

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

452



**FROM:** Executive Office

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
January 27, 2014

**SUBJECT:** 2014 Federal Legislative Platform

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the 2014 Federal Legislative Platform and direct the Executive Office and the county's Washington D.C. based representatives to advance the legislative proposals contained herein.  
All districts, [\$0]

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

Each year, the Board of Supervisors adopts a Federal Legislative Platform to guide the legislative advocacy efforts at the federal level. The Executive Office working in conjunction with Board members, department heads, state and regional advocates, developed the Federal Platform to address a variety of crucial issues facing the county.

Departmental Concurrence

*Alex Gann*

Alex Gann  
Deputy County Executive Officer

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost:	POLICY/CONSENT (per Exec. Office)
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:** N/A

**Budget Adjustment:** N/A

**For Fiscal Year:** 13/14-14/15

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:**

APPROVE

*George A. Johnson*  
George A. Johnson

County Executive Office Signature

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

- A-30
- 4/5 Vote
- Positions Added
- Change Order

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.60 12/18/12

District: All

Agenda Number:

**3-4**

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary (continued)**

Previously approved Board positions from earlier federal platforms are still in effect. The 2014 platform includes new federal policy items and key selected policy items of continuing importance. Due to the dynamic nature of the legislative process, the Board will consider additional federal legislative issues of concern throughout the year as the need arises.

Based on the principles of fiscal stability, preservation of local control, efficient service delivery/operations, and the promotion of inter-agency cooperation and collaboration, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors provide specific direction and overall policy guidance by adopting an annual platform for each legislative session in accordance with Board Policy A-27.

**Impact on Residents and Businesses**

The action by the Board will not impact businesses or residents.

**SUPPLEMENTAL:**

**Additional Fiscal Information**

N/A

**Contract History and Price Reasonableness**

N/A

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY 2014

## FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**Jeff Stone, Chairman**  
*Third District*

**Kevin Jeffries**  
*First District*

**John Tavaglione**  
*Second District*

**John Benoit**  
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**Marion Ashley**  
*Fifth District*

**Jay E. Orr**  
*County Executive Officer*

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<sup>1</sup> CSAC 2013 Federal Advocacy Priorities .....	Attachment A

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the Executive Committee; pending approval of the CSAC Board of Directors on February 20, 2014.



## **Executive Summary**

## **Executive Summary**

The Executive Office prepared this document with assistance from the Board members, department heads, federal advocates and regional stakeholders. Previously approved Board positions from earlier Federal Platforms are still in effect. The 2014 platform includes: key federal legislative priorities, new existing policy items, selected policy items of continuing importance, and finally the CSAC federal priorities are presented for Board approval. Due to the dynamic nature of the legislative process, additional federal legislative issues of concern to the county will be brought forward to the Board for appropriate action throughout the year as the need arises.

Based on the principles of fiscal stability, preservation of local control, efficient service delivery and operations and the promotion of inter-agency cooperation, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors provide specific direction and overall policy guidance by adopting an annual platform for each legislative session in accordance with Board Policy A-27.



## **New Federal Legislative Policy Items**

## **Community Services Block Grant**

**Issue:** Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) provides core federal funding for Community Action Agencies in the United States to help eliminate the causes and alleviate the conditions of poverty. Currently, CSBG provides \$680 million to more than one thousand CAAs across the country, allowing individuals and families to meet their basic needs, educate themselves, achieve self-sufficiency and improve their communities. Because CSBG funds their central management and core activities, CAA's are able to leverage additional resources to combat causes of poverty.

**Action:** Support funding of CSBG at current level, support re-authorization of CSBG.

**Background:** President Obama's last three budgets have reduced CSBG funding by 50%. Funding has been restored by Congress. Community Action Partnership understands the need to reduce spending, but spending cuts should be equitable across the board.

In 2014, bi-partisan sponsored legislation will be introduced to re-authorize CSBG. There has not been a re-authorization since 1998. Changes in the legislation reflect needed updating of the law.



## **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program**

**Issue:** Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federal program that provides a necessary life-line by helping to maintain or restore utility service to low-income residents throughout Riverside County when they are facing a crisis situation. It also funds home weatherization, which results in an average utility cost savings of 20%, while also making the homes healthier to live in. Priorities are given to the elderly, disabled, and families with young children. Demand is continually increasing despite cuts in funding.

**Action:** Support maintaining FY 2014 funding level.

**Background:** LIHEAP provides critical heating and cooling assistance to low-income households, especially for the elderly, disabled and families that are forced to choose between paying their energy bills or paying for food, medicine and other essentials. Weatherization gives them long term cost savings, freeing up money for other necessities.

The program's energy crisis intervention components are designed to provide immediate response to alleviate potentially life-threatening situations, and the client education component of the program provides funds for activities that encourage regular utility payments, promote energy awareness and encourage reduction of energy use through energy efficiency, education and weatherization.

## **Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program**

**Issue:** CAP Riverside weatherizes over 800 homes throughout Riverside County annually. The federally funded Weatherization Assistance Program results have an average utility cost savings of 20%, while also making the homes healthier to live in. It also provides jobs as well as benefitting the economy through purchases from Riverside County vendors and suppliers.

**Action:** Support continued funding of Weatherization Assistance Program.

**Background:** The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) was created in 1976 to assist low-income families who lacked resources to invest in energy efficiency. Funds are used to improve the energy efficiency of low-income homes using the most advanced technologies and testing protocols available in the housing industry. The energy conservation resulting from the efforts of state and local agencies helps our country reduce its dependence on foreign oil and decrease the cost of energy for families in need while improving the health and safety of their homes. Weatherization funding has been steadily decreasing despite an increase in demand.

## **Water Resources Development Act of 2014**

**Issue:** Prioritization of Ecosystem Restoration Efforts

**Action:** Retain Senate text in Conference Committee, Secure President's signature.

**Background:** The Salton Sea is at the tipping point. Legislative initiative coordinated by Riverside County may well determine whether the Sea devolves into an ecological and economic disaster, or whether the Sea is transformed into a healthy, attractive environment as America's renewable energy powerhouse.

At the federal level, the Salton Sea Authority is poised to take action with its local agency members in securing \$30 Million in funding already authorized in previous passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). A crucial first step is to adjust the general priorities in appropriations for major federal water research agencies, including the U.S Army Corps of Engineers. WRDA bills authorize water resources projects and policies for navigation, flood control, hydropower, recreation, water supply, and emergency management. Each bill directs how the Corps formulates, reviews, and implements projects.

In 2013, the Senate approved Senator Boxer's S. 601, the *Water Resources Development Act* in May, and the House subsequently approved H.R. 3080, Water Resources Reform and Development Act in October. The Senate versions of the WRDA legislation includes language for prioritizing ecosystem restoration projects that would be useful for Salton Sea project funding. The text of the provision is as follows:

### **SEC. 2045. PRIORITIZATION OF ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION EFFORTS.**

For authorized projects with a primary purpose of ecosystem restoration, the Secretary shall give funding priority to projects.

(1) that:

- (a) address an identified threat to public health, safety, or welfare;
- (b) preserve or restore ecosystems of national significance; or
- (c) preserve or restore habitats of importance for federally protected species, including migratory birds; and

(2) for which the restoration activities will contribute to other ongoing or planned federal, state, or local restoration initiatives.

Although the language does not include funding, the prioritization of projects with criteria aligned with the Salton Sea is vital to move up on federal project lists. In terms of funding, The Salton Sea is still included in the President's budget and other portions of WRDA 2013 will expedite our ability to construct the proposed WRDA 2007 demonstration projects.

The final version of the WRDA legislation is now being negotiated by a House-Senate conference committee. Riverside County and its partners in the Salton Sea Authority must work together to ensure the language is accepted in the Conference Committee's final bill that is signed by the President.

## **Export-Import Bank of the United States**

**Issue:** Expansion of Service of the Export-Import Bank of the United States in the County of Riverside in 2014.

**Action:** Support, advocate, and promote.

**Background:** The Export-Import Bank of the United States provides export financing assistance to manufactures and other exporters in Riverside County via a partnership agreement executed by the Assistant County Executive Officer/EDA, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors. The County Foreign Trade Commissioner/EDA serves as the county representative to the Ex-IM Bank in Washington, D.C. and to the business community. With the recent Brookings Institute study indicating Riverside County ranking 24 in the nation in exports, Ex-Im Bank should consider funding a full-time position in Riverside County to better serve our business community. Almost 50 county businesses rely on Ex-Im Bank services to assist in capitalizing exports. Advocating for the addition of a part-time staff position for the Ex-Im Bank will be a benefit to the county and its businesses and expands and improves services, which must now be offered from Newport Beach and/or San Diego. Authorize county staff within the economic development agency to advocate for this staffing increase in the house and senate along within the administration whenever deemed in the best interest of the county.

## **FAA Airport Improvement Program**

**Issue:** Increase FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grant Funding amount for small airports back to 95%. Advocate for FAA policies in best interest of county airports.

**Action:** To pass legislation for FAA to restore and maintain an appropriate level of AIP grant funding based on percentage scale of 95%.

**Background:** Congress has passed H.R. 658: FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grant Funding. The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grant funding amount was reduced from 95% to 90% for smaller general aviation airports. Overall AIP funding budget was also cut to \$3.35 billion, compared with \$3.5 billion in the previous two fiscal years.

Riverside County's principle source of funding for its airport capital improvements are Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants from the FAA. Projects eligible for AIP grant funding include improvements related to airport safety, operational facilities, capacity, security and environmental protection.

These reductions may result in a loss of discretionary AIP grant funds in an amount up to \$2,000,000/yr. and entitlement funds in an amount up to \$600,000/yr. The FAA also conveyed to airport sponsors the reduction in grant administrative expenses, from 10% to 3%. This reduction passes the grant administration costs to the County and may result in a loss of \$60,000/yr.

Riverside County's principle source of funding for its airport capital improvements are AIP grant funds from the FAA.

## Community Development Block Grant

### Issues:

1. County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation was reduced in FY 2013;
2. Reduction under Sequestration equates to 8%;
3. CDBG program needs regulatory reform to ensure long-term sustainability and effectiveness.

**Action:** Support, advocate, and promote adequate and stable funding for the CDBG program by:

1. Support the proposed FY 2015 CDBG funding in Senate and house.
2. Seek restoration of Sequestration cuts.
3. Fundamental regulatory reform of the CDBG Entitlement programs to ensure long-term viability.

**Background:** The FY 2013 CDBG allocation to the County was the lowest since the FY 92 program year. This reduction was due primarily to 13% reduction in CDBG funding from Congress as well as the loss of several participating cities from the County's Urban County Program. CDBG was cut by nearly 17% in FY 2011. When adjusted for inflation, the funding level for the County and the Country is at its lowest level since the program started in 1975. The CDBG regulations must be reformed and amended to change the requirements and eligibility for "entitlement" status. In 1984, there were 795 jurisdictions (counties, cities, states) dividing up the \$3.468 billion CDBG allocation. For FY 2012, there will be 1209 grantees dividing up only \$2.98 billion. The end result is that there are more jurisdictions fighting for and ever-shrinking CDBG funding.

Consequently, when adjusted for inflation, the average FY 2012 CDBG grantee received only have  $\frac{1}{4}$  or 25% of the funding that the average FY 1984 CDBG grantee had. The effectiveness and viability of the CDBG program cannot be sustained under this formula. Authorize county executives to advocate for legislation in the best intent of county CDBG.

## Workforce Investment Board

The Riverside County Workforce Investment Board is one of 600 private-sector led Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) in the Country. WIBs are transforming the nation's workforce system to be responsive to the demands of a global economy. Through strong strategic partnerships with private-sector businesses, local government, community-based organizations, institutions of higher education and K-12 education, WIBs remain in a prime position to serve as the pipeline for a skilled labor force necessary for economic recovery and long-term growth.

**Action:** We face a churning economy and even in this economic downturn skill shortages continue in many industries. The increasing diversity of the workforce creates new challenges and opportunities to create a workforce system focused on innovation and skills development. The WIB believes that efforts to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act should build on the lessons learned over the past 10 years of implementation and push the system toward innovation. Building on what has been established, the Riverside County Workforce Investment Board urges Congress to consider the following improvements to the law:

### Governance

- **Regionalization.** Provide incentives for working collaboratively across workforce areas. For the most part, regional lines should be drawn based on existing MSA's and/or commuter patterns; provide incentives for regionalization through the governors set aside funds (e.g., regional initiatives may have access to funds that other boards do not) rather than consolidating existing boards; allow local areas to have more flexibility in the composition of local workforce boards and if mandatory partners do not actively participate on the boards, allow the local area to remove them from the board; maintain the majority business focus and business led; ensure that boards have responsibility for oversight of workforce issues in the area and not just WIA programs.
- **Oversight.** Strengthen the role of the local boards to convene and connect economic development, education, and workforce development. Ensure local boards continue to provide oversight to the operating side of the system.
- **Local Flexibility.** Retain local flexibility and promote cross-sector collaboration between workforce investment boards, businesses, labor, service providers, school districts, secondary education, county/city and state institutions.



## Structure

- **One-Stops.** Maintain the infrastructure of single access point to partner services and **universal access to core services**. Do not require that all services (including core services) be targeted to only those who are eligible for services based on income. Mandate co-location in full service one stops of the mandatory partners.
- **Serving Businesses.** Recognize the importance of business to the nation's workforce development system by establishing strategies and initiatives that ensure the involvement of business leaders; and provide relevant services to employers. Increased linkages between workforce, education, and economic development programs should be developed; and innovative strategies such as the utilization of business intermediaries, industry sector initiatives, and **incumbent worker training programs** (through on the job training and customized training) must be encouraged to meet employers' needs.
- **Sequence of Services.** Relax requirements around the sequence of core, intensive, and training services, providing greater flexibility to move customers through the various components of the system. Focus on promoting a system that allows the local area to assess a customer's needs and to match a customer with the appropriate sequence of services from where they are to help them meet their employment goals.
- **Youth Councils.** Maintain Youth Councils. Youth Councils have the potential to develop a comprehensive youth development system in local communities. This series of partnerships or connections among organizations to plan and deliver services based on youth development principles to all young people in the community has many advantages, including: reducing duplication of effort, leveraging community resources more effectively, providing a continuum of support to all youth, and building community- wide commitment to youth as valuable cultural and economic resources. Without a separate and distinct focus on youth, it is unlikely that many WIBs, with their focus on adults and one-stops, will spend the time required to build such a system.

## Accountability Measures

- Establish performance standards that: measure customer satisfaction; measure the attainment of skills as defined by business; measure services provided to businesses; encourage and provide credit for the brokering of training services (paid for with resources other than WIA title I); capture the provision of core services; maintain a cost efficiency measure that accounts for multiple years of service for providing intensive and training services; create a measure of the

return on investment of dollars spent to dollars contributed to the economy.

- Establish a Performance Measurement System that takes into account the challenges associated with serving the hardest to serve populations and other local environmental factors.
- Establish a system that tracks successful employment of customers to enable quarterly reports listing placements.

### **Eligibility**

- Streamline the eligibility determination process and align eligibility with other programs that would allow automatic eligibility for WIA enrollment if an individual had already been determined eligible for other means tested programs such as the school lunch program. While we support serving individuals up to the age of 24 (see below), increasing the age limit increases the potential pool of those needing service. Without additional sustained resources to meet increased demand for services, keep the current eligibility for youth ages 14 through 21.
- With additional resources, create a new category of eligibility for Transitional Youth. This category of youth, ages 22 to 24, should receive service offerings at appropriate levels of intensity and support to assist them as they transition from being youth to becoming young adults. The service mix required for this age group is a combination of supports found in the current youth system while focusing on more mature methods of job search assistance and occupational skills development.
- Combine the Adult and Dislocated Worker, considering all as adults with eligibility focused on long-term unemployed and/or those who have been dislocated.
- Advocate for education and training program expansion for military veterans and their families.

### **Funding & Formula**

- Establish funding formulae that maintain or increase local area funding to ensure that local programs can deliver the full complement of services to businesses and jobseekers.
- Establish more specific requirements for partners to fund the one-stop infrastructure and/or create a separate funding stream in the law for funding the one-stop infrastructure.

- **Out-of-School/In-School Funding Requirements.** Establish the requirement that, *at minimum*, 50 percent of youth formula funds should be spent on out-of-school youth who are 16-21 without a secondary credential, and other high risk categories. Provide the opportunity for waivers to local workforce boards that can demonstrate the need to serve more than 50 percent in-school youth.
- **Summer Employment, Work Experience and Service.** Allow up to 30% of formula funds to be used to for paid work experience opportunities, summer employment opportunities, and/or service activities.

### **Innovation**

- **Offer Multiple Pathways to Secondary and Access to Postsecondary Credentials and Certifications.** Promote innovation and expand upon what works to offer and expand pathways to secondary and postsecondary credentials, industry recognized certifications, and employment.
- **Funds for Technology Solutions.** Provide and promote funding to build cross system technology solutions for ease of access to labor market data and to enhance efficient and effective integrated operations across programs and agencies.

## **Section 8 Program**

**Issue:** Reduction of Ongoing Administrative Revenue Fees for the Section 8 Program.

**Action:** Oppose reduction of Administration Revenues.

**Background:** The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program requires skilled staff to implement all of the functions within HUD's tight policies, regulations and deadlines. The Housing Authority earns ongoing administrative fees for each voucher-assisted family under a Section 8 lease. For the past several years the Housing Authority has received annual pro-rations averaging 90%, in 2011 83% and for FY 2012 Congress cut administrative funding by an additional 7%, with a pro-ration of 75%. Ultimately, in order to assist the 8,888 families in Riverside County currently under lease, it takes people to function as case workers. Deep cuts in this area affect the number of case workers available to provide this service.

The EDA/Housing Authority supports any HUD appropriations that would renew ongoing administrative fees at a sufficient level to maintain the availability of housing services to low-income families.

## **Moving to Work Designation**

**Issue:** Support Moving to Work (MTW) Program Reform.

**Action:** Support an expansion of the MTW program to include larger Public Housing Authorities such as the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside.

**Background:** MTW designation would allow public housing agencies to develop measures to promote economic independence for families with children, whose head of household is working, seeking work, or preparing for work to obtain employment and become economically independent, by participating in job training, educational programs, or other supportive services and programs that assist in meeting such goal.

MTW designation would give public housing agencies and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development the flexibility to design and implement various approaches for providing and administering housing assistance that: reduce cost and achieve greater cost effectiveness in Federal expenditures.

## Public Housing Program

**Issue:** Fully fund the operating costs of the Public Housing program and establish protected capital reserves that allow the Housing Authority to plan for its current and future maintenance and modernization needs.

**Action:** Urge Congress to fully fund the Operating Fund program through direct appropriations as well as fully restore the Capital Fund to address the ongoing capital needs of the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside's Public Housing 469-unit stock.

**Background:** EDA/Housing Authority strongly opposes any further reductions of the Public Housing Agencies' (PHA) operating reserves or its Capital Fund. This action would continue to place our 469 Public Housing units at risk of deterioration as there would not be enough funding to cover for materials, services, and stand-by pay for maintenance staff to do immediate repairs. The preservation of public housing inventory requires cash reserves at a sufficient level to provide a financial buffer for late or inadequate funding or for unanticipated situations.

**Affordable Housing and Homeless Assistance Programs  
HOME Investment Partnerships**

**Issue:** Congress has cut funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships program by nearly 50% over the course of two fiscal years.

**Action:** Urge Congress to fully fund the HOME Investment Partnerships program.

**Background:** EDA/Housing Authority strongly urges Congress to fully fund HOME. Since 1994, Riverside County EDA's Housing team has made possible the construction, acquisition, and/or rehabilitation of more than 4,241 units. HOME has also assisted the Housing Authority to help 1,485 families with security deposit assistance in order to remove the initial barriers that some families face when securing a rental unit. A continued loss of these funds would be detrimental to the Housing Authority's ability to produce much needed affordable housing units.

## **Community and Economic Development New Markets Tax Credit Program**

**Issue:** Preserve HUD's Economic Development Tools. Provide alternative affordable housing funding tools to replace RDA loss.

**Action:** Urge Congress to reauthorize and increase the funding line item for the New Markets Tax Credit program. In addition, legislation should be initiated that would eliminate current restrictions on utilization of New Market Tax Credits on affordable housing projects unless they are integrated with a commercial, market rate project. Further, the definition of qualifying Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) should be liberalized to include Local Governments as eligible applicants directly to HUD rather than being restricted to applying through regional CDFI's.

**Background:** New Market Tax Credits have existed since 2000 as a tool to incentive economic developed in underserved low income communities which meet certain demographic criteria. Grants and low interest loans have been largely only available for existing and new business development and has excluded affordable housing. A clear link can be made between quality affordable housing and the economic stabilization of families and neighborhoods. Authorize staff to advocate for these and other programs like it to improve and enhance New Market Tax Credits as needed in 2014 session.



## **Housing Trust Fund**

**Issue:** Congress enacted the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 which authorized the national Housing Trust Fund but failed to capitalize it.

**Action:** Urge Congress to identify a mandatory revenue source for the Housing Trust Fund.

**Background:** EDA/Housing Authority strongly urges Congress to capitalize the Housing Trust Fund. Repeated efforts in Congress to capitalize the NHTF have failed. A prior proposal by members of the House to reform the Mortgage Interest Deduction and dedicate a share of the savings to the Trust Fund should be explored. Authorize staff to advocate for this program.

## **Foreign Trade Zones in 2014**

**Issue:** Expansion of the Palm Springs Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) and the creation of the Four Winds Tribal Coalition Free Trade Zone.

**Action:** Continue support the expansion of Palm Springs Foreign Trade Zone and the creation of the Four Winds Tribal Coalition.

**Background:** In 2011 the Board of Supervisors supported the expansion of the Palm Springs Foreign Trade Zone and the creation of the new Four Winds Tribal Coalition Trade Zone. Each effort is of vital importance to the county and cities. FTZ's reduce the cost of doing business and ensuring these two FTZ's are approved in Washington, D.C. at the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Commerce are of great importance. These programs have been of great benefit to our regional economy and have helped create jobs and reduce the cost of doing business. FTZ's are part of a business attraction and retention program that has helped keep business here and bring in new business and jobs. Assistant County Executive Officer/EDA, Managing Director/EDA, and/or the County Foreign Trade Commissioner/EDA will continue to work on this program with federal and local officials for the purpose of job creation and retention during the 2013 legislative session. These expansion applications will be submitted during the 2013 session as will the initial application of the Four Winds Tribal Coalition. This effort is in the final phases of approval and submittal.

## **Support for Free Trade Agreements Free Trade Agreements**

**Issue:** Trans Pacific Partnership

**Action:** Support for Trans Pacific Partnership/Trans Atlantic Partnership.

**Background:** Riverside County became the nation's first county to formally advocate for the passage of the Korean, Columbian, and Panamanian Free Trade Agreements (FTA) in 2010. After two years of advocacy, we have seen the passage of FTA's. These agreements knock down trade barriers between the U.S. and other nations and help create additional jobs here at home as export orders to new nations increase products and good shipments. Historically, Riverside County exporters have seen large increases in product sales of shore as duties, tariffs, and taxes are eliminated or reduced. FTA's are essential to continue to growing our exports and producing jobs here at home. The successful completion of The Trans Pacific Partnership will be of great benefit to the business and workforce within Riverside County.

## **Base Realignment and Closure**

**Issue:** Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

**Action:** Oppose

**Background:** Base realignment and closure is a possibility in 2014. EDA opposes further BRAC action in the county. March Air Reserve Base (MARB), Norco Naval Surface Warfare Center, and National Guard Armories could be targeted. Staff requests authorization to aggressively oppose BRAC.

## **Military Appropriations**

**Issue:** Appropriations for area military installation, bases, organization.

**Action:** Support defense appropriation requested by guard and reserve, active forces, and organization located within the County of Riverside.

**Background:** DoD and the administration are reducing appropriations for armed forces across the board. Our military installations contribute billions to our local economy and employ 7,000 military and civilian personnel. Authorize staff to advocate for the appropriations, equipment, personnel, and federal and state missions in support of the Guard and Reserve Forces.

## **Support of Agriculture**

Agriculture is the County's fourth largest business sector and provides \$4 billion in economic impact for the county. Twelve hundred (1200) farming operations with thousands of direct jobs are created in the county by farming and the agricultural industry. Supporting this industry is vital to the economic interests of the county.

Support legislation and advocate to protecting and promoting farming and agriculture within the County of Riverside. This also renews the county support for the reauthorization and passage of a new Farming Bill in Washington, D.C.

Authorizes the County Commission of Foreign Trade to continue advocacy in Washington D.C. and Sacramento for crafting and passage of legislation that benefits the farmer and the agricultural industry in exporting products.

## **Municipal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Compliance Requirements**

**Issue:** The federal Clean Water Act was amended by Congress in 1987 to create the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater program. Subsequent storm water regulations were promulgated to protect Waters of the United States from the impacts of urban stormwater runoff discharged from municipal storm drain systems through a permitting system based on a “Maximum Extent Practicable” Best Management Practice (BMP) regulatory framework. In California, the NPDES program is administered by the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) on behalf of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Subsequent court cases, memorandums, policies and permits are shifting municipal NPDES programs to a regulatory framework based on direct compliance with water quality standards at end of pipe, similar to how industrial wastewater discharges are regulated. Such a shift is untenable for NPDES programs as, unlike industrial wastewater, stormwater is of variable quality and quantity and includes not only urban runoff, but runoff from agricultural, state, federal, tribal and other lands beyond municipal authority. Sources of pollutants contributing to exceedances of water quality standards can also include natural and other non-controllable sources (such as federally authorized and legal use of pesticides) that are beyond the ability of local governments to address. Exceedances of water quality standards can also be the result of outdated water quality standards that do not adequately consider stormwater, reflect current scientific understanding or are inappropriate for local conditions. The cost of NPDES compliance is expected to rise significantly. At the same time, efforts to develop funding for NPDES programs are limited by Proposition 218 at the local level and efforts to seek reimbursement through unfunded mandates claims have been denied or severely restricted by the courts. State and federal funding sources are also insufficient to supplement compliance efforts.

**Position:** The County supports effective and efficient NPDES programs that focus local resources on water quality issues that are important to our communities and are controllable at the local level. The county supports state and federal NPDES requirements that are best management practice based, do not unduly impact businesses and residents, allow flexibility to consider integrated and regional approaches to protecting environmental resources and reflect the realities of available local resources. The county also supports the development of local, state and federal funding sources to assist with compliance costs. The county therefore supports legislation sponsored by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), League of Cities, California Coalition for Clean Water, the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) and others that are intended to attain these goals.

In addition, the county supports the following specific policies:

- Reaffirm “Maximum Extent Practicable” approach to stormwater regulation - Promote legislation, regulation and permits that reaffirm the intent of Clean Water Act Section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) that requires municipal storm-sewer discharges “to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable” and confirm that an iterative approach to stormwater management (one that does not impose automatic liability for any exceedance of water quality standards) is the appropriate regulatory approach.
- Reform Receiving Water Limitations language in NPDES Permits - Restore the intent of the Receiving Waters Limitations language in NPDES MS4 Permits to reflect the aforementioned Maximum Extent Practicable regulatory approach and facilitate the prioritization of actions based on local water quality needs, community resources, and local conditions, including geology, weather and geography, without jeopardy for water quality standard exceedances beyond the ability of municipalities to control.
- Promote integrated paths to compliance – Promote cost effective alternative paths to compliance for private developments and public works projects that allow consideration of regional and environmentally integrated water quality mitigation projects to reduce the net cost of compliance for individual project proponents and increase environmental and community benefits. Similarly, promote alignment of competing environmental regulations so as to minimize regulatory burdens on the public.
- Promote the allocation of state resources to the development of science necessary to update and improve the RWQCB Water Quality Control Plans and Water Quality Standards – The RWQCB Water Quality Control Plans (i.e., Basin Plans) were developed in the 1970’s and predate regulation of stormwater. Most EPA funding is for the development of regulations and permits, not for the review of underlying standards. Improving water quality standards can assist the County with prioritizing resources towards high priority water quality issues within the region.
- Review of Standards Prior to Implementation – All water quality standards to be utilized in the development of municipal NPDES compliance requirements must be routinely and thoroughly reassessed, verified and adjusted as necessary to ensure they are appropriate for protecting local water resources, adequately consider the regulation of stormwater, and comply with the economic analysis mandated by Water Code Sections 13241 and 13242 prior to implementation.
- Improvement and Implementation of Section 13241 and 13242 Factors – Full cost-benefit analyses should be required of all Basin Plan designations for Beneficial Uses and Water Quality Objectives. Further, the public interest and



impact assessments identified in Water Code Sections 13241 and 13242 should be fully implemented when new regulations or standards are proposed.

- **Resolve Statewide Inconsistencies** – Inconsistent regulatory interpretations promulgated by the state’s nine Regional Boards should be addressed by development of a statewide policy and by modifying as necessary, the respective functions and responsibilities of the State Board and Regional Boards.
- **Mandatory Experience Requirements for Regional and State Board Members** – Candidates for appointment to the Regional and State Boards should be required to demonstrate significant educational background and work experience relative to the position for which they are being appointed including a background implementing or developing water quality programs for or on behalf of the discharger community.
- **Promote appointment of educated and informed Regional and State Board Members** – Amend the Clean Water Act to remove or modify the restriction on appointment of individuals that receive more than 10% of their income from permitted sources to a Board and replace it with a conflict of interest standard prohibiting any member of a board or body that approves permit applications from voting upon, or seeking to influence, any permit which the member of the board or body has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined by applicable state law.
- **Support source control at the state and federal level** – Several pollutants deemed to be impacting local water resources as a result of current water quality standards (including pesticides, copper, zinc, and lead) are sourced from authorized and legal uses of commercial and/or retail products containing these constituents, such as brake pads and tires. The County supports efforts to review water quality standards for appropriateness, and where necessary, to promote state and federal regulations to address product formulations that are impairing local water resources.
- **Dispute Resolution by Independent Decision Makers** – Conflicts regarding water quality permit terms or rules should be resolved by independent administrative law judges or mediation rather than relying on internal agency conflict resolution process.
- **Reinstate the State Grant Program** – To assist in achieving clean water and to assure that regulators more carefully consider the costs and benefits of new rules, the state government should return to its historic practice of directly funding attainment of water quality regulations it enacts.
- **Support legislation to develop stable funding sources for NPDES Compliance Programs** – Due to a narrow interpretation of Proposition 218 exemptions and

the lack of financial assistance from the State, local governments' ability to address new regulations promulgated by the Regional Boards, which increase administration, capital improvement, development review, compliance enforcement, monitoring and education related NPDES costs, is severely hampered. The County supports legislation that would allow the formation of stormwater utilities, or similar, by providing them with the same Proposition 218 exemptions afforded to sewer, water and refuse utilities.

- Acknowledge Flood Management as a Beneficial Use – Define flood management as a beneficial use in Porter Cologne in order to limit the assignment of incompatible potential beneficial uses on waters of the state used as and maintained as flood management conveyances.
- Clearly Define Regulatory Roles – Roles and duties of regulatory agencies, particularly the Regional Board, should be clearly separated and defined. For example, the Regional Boards should not be regulating habitat where the Department of Fish and Wildlife has principal responsibility.

**Background:** The federal Clean Water Act (CWA), in conjunction with the State's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne), provides the primary legal basis for controlling discharges to California's waters. The CWA requires issuance of NPDES permits for discharges from public storm drainage systems. Although, the CWA and Porter-Cologne are administered by the State Board and the nine Regional Boards, the responsibility for cleaning up non-point source pollution that enters the local storm drainages systems has fallen to local jurisdictions, including the counties, flood control districts and cities.

Every five years the NPDES permits issued for public storm drainage systems must be renewed and each renewal contains new and more stringent requirements – even though the underlying statutory and regulatory requirements have not changed. Over the last several years, environmental groups have felt the Regional Boards have not been implementing the CWA adequately and have filed lawsuits against municipalities and have challenged administratively the Regional Boards when the Regional Board has issued an NPDES municipal stormwater permit. This has led to a shift in regulatory focus from a technology-based approach to an approach based on achieving water quality standards irrespective of benefit, cost, or practicality. Under this new approach, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) and NPDES permits have increasingly required regulated local agencies, including Riverside County, to implement whatever actions may be necessary to achieve water quality standards. Large public and private expenditures are being required to achieve this goal and these expenditures will need to increase. Although Porter-Cologne requires consideration of economics, the State and Regional Boards have argued that either the CWA does not require consideration of economics, or that many current standards were developed at a time when the costs

required to meet them were not foreseen and without regard for such statutorily mandated considerations.

## **Older Americans Act Reauthorization and Appropriations**

**Action:** Support Reauthorization and Funding of the Older Americans Act and Administration on Aging (AoA)

**Background:** Since 1965, the Older Americans Act (OAA) has gained recognition as a unique and highly regarded statute that has stimulated the development of a comprehensive and coordinated service system. This system has contributed greatly to enhancing the lives of older individuals, family caregivers, and persons with disabilities. Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), established under OAA in 1973, receive federal, state, and local funds to contract with local organizations for service to seniors. There are 618 national AAA's, with 33 AAA's designated by the California Department of Aging as the local Planning Services Agencies. Riverside County Office on Aging was designated on June 18, 1974, by the Board of Supervisors, as a County Department on Aging for Planning and Service Area (PSA) 21. It serves as the official Area Agency on Aging throughout Riverside County, California.

The OAA has been operating under a simple extension since 2011 and requires support for its reauthorizing. In March of 2013, the OAA and the older adult programs that the Act funds were cut due to sequestration, with Riverside County Office on Aging realizing over \$700,000 in annual federal funding cuts that are utilized for community programming including senior nutrition, assisted transportation, legal and respite services, and other pertinent programs. Older adults and the demand for services are increasing in both numbers and as a percentage of the population at rates unprecedented in our history.

On October 30, 2013, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed the Older Americans Act reauthorization bill. The bipartisan measure (S.1562), if fully reauthorized as written, will provide funding for the next five years. The Office on Aging relies on federal funding in general and the funding provided through the Older Americans Act specifically. The House Committee on Education and the Workforce is scheduled to begin working on OAA reauthorization early in 2014.

## **Health Screening for H-1B Visa Applicants**

**Issue:** There is a lack of health screening for H-1B work visa applicants, and their families, some of which are already in the United States. This presents a potential health risk due to communicable diseases.

**Action:** Support legislation that requires that individuals entering the U.S. on H-1B visas from countries that are endemic for TB and other diseases of public health significance have health screening by overseas panel physicians. The health screening should be completed by civil surgeons for individuals already in the United States. The cost of the screening should be covered by the sponsoring employer.

**Background:** It is estimated that immigration reform will increase the number of H-1B work visas from the current 65,000 to approximately 180,000 annually. These individuals come from countries with high prevalence of TB and drug resistant TB. Screening of the applicants and their families for TB and other communicable diseases of public health significance is an important prevention strategy to reduce potential disease transmission and ensure appropriate treatment and follow-up of infected individuals.

## **Transportation Funding for Complete Streets**

**Issue:** Complete Streets are designed to be used by everyone: cars, buses, bicyclists and walkers. Complete Streets help create better/healthier communities for people to live, play, work and shop. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

**Action:** Support state and federal funding for Complete Streets which encourages transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

**Background:** Often, we do not consider pedestrians or bicyclists when we build our streets making walking or bicycling challenging. Complete streets allow walkers and bicyclists to be active users of roads.

## **Public Health and Medical Emergency Preparedness and Response Funding**

**Issue:** Funding local health jurisdiction planning, preparedness and response to acts of terrorism, disasters, or other public health emergencies.

**Action:** Support the continuation and/or increase of federal and state funding to offset the local costs associated with planning for and responding to the public health and medical consequences of terrorism, natural disasters and/or other public health emergencies.

Support the removal of restrictions on the utilization of grant funds to support personnel, including permanent and temporary staff positions and contract personnel.

Support the continued use of grant funds for the infrastructure needed for personnel, including rent, communications equipment and computer support. Continue to allow these costs to be billed as direct charges.

Support the development of funding formulas that consider proximity of jurisdictions to high profile targets and are not based solely on the presence of such targets within jurisdictional boundaries.

Support the reinstatement of categorical Homeland Security grant funding for the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS).

**Background:** The terrorist activity on and after September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, Hurricane Katrina, the October 2007 fires in Southern California and the 2009 H1N1 Pandemic Influenza response are a few examples of events that have identified the impact of terrorism, natural disasters and public health emergencies on local, state and federal medical/health response capabilities.

Recent changes in federal funding have placed limitations on the amount of personnel that can be supported by emergency preparedness and response grants. Although the grants allow for the utilization of contract staff, these staff are often unfamiliar with local policies and procedures, do not necessarily have a vested interest in the community in which they are working, and are often only contracted for a short period of time. In addition, some federal grants include contract staff in personnel caps. Federal grants should not restrict the funding of personnel at the local level; such restrictions severely impair the ability of the local health jurisdiction to develop and support comprehensive activities to combat the evolving threats of terrorism, natural disasters and other public health emergencies.

Increases in state and federal funding are needed to augment local programs to prepare for and respond to all forms of terrorism, natural disasters or other public health

emergencies. Legislation is needed which increases prevention and response capabilities and strengthens the partnerships between state, federal and local agencies to effectively identify, prevent and respond to the medical/health consequences of terrorism, disasters or other public health emergencies. Funding formulas should consider proximity to high profile, high impact targets as nearby jurisdictions to such targets will likely be severely impacted through the provision of mutual aid to the impacted jurisdiction or by the influx of large numbers of people seeking shelter and/or treatment.

The Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) as a separate funding stream has been eliminated from the Homeland Security suite of grants. Although an allowable project under the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), the lack of dedicated funding to MMRS has resulted in a decrease in support for the capabilities built by the MMRS program over the past 14 years. MMRS funding was unique in that it supported the integration of the public health and medical response community with the first responder community. Further, MMRS provided support for activities not specifically benchmarked in the CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement or the ASPR Hospital Preparedness Program, such as building an integrated, multi-disciplinary hazmat response and EMS response activities including dispatch triage and decontamination of EMS equipment.



## **Child Nutrition Reauthorization Funding**

**Issue:** Child Nutrition Reauthorization

**Action:** Support Child Nutrition Reauthorization to provide full funding which is adequate to maintain current and anticipated Women Infant & Children (WIC) participation levels and assure adequate Nutrition Services and Administration (NSA) funding to maintain clinic costs, education and cost of living increases should the economic recovery take longer than anticipated.

**Background:** The economic recovery may take longer than anticipated and more families will turn to WIC for nutrition assistance requiring additional funding. Since fiscal years 2006, unforeseen economic circumstances have forced WIC to utilize contingency funds to assure that mothers and young children were not turned away. WIC urges Congress and the Administration to carefully monitor WIC participation and food cost inflation to assure that the budget request responds to economic conditions. Should the economic recovery take longer than anticipated, more families will turn to WIC for nutrition assistance and WIC may require additional funding for food cost and Nutrition Services Administration (NSA). WIC strives to combat childhood overweight and obesity and chronic disease prevention and has been part of the President's budget proposals to Eat Healthier, Live Better.

## **Training, Recruitment and Retention of Public Health Workforce**

**Issue:** Training, Recruitment and Retention of Public Health Workforce

**Action:** Support legislation that allows for the establishment of a Public Health Workforce Scholarship Program and a Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program.

**Background:** The ability of the public health system is to prevent, respond to and recover from bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks and other health threats depends on the existence of adequate numbers of well-trained public health and environmental health professionals. The current public health system has an aging staff nearing retirement with no clear influx of highly skilled and capable employees to fill the void.

## Claims Backlog

**Issue:** VA Disability Claims Backlog Partnership

**Action:** Support legislative, regulatory or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the VA veteran's claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans.

**Background:** VA has expressed the belief that one important way to reduce the unacceptable claims backlog is the initial submission of as complete as is possible claims packages. Individual claimants are unfamiliar with the requirements of the VA claims system. It is, therefore necessary to have competent, trained intermediaries, such as County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO), participate in the preparation and submission of claims. Many CVSOs do not have the resources to do the community outreach that would enable them to reach the maximum possible number of benefit claimants. Federal/state/local partnerships will enable State and County veterans service programs to reach and assist more claimants thus helping to reduce the chronic VA claims backlog.

## **VA Means Test**

**Issue:** Means Test for VA Medical Care

**Action:** Support legislation that would eliminate the Means Test for veterans to qualify for VA medical care.

**Background:** The VA currently uses Means Tests (income limits) as one of the factors in determining a veteran's eligibility for VA medical care. These income limitations have excluded many veterans, who would otherwise qualify for enrollment, from obtaining their primary healthcare through the VA. In light of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, we believe all veterans have earned the right and should be able to enroll and obtain their healthcare through the VA if they so choose.

## **Provide Timely and Safe Home Placements for Foster Children**

**Issue:** Safety of children placed in foster care

**Action:** Support legislation to provide authority to social services agencies with child welfare responsibilities to access National Crime Information databases, including access to the FBI's national criminal information databases.

**Background:** One of child welfare agencies overriding goals is to provide foster children with safe and stable home environments as quickly as possible. Child welfare agencies strive to ensure the placement of the child in a safe and stable home environment and take many precautions to avoid unsafe placements, including avoiding the placement of children in homes with persons with criminal backgrounds.

Currently, child welfare agencies cannot access national crime information databases for use in foster care placements. Children need stability. Children need to be safe. Allowing access to these databases would help provide for an accurate and timely assessment of a safe home environment.

## Public Defender

**Issue:** Potential Government Funding Opportunities for the Law Offices of the Public Defender

**Action:**

- 1) "Second Chance" Programs: For approximately six years now, the Law Offices of the Public Defender has actively engaged itself in offering expungement services and workshops to those previously convicted of a crime who are seeking to clear their criminal records pursuant to California law (Penal Code section 1203.4). We offer these post-conviction services pursuant to Government Code section 27706, as do other Public Defender offices within the State, in order to afford individuals the opportunity to reenter the workforce and/or to pursue educational opportunities so that they may become productive citizens who are not inclined to reoffend. This, of course, generates money for the county in terms of the payment of taxes by the now productive individuals, and saves money in terms of the costs of incarceration of a reoffender. Our own "Fresh Start" program handles a significant number of expungement requests every single month which are processed and then submitted to the courts for consideration and approval or denial. We also conduct expungement workshops, county wide approximately once a month in collaboration with other County agencies such as DPSS. We have had staff members' present workshops in the past to local Mental Health facilities, drug rehab facilities, and other community events such as job fairs. We currently have one paralegal whose core duty is processing these expungement applications county wide. This paralegal has other ancillary duties, as well. Additional grant funding would speed this process and allow for expansion of our services to the community, for which there is a demand, because we would be able to add personnel to the program.
- 2) The Riverside County Superior Court instituted a Veteran's Court approximately 18 months ago. Congressman Takano attended the second graduation of Veteran's Court participants just last week, and also attended another session of the Court quite recently. The Law Offices of the Public Defender has been a key participant in this collaborative court since its inception and we have one Deputy Public Defender assigned to this court fulltime. It is my understanding that the Court received a federal grant last year which was used, at least in part, to pay for training for local participants which was conducted in Washington, D.C. Additional grant funding would allow the Public Defender to augment its services in this high profile court by way of adding additional personnel, such as a paralegal or social worker, to assist our lone attorney in carrying out her tasks.
- 3) Riverside County Superior Court has had a Mental Health Court for some time. Once again, the Law Offices of the Public Defender is a key participant in this

collaborative court and was instrumental in its formation. Although we assign two fulltime Deputy Public Defenders to this Court, their caseloads are still quite heavy. Additional grant funding would allow us to supplement our staff so that the caseloads could become more manageable. In particular, if we could obtain funding for a social worker position, this would greatly assist the attorneys in terms of managing their workload as well as locating and placing clients in qualified mental health facilities and/or reentry programs.

- 4) There has been an emphasis on reentry services for qualified individuals pursuant to realignment (AB 109). There also appears to be a philosophical shift state wide away from incarceration and towards offering rehabilitative services such as drug counselling in lieu of incarceration. This has been the topic of recent debates within the State Legislature. The Law Offices of the Public Defender has experience in locating appropriate facilities for clients in need of counselling and effectuating their placement in such facilities. However, due to funding constraints, we have only one employee who handles these services. Additional grant funding would be greatly beneficial in terms of our ability to expand our services in this arena.
  
- 5) U.S. Attorney General Holder has repeatedly and publically emphasized the need to fulfill the constitutional requirement for adequate funding for counsel appointed to represent indigent criminal defendants. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in Gideon v. Wainwright was last year. This decision held that every person accused of a crime where incarceration could result is entitled to counsel to represent them even if they cannot afford to pay for counsel. Moreover, our adversary system of justice only functions if there is qualified and competent counsel on both sides of the courtroom. The Law Offices of the Public Defender has always been proud of its ability to do more with less. Nevertheless, there are times when staffing needs go unmet and some desirable services are constrained. Of course, we realize that we are not the only county department that faces or has faced fiscal challenges, and that we are part of a greater whole that must share finite resources. Given the Attorney General's public statements, however, there seems as though there is some interest at the federal level to augment through grants the quality of indigent defense services nationwide.



## **Previous Federal Policies Positions**



## **Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

**Issue:** Riverside County is one of the most diverse regions within the United States, and that diversity keeps us strong and vibrant. The immigration system is broken and has created a situation where up to 11 million undocumented immigrants are living in the shadows.

**Action:** Support the passage of comprehensive immigration reform that includes: continued enhancement of border security/national defense, a tough but fair pathway to citizenship, a guest worker program for agricultural workers and other subsistence-wage workers, a special provision to ensure minor children are treated separately, a registration program with the government to combat visa overstays, and an improved process for admitting future workers to serve our nation's workforce needs while simultaneously protecting all workers.

**Background:** Riverside County encompasses persons from over 120 countries and a foreign-born population comprising over 21.8 percent of the local population. The diversity of both the County and the United States keeps us strong and vibrant, and in an increasingly interconnected world, the diversity of our nation is a powerful advantage in the global competition.

## Federal Housing Funding

**Issue:** Federal Housing Funding is not based on a predictable formula that allows local housing authorities to properly plan future budgets. Furthermore, funding allocations have declined as rising unemployment increased the need for housing assistance in Riverside County.

**Action:** Create a set formula to determine the level of funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The formula should reflect and adequately fund increasing housing needs.

**Background:** A five month delay in receiving the 2009 HUD funding notice left the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (HACR) with insufficient time to adjust its budget and address funding shortfalls. HUD uses different formulas each year to determine funding levels, leaving local housing authorities with limited guidelines for budget planning. This created delays for families in need of rental assistance and can create serious budget issues for the agency.

Additionally, Riverside County's funding allocation was required to use its program reserves as part of its funding allocation. This reduced the level of funding Riverside County would receive from HUD for rental assistance. Unprecedented increases in the county's unemployment surged demand for Housing Assistance Payments, known as Section 8 subsidies. The housing authority was forced to reduce program costs and has issued vouchers to families from their waiting list to those who were slated to receive assistance. Families from outside the area who wanted to move to Riverside and transfer their Section 8 voucher were no longer accepted and those who wanted to move outside of the county were required to relocate to lower-cost locations. Increases in payments to landlords and rising demand for housing assistance further stressed the agency's finances.

The HACR was able to avoid further cuts to rental assistance by using all of its program reserves. Any delays in future funding notices or additional cuts to funding would jeopardize the rental assistance provided for many Riverside County families.

## **Jobs Stimulus Funding**

**Issue:** Jobs Stimulus Funding.

**Action:** Encourage federal jobs funding that creates jobs in regions hard hit by foreclosures and property value decline.

Prior stimulus programs have focused on job sectors such as weatherization and construction that are not helpful to Riverside County. Most of our two million residents live in homes that are new and generally have good insulation. Further, we have an excess supply of recently built homes and any new home construction would further lower home values. The proposed jobs programs would have little beneficial impact on county unemployment, which currently stands at 15 percent.

## Regional Habitat Planning

**Issue:** Regional Habitat Planning, Conservation, Management and Monitoring Fiscal Support via the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Section 6 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund* in the *FY 2011 Senate Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill*.

**Action:** In partnership with approximately a dozen counties in northern and southern California, we request that funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Section 6 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (the "Fund") be restored to previous levels, from the \$85.0 million current-year level to \$125 million in FY 2011. This will restore the Fund to approximately its fiscal 2001 level, adjusted for inflation and provide much needed support to regional Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) in Riverside County, throughout the state and nationally.

The Fund includes grants for land acquisition of approved HCPs, planning grants for HCPs in preparation, land acquisition grants for species that have Recovery Plans and sub grants for management and monitoring activities. Section 6 grants are the main source of federal funding to aid the preparation and implementation of HCPs.

In the years ahead, the land acquisition grants will be an essential component for meeting the biological conservation and permit streamlining benefits of HCPs. Management and monitoring activities, which are critical to the continued success of these plans, also need to be funded. However, the program is currently funded at a substantially lower level than in Fiscal 2001 in actual dollars. Fiscal 2001 appropriations were \$104.7 million. The current funding level is only \$85.0 million. The decrease is far more severe when inflation is taken into account.

Due to the increasing number of HCPs emerging throughout the country, the Fund will have to increase significantly over the next several years in order to ensure that HCPs continue to be initiated and implemented successfully. In California alone, the number of regional HCPs has doubled while the Fund has failed to keep pace with inflation. Despite the recent economic downturn, costs to fully implement and manage regional HCP reserve systems remain high. Demand is particularly high for planning and land acquisition funding, given the large number of completed HCPs and Recovery Plans.

With adequate funding, HCP's can significantly capitalize on our present economic situation by securing lands, previously out of market range, needed to establish the reserve systems. Given this unique opportunity a large increase of the Fund over the next several years is justifiable and necessary.

## Direct-to-Consumer Shipping of Wine

**Issue:** Legislation was introduced in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress that would have allowed individual States to eliminate direct-to-consumer shipping of wine, and is likely to be reintroduced in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**Action:** Oppose legislation that would relinquish Federal authority of alcohol regulation to the States, eliminating the protections granted by the Commerce Clause in the regulation of wine and alcohol.

**Background:** The Commerce Clause of the Constitution grants the U.S. Congress the sole power to regulate interstate trade, and bars States from passing laws and regulations that impede such trade. In the Supreme Court case of *Granholm v. Heald* (2005), the Court ruled that a state cannot pass laws that discriminate between in-state and out-of-state wineries unless the state can prove that it lacks other means of addressing such issues as public safety and public health.

Legislation introduced in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress as H.R. 5034 would have allowed certain State alcohol laws to avoid judicial scrutiny through a presumption of validity, and insulate and sanction discriminatory state laws by reversing evidentiary rules for Commerce Clause challenges and increasing the burden of proof for plaintiffs. In essence, the measure would have allowed the elimination of direct-to-consumer shipping of wine in the 37 states and District of Columbia that currently permit it, including California, reducing consumer choice and hurting wineries.

California – including Riverside County – is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest wine producing region in the world. The industry creates more than 330,000 jobs, produces billions of dollars in economic impact, and preserves agricultural land and family farms. However, only 17 percent of wineries are distributed by wholesalers nationally, and 54 percent are unable to secure a wholesaler even where they actively seek representation. As a result, many wineries must rely on direct sales to survive. By allowing states to close down this method of distribution, the proposals would hurt businesses, jobs, and state and local economies in states with a thriving wine industry.

## **Emancipated Foster Youth**

**Issue:** Emancipated Foster Youth.

**Action:** To protect and support children in foster care by supporting legislation that provide states access to federal resources to support emancipated foster youth up to age 21.

Every year, more than 4,000 California youth lose foster care support when they reach the age of 18. These children who 'age out' often face economic, educational and social hurdles as they try to transition independently into adulthood. The critical years between the age of 18 and 21 are when these youth are most at risk of becoming homeless, involved in the criminal justice system or unemployed. Not only are there personal costs to the youth involved, but the failure to support these children reverberates throughout the state and local governments in the form of incarceration and social service costs.

The intent of this proposal is to support legislation to provide California with the ability to leverage federal resources to support foster children up to age 21.

## **Foster Care Background Checks**

**Issue:** Foster Care Background Checks.

**Action:** Federal law went into effect on October 2008 that requires California to use federal requirements to conduct its criminal background checks. California currently has a thorough background check process which allows for exemptions for potential foster-care parents, under specific circumstances. The exemption option is not available under the federal law. This will result in a decrease in the number of persons, especially relatives, who can be authorized to care for children in foster care.

The intent of this proposal is to support children in foster care by allowing California to determine standards of foster care placements.

Continued use of the current California background check process in foster care placements would not create a fiscal change.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits  
for Emancipated Foster Youths**

**Issue:** Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits for Emancipated Foster Youths.

To protect and support children in foster care by supporting legislation that would allow foster care youth nearing emancipation to apply for SSI benefits in a timely manner.

**Action:** The intent of this proposal would be to support legislation to provide California with the ability to allow for timely application for SSI benefits to emancipating youth.





## **Continuing Federal Policies Positions**

## **Continuing Federal Policy Positions**

### **Re-Entry and Anti-Recidivism Programs:**

Support measures that will increase funding for re-entry and anti-recidivism programs to provide a second chance at the local level.

### **Alternative Energy:**

Support incentives and programs that encourage alternative energy, including wind power and solar.

### **Santa Ana River Parkway:**

Support federal funding for this tri-county parkway, including support of the Army Corps of Engineer's request for funds for use at Prado Dam.

### **Unfunded Mandates:**

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

- Requiring adequate federal funds for new mandates arising from federal law, regulation, or policy; and,
- Reimburse 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, the Community 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 (PILT):**

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 reauthorize and improve the TANF program.

**Riverside County Regional Medical Center:**

Support legislation that would provide funding for capital improvement projects to improve Riverside County Regional Medical Center'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.

**Reimbursement Rates for Uninsured Persons Utilizing Hospitals:**

Support state efforts to gain additional federal funding to both reduce losses to hospitals under the Medicaid program, and to provide reimbursement for uninsured patients seen by hospitals.

**Empowerment Zones:**

Support measures that establish a formal funding mechanism and ensure long-term funding for Empowerment Zones.

**Foreign Trade Zones:**

Support Federal legislation that will allow existing Foreign Trade Zones to expand and support legislation that will allow for the creation of new Foreign Trade Zones.



## **2013 Federal Advocacy Outcomes**

## 2013 Federal Advocacy Outcomes

Many observers consider the first session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress to have been one of the least productive sessions ever, both in terms of quantity and of quality of legislative initiatives actually completed. As the session began, there were exaggerated expectations that work would be completed on a broad array of policy issues of significance to the County, including: immigration reform; completion of an overdue Farm Bill, reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act; Workforce Investment Act reauthorization; Water Resources Development legislation; and the Older Americans Act. But the hyper-partisanship inherited from the previous Congress quickly reasserted itself, and with the exception of the successful reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act early in the year, progress on these issues has been tumultuous and painfully protracted, if it occurred at all. And as has been voluminously documented in the media, much of Congress' time and energy was consumed in careening from one fiscal crisis of its own making to the next, including sequestration, the unfinished FY 2013 appropriations process left over from the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, the increase in the Debt limit, and the disintegration of the FY 2014 appropriations process that culminated in the government shutdown in October.

Funding for specific projects in general and Riverside County proposals and projects in particular was limited by the continuation of the moratorium on earmarks, as well as the uncertainty of Federal funding streams due to the multiple fiscal crises throughout the year. Nevertheless, the County was awarded several Federal grants and reimbursements, including:

- \$6.97 million in FY 2013 Ryan White Part A funding for the joint Riverside - San Bernardino Transitional Grant Area;
- \$3 million for the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and \$2,773,398 for the Western Riverside MSHCP, both under the Section 6 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund;
- \$3.1 million under the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program;
- \$1.77 million for Continuum of Care mental health activities under the McKinney Homeless Assistance program;
- \$890,723 under the State Criminal Aliens Assistance Program (SCAAP);
- \$506,398 under HUD's FY 2013 Capital Fund Program for construction, repair, renovation, or modernization of public housing units; and,
- \$472,464 under the FY 2013 Emergency Shelter Grant program;
- \$445,413 under the FY 2013 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program; and,

- 75 vouchers and a one-year budget authority of \$575,847 under HUD-VA Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program.

Comprehensive immigration reform is expected to be one of the highest and most highly-charged political and policy priorities to be tackled during the second session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. In addition, Congress will attempt to address the authorization or reauthorization of a variety of programs of significance to the County, including: the Farm Bill; Water Resources Development legislation; TANF; the Workforce Investment Act; and the Older Americans Act.