

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



**FROM:** Supervisor Bob Buster

**SUBMITTAL DATE:** April 6, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Ballot measure establishing a charter for local control in Riverside County

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors direct staff to:

1. Identify the statutory requirements and timelines necessary to place an initiative on the November 2010 ballot for the purpose of seeking a voter approved charter for Riverside County and initiate the process;
2. The purpose of the charter shall be to address the filling of vacancies on the Board of Supervisors;
3. Report back to the Board within 30 days with recommendations on how best to proceed.

**BACKGROUND:** Riverside County is bound by general law which requires the Governor to make an appointment should a vacancy occur on the county Board of Supervisors. Counties, with the public's support, can adopt charters that create local options for filling vacancies.

After the unexpected death of Supervisor Roy Wilson in August 2009, Riverside County had no choice but to wait more than two months for a decision from Sacramento and another month for the appointment to take effect. During that time, the board was forced to delay matters of great importance to fourth-district residents as well as budget votes affecting the entire county.

(continued on 2<sup>nd</sup> page)

*Bob Buster*

**Bob Buster**  
Supervisor, 1<sup>st</sup> District

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**BACKGROUND continued: Ballot measure establishing a charter for local control in  
Riverside County**

The Board of Supervisors now faces the possibility that another vacancy may open up in the third district after November. The county would again find itself at the mercy and the convenience of Governor's office. The county confronts unprecedented challenges, and neither the Board of Supervisors nor our residents can afford to be without representation.

The current law that governs Riverside County sets no time limit for the Governor to select an appointee. Charters can provide for more timely solutions that place urgent local needs above state political maneuvering.

All of Riverside County's larger neighboring counties have their own charters. San Bernardino, San Diego and Los Angeles counties approved theirs many decades ago. Orange County passed its charter in 2002. More than 100 California cities have charters, including Riverside County cities such as Riverside, La Quinta, Norco, Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage and Palm Springs.

The Orange County charter, approved by voters in March 2002, made only one substantive change to county's governance— it instituted local control over the filling of Board vacancies. The charter has been tested and validated in the courts.

Residents of Riverside County have lost faith in the state government's ability to manage its own affairs, much less those of local counties. A charter could help to insulate Riverside County board appointments from Sacramento dysfunction and give us the local control we need.