

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

425



FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE:
January 31, 2006

SUBJECT: 2006 Federal Legislative Platform

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors approve the attached policy positions on selected Federal issues and direct the Executive Office and the Board's Washington, D.C. legislative representatives to further the Board's positions.

BACKGROUND: Annually the Board adopts positions on selected Federal legislative issues to guide advocacy efforts at the Federal level. The major policy issues in this year's Federal platform are: Homeland Security / Bioterrorism/Anti-Terrorism/Urban Area Security Initiative, Telecommunication Reform, Eminent Domain, Impacts of Illegal Immigration, and Access to Health Care. Although previously adopted Board positions remain in effect, several are briefly mentioned to emphasize the Board's continuing support for these measures. Additional federal issues will be brought to the Board for appropriate action as the need arises.

Attachment

Gary M. Christmas
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Deputy County Executive Officer

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ N/A	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ N/A	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ N/A	For Fiscal Year:	N/A

SOURCE OF FUNDS:	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

County Executive Office Signature

[Signature]

- Policy
- Policy
- Consent
- Consent

Dept's Recomm.:
Per Exec. Ofc.:

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District:

Agenda Number:

3.26



**2006
FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY POSITIONS**

ISSUE: Homeland Security / Bioterrorism/Anti-Terrorism/Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)

Local governments are integral components in homeland security, and the federal government must provide significant resources to local governments so that they can prevent or respond to terrorist attacks.

In California, local governments are the first responders to terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other major emergencies. County public health, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other public safety personnel, are responsible for on-the-ground response and recovery actions. Counties own, operate and secure essential aspects of the nations' infrastructure, such as airports, communication systems, transit systems, water supplies, schools and hospitals. Finally, elected county officials and county emergency managers provide the essential regional planning and coordination in preventing, preparing for and managing the response to emergency events.

ACTION: Support measures that provide funding to the county for homeland security and anti-terrorism, including funding for disasters, an improved communication infrastructure, emergency evacuation and UASI.

ISSUE: Telecommunication Reform

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 provided a legislative model for dealing with and managing the telecommunications industry. Since 1996, however, new and emerging technologies have shown that existing regulatory and taxation policies simply do not work and need to be reformed. Federal legislation must take into account the needs of county government as these laws are revised.

One of the major technologies driving telecommunications reform is "convergence" - a coming together of a variety of traditional communications services into a converged world where, for example, video programming can be provided over phone lines, on cell phones, from satellites and over the internet. Voice services can now be provided by cable companies, wireless carriers, traditional phone companies and through the internet. Internet access is now available through wireless carriers, phone lines, cable, and via satellite. Legislation to provide a new road map for regulating and controlling these services has been introduced.

ACTION: Support telecommunication reform that is in the consumer's interest and retains public access, educational and governmental programming. Support legislation that maintains the right of local authorities to manage and control public rights of way, maintains local revenues and the ability of local governments to continue taxation and fees consistent with local needs, continues to meet the challenges of public safety and homeland security and allows for public ownership and access to telecommunication services such as broadband.

ISSUE: Eminent Domain

The U.S. Supreme Court reported its decision in the eminent domain case of Kelo versus City of New London on June 23, 2005. Since that date, there has been much discussion and proposed legislation concerning the use of eminent domain by local governments. In Kelo, by a vote of 5 to 4, the court affirmed the rights of states and local governments to use eminent domain to acquire private property with just compensation for economic development purposes. Legislation has been introduced that would forbid local governments from taking private property for economic development purposes if they have received federal economic development dollars in the past two years.

ACTION: Support positions that continue to allow local government to oversee land use, including eminent domain, in their jurisdictions. Support the maintenance of existing authority that allows local government to use eminent domain, when appropriate, to promote economic development, to increase the tax base, and to create new businesses and jobs vital for economic health.

ISSUE: Impacts of Illegal Immigration

The county, other local governments, schools and health care providers in Riverside County continue to incur millions of dollars in unreimbursed costs because they must either provide services to undocumented immigrants, or they must expend criminal justice resources to apprehend, incarcerate and adjudicate undocumented immigrants who violate state laws. Currently, the county, state and local agencies are reimbursed for the costs of incarcerating criminal illegal aliens under the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP).

ACTION: Support measures that provide continued funding for SCAAP, and other programs to compensate the county for the impacts of illegal immigration, including the costs associated with processing, detaining and prosecuting undocumented immigrants. Support measures that provide compensation for providing health and social services to this population.

ISSUE: Access to Health Care

Many employed residents either do not have access to an employer-sponsored health insurance program or do not qualify for it. This is often the case for individuals who have successfully moved from welfare to work. In addition, as individuals lose or change jobs, they frequently experience gaps in health care coverage.

Under these circumstances, public hospitals and other hospitals that disproportionately serve this population provide a critical safety net of health care services, ensuring their continued well being and that of the general public, as well. In order to more effectively reach and serve the uninsured, it is essential that safety net hospitals have the resources to expand as well as integrate services across providers to improve access and ensure the availability of a continuum of core services.

ACTION: Support legislation and initiatives that provide funding to safety net hospitals and other county programs that provide services to uninsured and underinsured individuals.

EXISTING FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY POSITIONS

Unfunded Mandates

Support measures that ease the burden of Federal regulations and mandates on local governments by:

- 1) requiring adequate federal funds for new mandates arising from federal law, regulation, or policy; and
- 2) reimbursing local governments for the costs of complying with existing federal mandates.

Public Safety Funding

Support measures that provide funding opportunities for local public safety efforts, including law enforcement, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, violence against women, domestic terrorism, communications interoperability, and drug court activities.

Public Health Funding

Support measures that continue or increase critical Federal funding for local public health services, including Medicaid/Medicare, DSH, Ryan White, SAMHSA, and Preventative Health funding.

Social Services Funding

Support measures that continue or increase critical Federal funding for local social services, including Child Welfare Services programs, the Social Services Block Grant and funding under the Older Americans Act.

Maternal and Child Health Care

Support funding for Maternal and Child Health Block Grants and legislation to revise the distribution formula for MCH funds to provide a more equitable distribution of funding for jurisdictions that have experienced population growth.

Election Reform

Support measures that provide support and funding for upgrading and maintaining local voting systems.

Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Support measures consistent with the Board's policy to amend and reauthorize the ESA, including a more systemic approach to implementation of the Act.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

Support measures that increase PILT to the amount authorized by the Act in 1994.

Housing, Homeless, and Community Development Funding

Support measures that address the housing and homeless needs in the county, and increase and fully fund the CDBG program.

Agricultural Pests

Support measures to provide funding to address agricultural pest issues in the county.

Mental Health

Support measures that provide funding for mentally ill offenders and other mental health programs.

Habitat Conservation

Support measures that support and fund:

- 1) habitat conservation and related activities,
- 2) transportation and communication corridors to relieve congestion; and
- 3) planning efforts to establish future land use and housing needs.

Temporary Assistant to Needy Families (TANF)

Support measures that will continue the TANF program.

Desert Communities Empowerment Zone

Support continued funding for the Desert Communities Empowerment Zone through the annual appropriations process, as well as measures that establish a long-term funding mechanism for Empowerment Zones.

Riverside County Regional Medical Center

Support legislation that would provide funding for capital improvement projects to improve RCRMC's ability to serve as the region's first responder for health-related incidents, and oppose any attempts to reduce Medicaid payments to public hospitals.