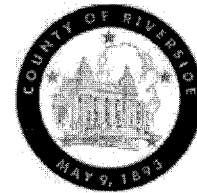


**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM
2.25
(ID # 9778)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, May 7, 2019

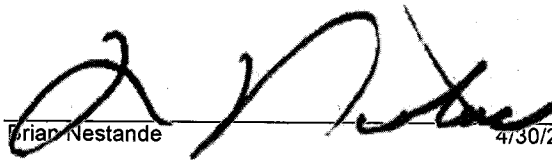
FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE:

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Letters Sent to Sacramento Regarding AB 55 Garcia Department of Veterans Affairs, AB 286 Bonta Taxation: Cannabis, Rapid Response Reserve Fund, All Districts. [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive & File the attached letters that were sent to Sacramento.

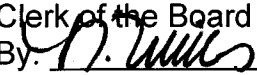
ACTION:Consent


Brian Nestande 4/30/2019

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Hewitt, seconded by Supervisor Perez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is received and filed as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: May 7, 2019
xc: E.O.

Kecia Harper
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

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

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
NET COUNTY COST	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SOURCE OF FUNDS:			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	18/19

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

As per Board Policy A-27, if a policy position exists and is referenced in the current legislative Platform, the Executive Office will then send a letter of support of opposition of the legislation. The Executive Office is then directed to bring as a consent item a copy of the letter to the next Board Meeting.

Summary

Since the last meeting of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, the following letters were delivered to our legislative delegation and all pertinent parties in order to voice Riverside County's Support/Opposition/ or concerns:

Legislation/Policy: Ab 55 Garcia Department of Veterans Affairs

Position: Support - Per Legislative Platform

Recipient: Eduardo Garcia

Summary: This bill entails an ongoing annual cost to the GF of \$11 million to fund CVSO activities through CalVet. This represents a net increase of \$5.4 million over the \$5.6 million that has been allocated from the GF in the annual budget act since 2015-16 and is proposed to be allocated in the Governor's 2019-20 January Budget Proposal.

Veterans are generally eligible for a range of programs and services provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Applying and filing for those benefits can often be a complex and highly technical process. To assist veterans and their families in navigating the claims process, 28 states, including California, use the CVSO model. CVSOs are trained, accredited professionals who work at the county level of government and partner with CalVet. Among other things, CVSOs help connect veterans with benefits provided by federal, state, and local governments.

CVSOs are independent local agencies whose funding is derived from a combination of local and state resources including the GF, the Veterans Service Office Fund and reimbursements. The GF subvention is appropriated to CalVet, which allocates the funds to the CVSOs. From 2004 until recently, the state contribution to CVSO funding was \$2.6 million. The Legislature enacted consecutive "one-time" augmentations of \$3 million, which were included in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 budget bills. The 2015-16 state budget process established \$5.6 million as a new budgetary baseline.

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

Legislation/Policy: AB 286 Bonta Taxation: Cannabis

Position: Support - Per Legislative Platform

Recipient: Bonta

Summary: This bill Reduces the excise tax on sales of cannabis and cannabis products from 15% to 11%, and suspends the tax on cannabis cultivation, until July 1, 2022, and requires the state's cannabis licensing authorities to provide reports to the Legislature that demonstrate the success of the changes to the tax structure through certain specified metrics. The legislation comes in response to industry-wide concerns that high taxes have pushed consumers toward an already flourishing black market

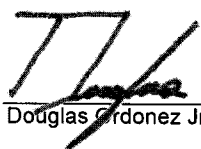
This bill was amended a week after we sent the letter of support. The amended bill dropped the provision reducing the excise tax on cannabis. The bill now narrowly focuses on the suspension of the state cultivation tax until July 2022, in an effort to lower overall taxes on cannabis products. The current is cultivation tax is imposed at a rate of \$9.25 per dry-weight ounce of cannabis flowers and \$2.75 per dry-weight ounce of cannabis leaves that are harvested and brought to market.

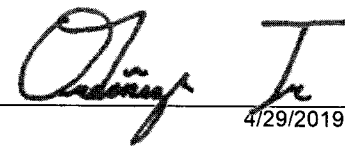
Legislation/Policy: Assistance with response efforts in Blythe

Position: Concerns

Recipient: Governor Gavin Newsom

Summary: Riverside County requested immediate approval of state funding of the Budget Act of 2018 (Rapid Response Reserve Fund of 2018), to assist qualified community-based organizations and nonprofit entities during this emergency situation to assist in the response efforts to meet the humanitarian needs.


Douglas Cordonez Jr.


4/29/2019



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Board of Supervisors

District 1 <i>Chairman</i>	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
District 2	Karen Spiegel 951-955-1020
District 3	Chuck Washington 951-955-1030
District 4	V. Manuel Perez 951-955-1040
District 5	Jeff Hewitt 951-955-1050

April 19, 2019

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 55 (Garcia, E.): Department of Veterans Affairs: veterans' services
As amended 3/6/2019 – Awaiting hearing in Assembly Appropriations Committee
County of Riverside: SUPPORT per Legislative Platform

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

On behalf of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, I write to express the County's strong support for AB 55, your measure that continuously appropriates \$11 million to California counties to fund the activities of County Veterans Services Offices. AB 55 will provide much-needed funding to County Veterans Services Offices to ensure that these offices have the necessary resources and support to accomplish their critical mission on behalf of California's veterans.

Riverside County is the proud home of 132,228 veterans, according to the latest federal and state data. Riverside County has the third highest veteran population in the state and is the host of two major military installations, as well as various National Guard and federal and state reserve facilities and installations. The County takes our commitment to help veterans connect with the benefits they have earned through their service very seriously and believes additional resources will help us to improve and expand access to needed services and support.

AB 55 is an important step towards meeting our joint commitment to California's veterans. Riverside County appreciates your efforts and is pleased to lend our support to this important measure. If you have any questions about the County's position, please do not hesitate to contact Deputy County Executive Officer, Brian Nestande at (951) 955-1110 or at bnestande@rivco.org.

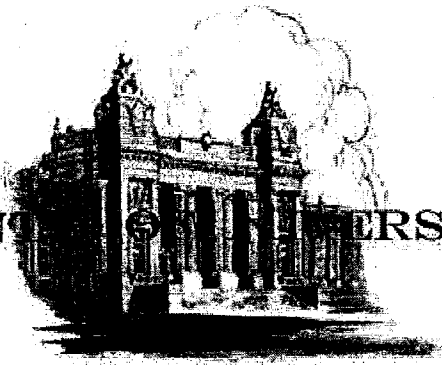
Sincerely,



Kevin Jeffries
Chairman, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Riverside County Legislative Delegation

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE



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April 19, 2019

The Honorable Evan Low, Chair
Assembly Business and Professions Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 286 (Bonta): Taxation: cannabis
As amended 4/06/19 – **SUPPORT Per Legislative Platform**
Scheduled for hearing 4/23/19 – Assembly Business and Professions Committee

Dear Assembly Member Low:

On behalf of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for Assembly Bill 286, Assembly Members Rob Bonta's measure that would temporarily lower California's total tax on cannabis by decreasing the cannabis excise tax from 15% to 11% and suspending the cultivation tax for three years. The County is concerned about California's relatively high rate of cannabis taxation driving sales to the underground market, particularly when local taxes are added.

The County of Riverside, like many local governments in the state, is in the process of developing local regulations for the cultivation, distribution, and sale of recreational and medical cannabis. While those conversations have included discussions about a local tax, the County has strong concerns about driving consumers to the underground market due to over taxation, generating less revenue for the state and local jurisdictions.

Colorado, Washington, and Oregon have all taken steps to reduce their cannabis tax rates, after initial rates of 30 percent or more did not reduce the underground market sufficiently. More recent ballot initiative proposals across the country propose rates between 10 and 25 percent. There is a growing body of research highlighting that consumers in the legalized cannabis market are strongly price sensitive. We agree that California should take steps to help cannabis producers, sellers, and consumers enter the legal market and AB 286 is an appropriate step to that end.

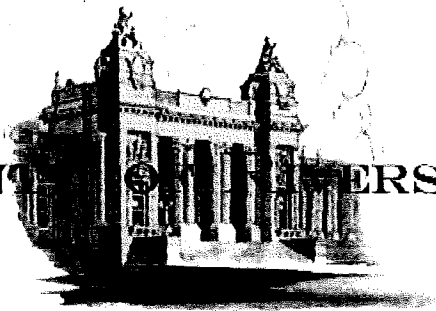
For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports AB 286. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Brian Nestande, Deputy County Executive Officer, at bnestande@rivco.org.

Sincerely

Kevin Jeffries
Chairman, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
The Honorable Rob Bonta, California State Assembly
Riverside County Legislative Delegation

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE



Board of Supervisors

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April 16, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

As the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, I am writing you about the developing immigration-related humanitarian crisis that is now directly impacting Riverside County, specifically the communities and essential services in the eastern portion of our county.

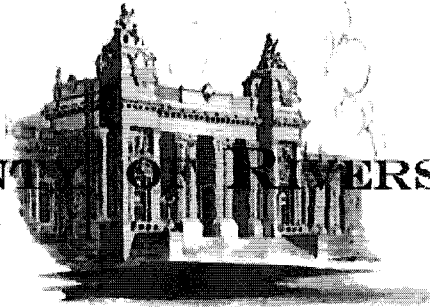
On March 28th, the City of Blythe Police Department was notified by the United States Border Patrol that the Yuma Sector has experienced a significant rise in the number of family units arrested throughout their sector for immigration violations. The Border Patrol advised that their processing centers are not designed to house the current numbers of families and small children that they are encountering. Due to capacity issues at these processing centers the Border Patrol has begun transporting families and individuals to the City of Blythe and releasing them with a notice to appear for their immigration hearings. As of this writing there have been 223 families totaling 448 individuals released in the City of Blythe.

The City of Blythe and supporting local Non-Government Organizations have extremely limited resources to meet the basic service needs for this influx of immigrants. In cooperation with the City of Blythe and surrounding communities, the County of Riverside has diverted critical social, behavioral health, public health, transportation, and housing services to assist in meeting the humanitarian needs of these immigrant families seeking asylum. Diversion of county resources is impacting services essential to the Eastern Riverside County communities of the Palo Verde and Coachella Valleys. These resources cannot continue to meet the needs of these immigrant families in addition to the existing community needs for an indefinite period.

Thousands of immigrants continue to be processed by US Customs and Immigration Enforcement (ICE), indicating there is no end to the release of these families that are impacting Riverside County communities. I am requesting the state to provide food, short and long-term housing, travel assistance, medical and behavior health care, and case management to these immigrant families that are being dropped off in Riverside County.

(Continued)

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE



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If the state has no plan in place for the provision of these services, Riverside County requests immediate approval of state funding pursuant to Section 23.20 of the Budget Act of 2018 (The Rapid Response Reserve Fund of 2018), to assist qualified community-based organizations and nonprofit entities during this immigration emergency situation for which federal funding is unavailable and/or the redirection of state-level staff to directly assist in the response efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of these immigrant families.

Thank you for your immediate attention and assistance.

Respectfully,

KEVIN D. JEFFRIES
Chairman, Riverside County