

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



765

FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE:
January 29, 2008

SUBJECT: 2008 State Legislative Platform

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board approve the 2008 State Legislative Platform and direct the Executive Office and the County's Sacramento representatives to advance the legislative proposals contained here.

BACKGROUND: Each year the Board adopts a State Legislative Platform to guide the legislative advocacy efforts at the State level. This year the State Legislative Platform is divided into three sections: general legislative guidelines on major priorities, new proposals that have not been included in previous Board approved platforms, and continuing concerns of high interest. Previously approved Board positions from earlier state platforms and Board actions are still in effect. Due to the dynamic nature of the legislative process, additional State legislative issues of concern to the County will be brought forward to the Board for appropriate action throughout the year as the need arises.

Departmental Concurrence

Attachment

Gary M. Christmas

Gary M. Christmas
Deputy County Executive Officer

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	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
[Signature]
BY: Bill Lina
County Executive Office Signature

- Policy
- Policy
- Consent
- Consent

Dep't Recomm.:
Per Exec. Ofc.:

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY
2008
STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Roy Wilson
Chairman

Bob Buster
First District

John Tavaglione
Second District

Jeff Stone
Third District

Marion V. Ashley
Fifth District

Larry Parrish
County Executive Officer
January 29, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

State Legislative Priorities.1
New State Legislative Policy Items. 5
Selected Existing State Legislative Policy Positions. 9

State Legislative Priorities

State Budget

Governor Schwarzenegger released his Fiscal Year 2008/2009 budget on Thursday, January 10. The governor proposed a \$101 billion budget for FY 2008/2009, stating there was a current year deficit of \$3.3 billion and projecting an 18 month deficit of \$14.5 billion. He is proposing 10 percent cuts across the board in current and FY 2008/2009 state spending and a constitutional amendment called the Budget Stabilization Act that would limit state spending in future years. The governor's plan also proposes delaying payments to counties and other entities to deal with a state cash flow problem. He also declared a state fiscal emergency and called for a special legislative session to address the budget crisis, which would have 45 days to implement reductions in the current year budget. Altogether the governor proposes a plan that will affect most county departments and agencies. Preliminary figures indicate proposed delayed or deferred payments to Riverside County could amount to approximately \$100 million.

- Oppose reductions in state programs that require increased local funding to maintain the same level of service.
- Oppose reduced state funding for county-administered state programs unless there is a commensurate reduction in the county's responsibility to provide for the program.
- Oppose any state efforts to shift costs or federal penalties from the state to local government.
- Protect Proposition 1A and other measures that require the state to fulfill its requirement to support local government.
- Support measures that enhance or maintain the county's revenue base.
- Oppose any measures that limit the county's ability to operate in reasonable and cost effective manner.

Corrections

Preserving public safety is a key priority for both state and local governments. Essential components of the public safety system are the interconnected state and local corrections systems. The Governor and Legislature have been considering and implementing various reforms to the state corrections system, including AB 900, which primarily focus on relieving overcrowding and reducing recidivism in state prisons and juvenile detention facilities.

County staff will monitor and respond to corrections related issues through the Corrections Working Group, composed of staff from the Executive Office and public safety departments.

- Support state funding to improve, expand and renovate local correction facilities.
- Support state correctional programs that recognize and promote innovation at the local level and permit maximum flexibility so that state funds can target local community needs.
- Oppose state-mandated correctional programs that do not have dedicated, sustained funding sources.

Human Services Funding Deficit

Counties operate a number of human services programs for the state. Statewide the annual shortfall between actual county expenses to operate these programs and state reimbursement has grown to over \$900 million since 2001. This increased cost of doing business has created a funding gap that forces counties to either reduce services to vulnerable populations or divert county resources from other critical local services.

- Support legislation that requires the state to fully reimburse the county for the increasing costs of providing state-mandated human services programs.
- Oppose measures that would freeze, delay, defer or suspend state payments to the county for human services programs.
- Support efforts to reform the state budgeting of human services programs so that funding is based on the reasonable cost to deliver services instead of out-dated formulas.

Health Care Reform

Various health care reform proposals have been promoted by the legislature, the governor and other interested groups. Foremost among these is AB 8, the Health Care Reform Measure sponsored by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez. The health reform package is quite large and includes many elements. Those that affect counties directly include the Medi-Cal rate increases for hospitals, doctors, and health plans; the Local Coverage Option; and a provision that allows unions for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Workers to request that members' health care be provided through union health trust funds. Key elements in the initiative include the county share of cost language; hospital fees, a sliding scale employer fee, and the tobacco tax.

Other elements of the bill will also have impacts on counties, but they may be less direct. For example, the bill plans to expand the Medi-Cal and Healthy Families programs. Such expansions may provide access to regular health care for persons who may seek assistance through county hospitals and health systems, thereby reducing the need for counties to care for these populations.

County staff will monitor and respond to health related issues through the Health Care Reform Working Group, composed of staff from the Executive Office, Riverside County Regional Medical Center, Community Health Agency and the Mental Health Department.

New State Legislative Policy Items

ISSUE: **The Local Public Health Response to Hepatitis C**

POSITION: Support the development of a coordinated plan of action for local health departments and the California Department of Public Health, with the inclusion of key stakeholders, including substance abuse prevention and treatment agencies and corrections to: 1) respond to HCV, including staff training, integration of HCV counseling and testing services to existing prevention programs; 2) enhance the HCV surveillance system; and, 3) develop education and outreach to at-risk populations.

Support the provision of new federal and private sector resources to enable local health departments to respond appropriately to the HCV epidemic and to implement the recommendations issued by the NIH and CDC.

Support the provision of new federal and private sector resources to expand affordable and accessible medical evaluation and treatment to persons with HCV, regardless of ability to pay, and to provide support for individuals with limited access to health education, testing and health care services and groups that may be disproportionately affected by HCV.

BACKGROUND: The Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is the most common bloodborne infection in the United States. An estimated 4 million Americans are infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), with an estimated 35,000 new diagnoses occurring each year. HCV is the cause of an estimated 40 percent of chronic liver disease, the tenth leading cause of the death in adults and is now the leading cause for liver transplants in the United States. A four-fold increase in currently undiagnosed adult chronic HCV infections is projected by 2015, presenting a formidable challenge to the public health and medical communities.

HCV is transmitted primarily through parenteral exposure to blood and blood products from infected persons with the majority of new cases since 1994 attributed to the practice of sharing needles and other paraphernalia for illicit drug use.

A majority of individuals who carry HCV are chronically infected but may be unaware of their infection due to the absence of clinical symptoms. As a result, they may unknowingly pass the virus on to others.

ISSUE: **Control of Communicable Diseases**

POSITION: Support increased State funding for Public Health Programs and legislation that enhances the authority of Public Health Officers to combat and control communicable diseases. (Delete acute Respiratory Syndrome SARS).

BACKGROUND: Local health jurisdictions are the State's partners in the control of communicable diseases. Communicable disease program augmentations are needed in light of new and re-emerging infectious diseases, the most serious of which are avian influenza, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB), extremely drug resistant tuberculosis (XDR TB), and West Nile Virus (WNV).

The re-emergence of syphilis as a public health concern highlights the importance of addressing Hepatitis C and HIV infection so that appropriate interventions can be taken. There is also a growing concern about emerging drug resistance to common organisms, such as methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and drug resistant gonorrhea.

The Public Health Improvement Act of 1999 (Chapter 797) was intended to increase the basic funding allotment to local health jurisdictions for core public health functions in order to control the spread of communicable diseases. However, during each budget cycle since enactment of the law, sufficient funds for the program have not been appropriated.

ISSUE: **Pediatric Immunization Programs**

POSITION: Obtain sustainable funding for pediatric immunization programs that support the California Statewide Immunization Information System (SIIS), and support efforts to increase the number of children receiving immunizations.

BACKGROUND: Currently, one in five children under the age of two in California are not up-to-date on their routine immunizations, leaving them vulnerable to serious disease. Only 73 percent of children in California are appropriately immunized by age two years as compared to the Healthy People 2010 goal of 90 percent.

California stands to save \$32.5 million per year in current costs for manual immunization record pulls by health care providers, schools, day care, and HEDIS; duplicative shots; reduced illness; and time lost from work by parents. To receive the full benefit of cost savings, California Statewide Immunization Information System (SIIS), must be able to expand and sustain this important health infrastructure. The federal government's goal is that 95 percent of children under age six have their immunization histories in a fully functional state registry by 2010. However, only about 30 percent of our young children in California have immunization histories in the SIIS registries.

All 50 states are developing registries and a number – including Michigan, Florida, Illinois, Oregon, Arizona and Washington – are already operating statewide. Registries keep track of immunization records as children move or change doctors within the state. California's size and mobile population make establishing an integrated statewide registry system all the more important.

Selected Existing State Legislative Policy Positions

Public Library:

Support measures that fully restore the Transaction Based Reimbursement to the county for lending library materials to other jurisdictions. Fully fund the Public Library Fund, which provides general state support to public libraries.

Design Build:

Support and clarify design build legislation so that this method of construction can be used for street improvements when they are part of an eligible design build project.

Sex Offenders:

Support measures to restrict the residence of sex offenders who are 290 registrants as permitted by Jessica's Law.

Court Facility Transfer:

Support an extension of SB 732, the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, which upholds the spirit and intent of the original enabling legislation and is not punitive to counties so that Riverside and other counties can complete the transfer of court facilities to the state.

Vehicle License Fee (VLF) Funding for Incorporations and Inhabited

Annexations:

Support measures that would extend the sunset of June 30, 2009, established by the VLF funding enabling legislation AB 1602. By allowing new communities the ability to use VLF revenues, AB 1602 has allowed up to six communities statewide to bring the question of incorporation to the ballot between 2006 and the current sunset date. The Riverside County communities of Wildomar and Menifee were able to use this legislation to their fiscal advantage in placing their incorporations to the voters and other communities within the county may be able to do the same if the sunset is extended.

Water:

Continue to support measures to mitigate the impacts of the water shortage as effectively as possible. Advocate for state water delivery projects and funding mechanisms that will improve water related infrastructure and delivery methods without causing delivery delays or jeopardizing existing water supplies.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA):

Support efforts to reform the RHNA process to more fairly and accurately distribute low and ultra-low income housing opportunities throughout Southern California. Support measures to create consistency regarding the allocation of tax credits to the forecast in the RHNA to provide for more additional development of affordable housing in Riverside County.