dry lawn fines heads to governor

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SACRAMENTO – The California Legislature has sent the governor a bill to protect residents who let their lawns go brown during the drought.

The Assembly on Thursday advanced AB1 unanimously with 70 votes. It will prohibit local governments from penalizing residents who conserve water by not watering their lawns.

Democratic Assemblywoman Cheryl Brown introduced the bill after hearing about residents in her San Bernardino district getting fined for parched landscaping. Gov. Jerry Brown's administration called such moves short-sighted last year.

Now the governor's office is ordering communities to slash water use as much as 36 percent compared to 2013 levels. Regulators have pleaded with residents to put their lawns on a water diet to protect supplies.

The governor has already prohibited homeowner associations from punishing residents who scale back landscaping.

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