

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



ITEM: 2.12
(ID # 24512)

MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Receive and File the Legislative Report for September 2024, [All Districts] [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and File the Legislative Report for September 2024.

ACTION:Consent

Carolina Salazar Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy

9/5/2024

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Gutierrez, 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 Gutierrez
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: September 10, 2024
xc: E.O.

Kimberly A. Rector
Clerk of the Board

By:
Deputy

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

BACKGROUND:

Summary

Board Policy A-27 provides, in part, that the County's legislative advocates and/or the Executive Office shall provide monthly reports on the progress of County-sponsored legislation and issues at the forefront of discussion at State/Federal levels that may have a fiscal and/or operational impact on the County. Included in the reports shall be known formal positions of notable associations and/or organizations.

ATTACHMENTS:

Legislative Report (September 2024)

CSAC Letters (September 2024)

UCC Letters (September 2024)

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Board Policy A-27 provides, in part, that the County's legislative advocates and/or the Executive Office shall provide monthly reports on the progress of County-sponsored legislation and issues at the forefront of discussion at state/federal levels that may have a fiscal and/or operational impact on the County. Included in the reports shall be known formal positions of notable associations and/or organizations. The Legislative Report is meant to meet that requirement.

This report includes updates on the County's federal and state legislative advocacy efforts, legislation of interest, and copies of advocacy letters sent.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY

RivCo Bill List

118th Congress

- **S. 3830: Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Establishment Act (Sen. Alex Padilla [D-CA])** Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program to award grants to eligible entities to provide funds to owners and operators of public water systems or treatment works to assist low-income households in paying arrearages and other rates charged to such households for drinking water or wastewater services.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Author on 04/10/24.]
- **H.R.696 (Rep. Calvert, Ken [CA-41])** To direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for Eastvale, California.
Position: Support [Per Board Agenda Item 3.1 on 02/07/23]
- **H.R.726 (Rep. McClain, Lisa C. [MI-9])** To amend the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to implement fertility controls to manage populations of wild free-roaming horses and burros, and to encourage training opportunities for military veterans to assist in range management activities, and for other purposes.
Position: Watch
- **H.R. 1586 Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023 (Rep. LaMalfa, Doug [R-CA-1])/S. 796 Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023 (Sen. Lummis, Cynthia M. [R-WY])** Exempts discharges of fire retardant by Federal land management agencies and local governments from the permitting requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.
Position: Support

CALIFORNIA STATE ADVOCACY

2023-24 Legislative Session

- **AB 637 (Low-D)** Zero-emission vehicles: fleet owners: rental vehicles. Would allow local jurisdictions to include the rental of ZEVs for compliance purposes in fleet calculations for ZEV acquisition requirements.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 817 (Pacheco-D) Local government: open meetings.** Would authorize members of local non-decision-making legislative bodies to participate in public meetings via two-way virtual teleconferencing without posting their location.
Position: Support
Impact: Would allow virtual participation on County appointed boards and commissions, removing barriers for participation.
- **AB 1168 (Bennett-D) Emergency medical services (EMS): prehospital EMS.** Would change the key provisions of the EMS Act, creating a fractured local EMS (LEMSA) system in which local jurisdictions could opt out of our current LEMSA.
Position: Oppose[Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
Activation: In addition to partnering with the opposition coalition, EMD staff met with legislative offices to advocate against the bill.
- **AB 1948 (Rendon-D, Santiago-D, and Gipson- D) Homeless Disciplinary Personnel Teams.** Would allow seven counties to continue using AB 728 authority to apply agency collaboration towards coordinating care for individuals and families at risk of becoming unhoused and reducing inflow into homelessness.
Position: Support
Impact: RivCo was one of the original pilot counties. Removing the current sunset would enable the County to continue using a collaborative approach to homelessness.
- **AB 1957 (Wilson-D) Public contracts: Best Value Construction Contracting for Counties.** Authorizes any county in the state to utilize the best-value contracting model and eliminates the statutory sunset on such authority.
Position: Support
Impact: RivCo was one of the pilot counties, the use of best-value contracting has allowed for a selection of contractors based on qualifications and experience, not simply lowest bid prices.
- **AB 2037 (Papan-D) Weights and measures: electric vehicle chargers.** Would require a county sealer to test and verify electric vehicle chargers operated by public agencies.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2115 (Haney-D) Controlled substances: clinics.** Would allow authorized practitioners at nonprofit or free clinics to dispense narcotic drugs to alleviate acute withdrawal symptoms while arranging treatment referrals.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2133 (Kalra-D) Veterinary medicine: registered veterinary technicians.** Authorizes registered veterinary technicians to perform neuter surgeries on male domestic cats

under the direct supervision of a California-licensed veterinarian, provided they meet certain conditions.

Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]

- **AB 2343 (Shiavo-D) CalWORKs: childcare programs.** Would enhance support for recipients of CalWORKs childcare services to provide additional support and navigation services to recipients experiencing homelessness or escaping domestic violence.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2448 (Jackson-D) Electric Vehicle Economic Opportunity Zone: County of Riverside.** Would establish an Electric Vehicle Economic Opportunity Zone (EVEOZ) in the County of Riverside County to create programs that make electric vehicle manufacturing jobs and education more accessible to lower-income communities.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2557 (Ortega-D) Local agencies: contracts for special services and temporary help: performance reports.** Would restrict county contracting and create onerous reporting requirements.
Position: Oppose
- **AB 2561 (McKinnor-D) Local public employees: vacant positions.** Would require public agencies with high vacancy rates of more than 180, at the request of the recognized employee organization to meet and confer.
Position: Oppose [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2866 (Pellerin-D) Pool safety: State Department of Social Services regulated facilities.** Would enhance required safety equipment for swimming pools on the premises of licensed child day care facilities and homebased family day care sites.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **AB 2871 (Manshein-D) Overdose Fatality Review Teams.** This bill would authorize a county to establish an interagency overdose fatality review team to assist local agencies in identifying and reviewing overdose fatalities.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
Impact: This bill codifies the best practices that have been created by the RivCo Overdose Fatality Review Team.
- **AB 2882 (McCarthy-D) California Community Corrections Performance Incentives.** Outlines specific goals for the local plans, which must be submitted annually to the Board of State and Community Corrections.
Position: Oppose
- **AB 3149 (Garcia- D) Promotores and Promotoras Advisory and Oversight Workgroup.** Would create the Promotores and Promotoras Advisory and Oversight Workgroup to provide perspective and guidance to changes in the health and human services delivery system, including, but not limited to, the Medi-Cal program.
Position: Support
- **AB 3182 (Lackey- R) Land conservation: California Wildlife, Coastal, and Park Land Conservation Act: County of San Bernardino.** Clarifies state law about the use of Prop 70 land sale proceeds in San Bernardino County, allowing the County to use these land sale proceeds to improve recreational facilities and conserve open space in our region.
Position: Support
- **AB 3198 (Garcia-D) Joint powers agreements: retail electric services.** Would authorize a public agency with the authority to provide retail electric services to enter into

a joint powers agreement with one or more public agencies with jurisdiction within the Coachella Valley Service Area.

Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]

- **SB 366 (Caballero-D) The California Water Plan: long-term supply targets.** This bill would complement and amplify Governor Newsom's Water Supply Strategy, ensuring there are reasonable water supply targets.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
Advocacy Strategy: This bill is being proposed by the Solve the Water Crisis Coalition as a solution to creating more reasonable water targets.
- **SB 994 (Roth-D) Local government: joint powers authority: transfer of authority.** Would facilitate the transfer of land use authority from the March JPA to RivCo.
Position: Sponsored
Impact: This bill idea was proposed by RivCo and the March JPA.
- **SB 1025 (Eggman- D) Pretrial diversion for veterans.** Would include certain felony offenses in the pretrial diversion program for defendants who are current or former members of the United States Armed Forces and who may be suffering from conditions such as sexual trauma, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, or mental health problems because of their military service.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **SB 1032 (Padilla-D) Housing finance: portfolio restructuring: loan forgiveness.** Would allow the Department of Housing and Community Development to forgive the full amount of principal, interest, fees, and other balances on certain multifamily housing loans.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **SB 1057 (Menjivar-D) Juvenile justice coordinating council.** Would reform the structure and function of county juvenile justice coordinating councils.
Position: Oppose
- **SB 1175 (Ochoa Bogh-R) Organic waste: reduction goals: local jurisdictions: waivers.** Seeks to facilitate local governments' implementation of SB 1383 (Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016), which is a statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants by setting specific phased-in targets for reduction of organic waste deposited in landfills.
Position: Support
- **SB 1224 (Ochoa Bogh-R) Alcoholic beverage control: on-sale general license: County of Riverside.** Would facilitate the alcoholic beverage on-sale licensing for the RivCo Fairgrounds for the variety of community-based events held at the Fairgrounds throughout the year.
Position: Sponsored
Impact: This bill idea was proposed by RivCo Facilities Management.
- **SB 1233 (Wilk-D) University of California: Western University of Health Sciences: veterinary medicine: spay and neuter techniques.** Would expand elective coursework for veterinary medicine students and will also be available to California-licensed veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians.
Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]
- **SB 1245 (Ochoa Bogh-R) In-Home Supportive Services.** Streamlines the process for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) clients to receive paramedical services.

Position: Support

Impact: This bill supports RivCo's integrated service delivery work.

- **SB 1249 (Roth-D) Mello-Granlund Older Californians Act.** Charges the California Department on Aging (CDA), within specified time periods, to take administrative actions that recognize the state's major demographic shift towards an older, more diverse population.

Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]

Advocacy Strategy: RivCo Office on Aging Director Jewel Lee testified in the Senate Human Services Committee on 04/01/24 as the lead witness in support.

- **SB 1396 (Gil-R) CalWORKs: Home Visiting Program.** Would extend eligibility for children up to 36 months at enrollment for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Home Visiting Program.

Position: Support [Per Letter Sent to Governor on 09/04/24.Attached]

Advocacy Strategy: RivCo Office on Aging Director Jewel Lee testified in the Senate Human Services Committee on 04/01/24 as the lead witness in support.



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
District 2	Karen Spiegel 951-955-1020
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District 4	V. Manuel Perez 951-955-1040
District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

August 10, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 637 (Jackson) – Zero-Emission Vehicles: Fleet Owners: Rental Vehicles
As amended 06/12/24 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing 08/15/24 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for AB 637—which would provide public and private fleets with additional options to meet the zero emission vehicle (ZEV) procurement requirements under the Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) regulation, adopted by the CA Air Resources Board.

Current ACF regulations allow fleet owners to claim compliance credit when they lease a ZEV truck instead of a diesel truck for a year or longer, but not for leases shorter than a year. This oversight unreasonably restricts the options available to fleet owners—particularly those with less resources and limited budgets—that are looking for cost-effective ways to meet the ACF’s ambitious goals. AB 637 seeks to address this gap and to offer greater flexibility for fleet compliance. Moreover, by incentivizing the leasing of ZEV trucks, AB 637 will boost demand in the private rental market, increase the availability of ZEV trucks, and ensure they are actively used instead of sitting idle in rental parking lots—ultimately contributing to the reduction of California's emissions.

Given the numerous challenges in transitioning to zero-emission technologies, particularly for medium and heavy-duty trucks, it is crucial that public and private fleets have a range of options available when creating their compliance plans so that they can continue to meet the immediate needs of the public. For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports AB 367. Thank you for

AB 637 (Jackson)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Corey Jackson, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 637 (Jackson) Zero-Emission Vehicles: Fleet Owners: Rental Vehicles
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 637—Assembly Member Corey Jackson's measure that would provide public and private fleets with additional options to meet the zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) procurement requirements under the Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) regulation, adopted by the California Air Resources Board on April 28, 2023.

Our County is committed to paving the way for a resilient, ready, and connected communities and remains committed to complying with ACF regulations. Unfortunately, supply chain issues have made it difficult to comply. Current ACF regulations allow fleet owners to claim compliance credit when they lease a ZEV truck instead of a diesel truck for a year or longer, but not for leases shorter than a year. This omission unreasonably restricts the options available to fleet owners—particularly those with less resources and limited budgets—that are looking for cost-effective ways to meet the ACF's ambitious goals. AB 637 seeks to address this gap and to offer greater flexibility for fleet compliance. Moreover, by incentivizing the leasing of ZEV trucks, AB 637 will boost demand in the private rental market, increase the availability of ZEV trucks, and ensure they are actively used instead of sitting idle in rental parking lots—ultimately contributing to the reduction of California's emissions.

We firmly believe that the rental of zero-emission trucks should count towards the total compliance obligation for these fleets given the numerous challenges in

AB 637 (Jackson)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

transitioning to zero-emission technologies. For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this important measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Corey Jackson, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 1168 (Bennett) Emergency medical services (EMS): prehospital EMS
REQUEST FOR VETO**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your veto of AB 1168—Assembly Member Steve Bennett's measure which will, if passed, would fragment our emergency medical services (EMS) system in Riverside County.

AB 1168 seeks to overturn an extensive statutory and case law record that has repeatedly affirmed county responsibility for the administration of emergency medical services, and with that, the flexibility to design systems to equitably serve residents throughout their jurisdiction.

With the passage of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Act in 1980, California created a framework for a two-tiered system of EMS governance through both the state Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) and Local EMSAs (LEMSAs). Counties are required by the EMS Act to create a LEMSA system that is timely, safe, and equitable for all residents. To do so, counties honor .201 rights and contract with both public and private agencies to ensure coverage of underserved areas regardless of the challenges inherent in providing uniform services throughout geographically diverse areas.

Passage of this bill would disrupt established agreements and create a fractured system that focuses services on well-resourced cities and districts, creating further strain on the system as a whole and resulting in a disjointed network, the exact problem the EMS Act of 1980 intended to resolve.

Our County is especially concerned with the precedent set by AB 1168. Our LEMSA is tasked with overseeing services in over 7,300 square miles. Passage of this bill could allow for some of the County's 28 incorporated cities to deem themselves a .201 entity moving forward. This goes against the intentions of the EMS Act and has the potential of creating huge gaps in services, which puts already under resourced unincorporated communities at further risk.

We urge you to consider the unintended health equity impacts posed by the passage of AB 1168. Riverside County has been focused on pursuing solutions that increase equitable access to emergency services. Our LEMSA is able take a holistic approach in looking at the equitable distribution of resources. Taking the incorporated cities out of the framework poses the risk of widening health equity gaps.

This bill creates fragmented and inequitable EMS medical services statewide. For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your veto. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Steve Bennett, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2037 (Papan) Weights and Measures: Electric Vehicle Chargers
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2037—Assembly Member Diane Papan’s measure that extends the jurisdiction of county sealers to include publicly operated electrical vehicle (EV) chargers. This allows county sealers to ensure a fair marketplace by inspecting, testing, and verifying such EV Chargers—so that consumers “get what they pay for.”

Privately operated EV chargers are subject to testing and verifying by county sealers, but publicly operated EV chargers are not as stipulated by a 1997 Attorney General opinion that limited the jurisdiction of county sealers by excluding cities from the definition of “person” presented in Bus. & Prof. Code § 12011. The distinction is meaningless to consumers who, regardless, expect to charge their vehicle at the advertised rate but are effectively left with no option for recourse if they suspect that they are getting less than what they are paying for.

As EV ownership continues to grow and as the County of Riverside continues to develop a robust and capable EV charging network to support the electrification of the county’s fleet, it is paramount that county sealers provide an unbiased, third-party verification just as they do with all other commercial scaling and volumetric measuring devices.

AB 2037 (Papan)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Diane Papan, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2115 (Haney) Controlled Substances: Clinics
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2115—Assembly Member Haney's measure which increases access to methadone by aligning state law with federal rules. This change would help expand efforts to prevent overdose deaths and further improve access to healthcare for our most vulnerable residents.

Our County is committed to fostering safe, sustainable, and healthy communities, this includes supporting efforts that improve quality outcomes. Methadone is the most well-studied pharmacotherapy for opioid use disorder (OUD), it reduces all-cause and overdose mortality, increases treatment engagement, and prevents harm related to injections. Unfortunately, people with OUD face multiple barriers to accessing methadone—as it can only be dispensed in a limited number of situations.

The Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) recently allowed clinics and hospitals to dispense 72 hours of methadone while referring a person to an Opioid Treatment Program. This extended dispensing authority provides methadone access while individuals are awaiting enrollment in a methadone clinic, such as on the weekends and in the evenings. Current California law does not fully align with this new authority. AB 2115 would address this issue by updating state laws. This change would lower the barrier to patients receiving opioid withdrawal management services, improve linkage to longer term treatment at methadone clinics, and reduce ongoing opioid use and overdose risk.

AB 2115 (Haney)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
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For these reasons, the County of Riverside requests your signature on AB 2115. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Matt Haney, Member, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

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June 2, 2024

The Honorable Assembly Member Ash Kalra
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

**Re: AB 2133 (Kalra) – Veterinary medicine: registered veterinary technicians
As amended 04/10/24 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Kalra,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for AB 2133—your measure that under specific conditions would allow registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) to perform neuter surgeries on male domestic cats.

As you are aware, there is a pet overpopulation crisis in California straining all our county-run animal shelters, that is only exacerbated by a severe shortage of veterinarians available to perform spay and neuter services. By expanding the scope of practice for RVTs and with the precautionary guidelines it establishes, AB 2133 will help to expand access to veterinary care and reduce euthanasia rates—without compromising the health, safety, and wellbeing of veterinary patients.

California RVTs are already trained and able to perform anesthesia for sterilization surgeries, dental extractions, and suturing. Anesthesia is widely viewed as the “riskiest” part of any surgery, while dental extractions are viewed as a far more difficult procedure with far more complications than cat neuters. AB 2133 falls in line with the current state regulations for both procedures by requiring the “direct supervision” of a DVM.

The County of Riverside’s Department of Animal Services (DAS) has made great strides and developed innovative solutions to combat the overpopulation crisis, this includes—hosting wellness clinics in unincorporated, underserved, high-stray communities to increase community access to veterinary care; adding shelter space and a new spay/neuter surgery suite; increased permanent veterinarian staffing, to specifically support spay and neuter surgeries. This resulted in the department performing more than 11,100 spay or neuter surgeries in 2023, which is our highest annual number since the pandemic. As a result of these efforts, as well as others, the DAS has increased the live release rate from 66% to 80% in the last year. While we have achieved significant progress, our goal is to reach a 90% live release rate. This will not be possible if we

do not increase the availability of veterinary services. Allowing RVTs to perform neuter surgeries under specific conditions will provide DAS with another safe and practical tool to combat the overpopulation crisis and to better leverage the resources currently at our disposal.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports AB 2133. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2343 (Schiavo) CalWORKS: Childcare Programs
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2343—Assembly Member Schiavo’s measure that allows agencies administering CalWORKs Stage One or Stage Two childcare programs to provide enhanced support and navigation services for families experiencing homelessness, surviving domestic violence, or both.

Our County is committed to providing financially stable and results oriented service delivery. CalWORKs families face unique barriers that prevent them from accessing available resources that are only compounded by a lack of affordable childcare. This bill will address disparities, systemic inequities, and help to mitigate the short- and long-term detrimental effects homelessness and domestic violence has on child development.

AB 2343 also authorizes these services to be delivered in collaboration with homeless service agencies, domestic violence organizations, and other supportive housing groups. This approach fosters future partnerships and local initiatives that not only leverage existing resources, but also offer greater flexibility, cultural competence, and a deeper understanding of community need—making it easier to engage residents and increase participation in programs. This leads to higher service utilization and improved outcomes. All in all, AB 2343 will allow our County to address service gaps and deliver more comprehensive wraparound care.

AB 2343 (Schiavo)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
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For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Pilar Schiavo, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2448 (Jackson)
Electric Vehicle Economic Opportunity Zone: County of Riverside
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2448—Assembly Member Corey Jackson’s measure that establishes an Electric Vehicle Economic Opportunity Zone (EVEOZ) in Riverside County.

AB 2448 seeks to serve as a model that can be replicated throughout the state to ensure that all communities will share in the economic benefits of the zero-emission vehicle industry. Specifically, it directs the Labor and Workforce Development Agency to establish and administer programs that make electric vehicle manufacturing jobs and education more accessible to lower-income communities in one of the fastest-growing regions in the state.

The bill also benefits car mechanics who build and maintain the vehicles, electricians and welders who create charging stations, and software developers who design programs to operate the cars. The Labor and Workforce Development Agency will engage with key stakeholders—including educational institutions, electric vehicle manufacturing businesses, and local and national financial institutions—to develop grants, tax incentives, apprenticeships, and hiring programs aimed at onboarding, training, and retaining workers within the geographical boundaries of the EVEOZ.

AB 2448 (Jackson)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

AB 2448 intends to act as a blueprint for other EVELOZ throughout the state. For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Corey Jackson, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	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	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2561 (McKinnor) Local Public Employees: Vacant Positions
REQUEST FOR VETO**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your veto on AB 2561—Assembly Member Tina McKinnor's measure which will, if passed, impose a significant administrative burden on local agencies already struggling to fulfill vacant positions.

AB 2561 would require local agencies to present this plan during a public hearing to the governing legislative body and to publish the plan on its internet website for public review for at least one year. Our County struggles with recruitment and retention and has been proactive in working to address class and compensation across the board. We are acutely aware of the impact long-term vacancy rates have—both on local agencies themselves and on the communities we serve.

AB 2561 will not provide public agencies a path forward to reducing staff vacancies. First and foremost, AB 2561 fails to understand that not all vacancies are created equally. In our County, vacancy rates are highest amongst specialty positions like nurses, licensed behavioral health professionals, social workers, and public safety professionals who are also experiencing nationwide workforce shortages and a dwindling pipeline for new entrants, driven by both an expansion of services and an aging workforce.

The public sector workforce has also changed significantly, especially in a post-COVID era where public employees were on the front lines of the COVID response. They experienced extreme burnout and harassment from the public.,

AB 2561 (McKinnor)
County of Riverside – OPPOSE
Page 2

then, had to endure the seemingly endless series of demands to transform county service delivery—while also providing consistent and effective services. There is no doubt a correlation between the county programs dealing with the largest realignments of service delivery and structural overhaul as mandated by the state and those departments with the highest vacancy rates. To further complicate the matter, local government agencies are competing with not just each other both also with the private sector.

Imposing an incredibly short timeframe, AB 2561 will prove to be impractical without increasing costs or diverting critical resources—especially in the absence of adequate state funding and support. Adding another unfunded mandate on public agencies will not solve the problem this bill has identified. Instead, it is more likely to create even more burn-out for the employees tasked with producing the various reports AB 2561 mandates.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your veto on AB 2561. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Tina McKinnor, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
District 2	Karen Spiegel 951-955-1020
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2866 (Pellerin) Pool safety: State Department of Social Services
regulated facilities
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, we write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2866—Assembly Member Gail Pellerin's measure that would enhance required safety equipment for swimming pools on the premises of licensed child day care facilities and home-based family day care sites.

Drowning – which is preventable – is the leading cause of death for children aged 1 to 4 years old. The County of Riverside is committed to water safety and drowning prevention. Through our Water Safety Coalition, the County brings together multiple county agencies to promote public education efforts and water safety resources to prevent accidental drownings.

AB 2866 puts in place a common-sense two-step system that would enhance drowning prevention measures at childcare facilities across the state. Specifically, AB 2866 requires licensed childcare facilities to install at least two specified safety features. Additionally, the facility must assure that specified safety equipment is easily and visibly accessible in the pool area and must conduct and log a daily inspection.

AB 2866 recognizes the need for bringing the pool safety standards that have been in place for nearly 30 years to day care facilities, representing a sensible drowning prevention standard. For these reasons, the County of Riverside

AB 2866 (Pellerin)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Gail Pellerin, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
District 2	Karen Spiegel 951-955-1020
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2871 (Maienschein): Overdose Fatality Review Teams
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 2871—by Assembly Member Maienschein. This measure would authorize counties to establish multiagency Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) Teams. As an early adopter of the OFR team model, the County of Riverside can attest to the value and benefits of this approach in building community awareness about overdose prevention and analyzing overdose cases to improve countywide overdose epidemiology.

Our nation's drug fatality crisis is well-documented. A recent National Center for Health Statistics' brief¹ found that the age-adjusted rate of drug overdose deaths in the United States increased from 8.2 deaths per 100,000 standard population in 2002 to 32.6 in 2022; however, the rate remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2022. According to the most recent fatal drug-related overdose data available² through California Department of Public Health, there were approximately 11,000 overdose deaths across the state for the 12-month period between December 2022 and November 2023. Riverside County has experienced 889 overdose deaths in 2022 and an estimated 826³ in 2023. Our county has committed considerable resources to taking a data-driven approach to inform an array of strategies and interventions to address overdose fatalities, including early deployment of an OFR team.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db491.pdf>

²

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/sapb/CDPH%20Document%20Library/PrelimMonthlyDeathData_2024_01_FINAL_ADA.pdf

³ Riverside County's overdose death total is an annualized figure based on 11 months of data. See

<https://countyofriverside.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=5e0ff2f698264ac6bd8795d6888e14a5>

Piloted in February 2020 and launched in June 2020, the County of Riverside's OFR team became the first and only such team in California. This effort has proven to be a valuable tool for sharing data, informing strategic planning, promoting health equity, and aligning prevention efforts among Riverside County stakeholders through improved coordination and collaboration. Our multidisciplinary team meets monthly to review selected overdose cases within a pre-identified focus area and identifies opportunities to improve countywide overdose epidemiology. In turn, the team develops recommendations that seek to prevent the initiation of substance use and substance use disorders, increase access to treatment for people who use drugs, and increase access to harm reduction resources to prevent overdoses and stop overdose deaths. Additionally, our OFR has welcomed visitors and observers from other counties and other states to our monthly meetings, as a means to share knowledge and promote broader adoption of the OFR model.

We appreciate that this measure would establish an organizational construct for other counties that wish to establish an OFR team. Importantly, AB 2871 also contains needed provisions that govern information sharing, which is critical to assessing how best to address overdose deaths, treat substance use, and promote harm reduction.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the County of Riverside Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Brian Maienschein, Member of the Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 3198 (Garcia) Joint Powers Agreements: Retail Electric Services
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, we write to respectfully request your signature on AB 3198—Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia's measure that authorizes a public agency to enter into a joint powers agreement with other public agencies in the Coachella Valley Service Area.

The County of Riverside is a self-help County with a record of working collaboratively with regional government agencies to address local issues. A tool by which the County achieves this is the formation of joint powers agreements. AB 3198 is a local bill which allows the County to work with other public agency and tribal nation stakeholders in the provision of electric services in the Coachella Valley, including the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), to utilize the formation of a joint powers agreement as an option for the provision of electrical services.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports AB 3198 and respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair

Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Vice Chair

cc: The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

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August 26, 2024

Administrator Shailen Bhatt
Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Support for Riverside County Transportation Commission's
Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program Application**

Dear Administrator Bhatt:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our strong support for Riverside County Transportation Commission's (RCTC) application to receive \$16 million from the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program.

This funding will support the RCTC Wildlife Crossing and Corridor Program, which includes two essential components: (1) Wildlife Crossing #10 across the Ramona Expressway and (2) an adjacent protected wildlife corridor. This critical wildlife crossing is a key component of the larger Mid County Parkway mobility project—which aims to address the long-term transportation needs of western Riverside County, while also minimizing negative impacts to the natural environment where the Mid County Parkway will be constructed.

Each year, highway projects cause millions of collisions between wildlife and automobiles that result in significant property damage, injuries, and death to both wildlife and people. Wildlife crossings are highly effective in mitigating these negative safety and environmental impacts. In Riverside County, these conflicts increase the dangers on a stretch of the Ramona Expressway already known for vehicle collisions. Wildlife Crossing #10 will allow wildlife—including protected species such as the bobcat, Stephens' kangaroo rat, and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit—to safely travel through the Mid County Parkway project area. The adjacent wildlife corridor will further encourage wildlife to safely use the crossing, reducing the likelihood of dangerous encounters with vehicles on the expressway. Together, the RCTC Wildlife Crossing and Corridor Program will strengthen the conservation and connectivity goals established under the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports RCTC's application. We appreciate the FHWA's consideration of this funding request, which will help create a safer, more sustainable Riverside County for both our residents and wildlife alike. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 366 (Caballero) California Water Plan: Long-Term Water Supply Targets
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on Senator Anna Caballero's measure SB 366. Given the extreme climate impacts of the 21st century, the anticipated reductions from existing water resources, and the controls on the use of groundwater, California needs additional water supply.

Our County is committed to paving the way for resilient, ready, and connected communities. SB 366 would establish long-term water supply targets for the state to achieve, require a financing plan, and would update the requirement that state agencies develop a plan to achieve those targets—in consultation with local water agencies, wastewater service providers, and other stakeholders. Fulfilling the generational responsibility to develop a water system that will adapt to changes in the environment and allow the state to thrive now and for future generations.

SB 366 will complement your Water Supply Strategy and extend beyond any single Administration—as it is a vital step towards securing the state's water future. For these reasons, the County of Riverside proudly supports SB 366 and requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should

SB 366 (Caballero)
County of Riverside – SUPPORT
Page 2

you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or cserrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Anna Caballero, California State Senate
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1020 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1025 (Eggman) Pretrial Diversion for Veterans
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 1025, Senator Susan Eggman's measure that would expand eligibility for an existing military pretrial diversion program.

Under current law, active-duty members of the military and veterans who have been convicted of a misdemeanor are eligible to enter a pre-plea diversion program, which suspends criminal proceedings for a specified time and under certain conditions. SB 1025 would extend this pretrial military diversion opportunity to those who are charged with a felony for instances in which the defendant is suffering from a sexual trauma, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use disorder, or a mental health condition that has resulted from military service. The bill also enumerates several serious and violent felonies that would disqualify a veteran from participation in the diversion program. Taken together, these proposed refinements to the military diversion program would bring consistency and parity across other diversion programs in the state.

California is home to the largest concentration of veterans than any other state in the nation. Approximately 117,000 veterans¹ – and even more active-duty

¹ California Veteran Population by County:
<https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/PublishingImages/Pages/Veteran-Demographics-/California%20Veteran%20Population%20by%20County.pdf>

military personnel – reside in Riverside County; only two other counties in the state have a higher veteran population. In recognition of the importance of military service as well as the challenges many veterans experience as a direct result of their active duty, the County – through its Department of Mental Health Veterans Services Liaison – is dedicating resources and supports to address the need of those experiencing mental health difficulties. Those efforts prioritize support to veterans and their families with a goal toward ensuring the highest quality of life marked with the dignity and honor they deserve.

SB 1025 would make a needed change to expand opportunities for veterans and active-duty members of the military to avoid serving jail time if they successfully complete treatment, education and any other requirements specified by the court. In turn, expanded eligibility for participating in pretrial diversion programs – which already exists in other diversion programs in the state – would offer our state's veterans and active-duty members important rehabilitative opportunities and access to needed services.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this important measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the County of Riverside Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Respectfully,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Susan Eggman, Member of the Senate
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	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	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

August 10, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 1032 (Padilla) – Housing finance: portfolio restructuring: loan forgiveness
As amended 05/16/24 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing 08/15/24 – Assembly Appropriations Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for SB 1032 which will give the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) the authority and discretion to forgive specific legacy loans.

Our county is dedicated to making homelessness a rare, brief, and non-reoccurring experience by taking a comprehensive, system-level approach. This approach addresses the various factors contributing to homelessness, including the significant shortage of affordable housing. The Inland Empire faces one of the most severe shortages of affordable homes in the nation, with only 18 affordable and available homes for every 100 renter households. Additionally, 58.6% of Riverside County renters are considered rent-burdened by HUD, spending more than 30% of their household income on rent—a figure that surpasses both state and national averages. Preserving and developing affordable housing in high-cost areas is crucial, and state and federal financing programs, some of which have been in place for decades, play a key role in this effort.

For instance, HCD administers several loan programs established by the Legislature in the 1980s and 1990s to preserve affordable housing across the state. These programs provided loans to public housing providers, such as the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (HACR), with terms designed to balance impactful funding with the need to keep rents affordable. Some of these loans, however, included provisions that allowed housing agencies to defer principal and interest payments, effectively trapping public housing providers in an ongoing cycle of debt with no clear way out.

These loans were structured on the assumption that housing agencies would only need to pay the HCD monitoring fee, with the expectation that future excess cash flows could be used to pay down the principal and interest. In practice, however, these affordable housing units rarely generate excess cash flows due to the rent affordability restrictions imposed by the loan program and the high costs of maintaining the units. As a result, many housing agencies have accumulated significant balances of principal and interest, which now appear on their balance sheets and hinder their ability to secure additional state and federal assistance. Given the current reality of how these loans operate, it is time to grant HCD the authority to forgive these loans and provide much-needed relief to the affected housing agencies.

Without loan forgiveness, these housing agencies will default on these loans, effectively increasing the possibility that a housing agency will need to close affordable housing sites which serve the most vulnerable residents of their communities, which will ultimately lead to more homelessness across the state. For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports SB 1032 as it will help to preserving and developing affordable housing. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

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



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: SB 1233 (Wilk)
University of California: veterinary medicine: spay and neuter techniques
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on SB 1233—Senator Scott Wilk’s measure that establishes a framework to create a first-in-the-nation High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVSN) certification program at the University of California and Western University of Health Sciences.

There is a pet overpopulation crisis straining all our county-run animal shelters, which is exacerbated by lack of access to veterinary care. SB 1233 provides much needed short- and long-term solutions. HQHVSNs are a minimally invasive surgical technique that allows for large numbers of spay and neuter procedures to be performed in a safe and cost-effective manner.

The establishment of a HQHVSN certification program at both veterinary schools would open two no-cost/low-cost centers in Northern and Southern California. These surgical centers would directly serve pet owners who demonstrate a financial need while also training and licensing veterinary students, practicing veterinarians, and registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) to perform HQHVSNs.

If approved, this measure will advance the efficiency, access, and quality of spay and neuter services—improving animal welfare and ensuring more pets can live healthy lives. SB 1233 directly supports the County of Riverside Department of Animal Services’ (DAS) efforts to increase veterinary access and

combat overpopulation. For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or cserrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Scott Wilk, California State Senate
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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District 3	Chuck Washington 951-955-1030
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District 5	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 1249 (Roth) Mello-Granlund Older Californians Act
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, we write to respectfully request your signature on SB 1249—Senator Richard Roth's measure that charges the California Department on Aging (CDA), within specified time periods, to take administrative actions that recognize the state's major demographic shift towards an older, more diverse population.

Building on the Master Plan for Aging, SB 1249 tasks the department to collect relevant robust data and develop strategies and approaches to maximize the impacts of aging programs and initiatives across communities. Specifically, the bill provides a county the option, to petition CDA to assume control of the area agency on aging that serves the local jurisdiction. The bill also requires on or before September 30, 2026, and in consultation with area agencies on aging and stakeholders, CDA to develop the core programs and services to be provided by all area agencies on aging.

Riverside County agrees that CDA plays a crucial role in weaving together local efforts into a cohesive system of support for seniors, by acting as a key coordinating body among various state/local agencies and organizations; and aligning resources, policies, and initiatives to ensure a comprehensive and seamless delivery of aging services.

Similarly, through the Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) Model, the County of Riverside promotes a holistic approach to address the diverse needs of aging

populations. Our County's local efforts to weave social services and community health care systems allows for early detection and management of health issues, promotes preventive care, enhances social support networks, and ultimately improves the overall well-being and quality of life for older individuals.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Richard Roth, California State Senate
Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



Board of Supervisors

District 1	Kevin Jeffries 951-955-1010
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August 10, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 1396 (Alvarado-Gil) – CalWORKs: Home Visiting Program
As amended 04/08/24 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing 08/15/24 – Assembly Appropriations Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for SB 1396—Senator Alvarado-Gil’s measure that extends the timeframe in which children may be enrolled in CalWORKs Home Visiting Programs (HVPs) and the period in which families can participate.

HVPs aim to strengthen parent-child relationships and enhance family wellbeing by connecting families with early childhood professionals who offer support in the home, on the parents’ schedule, and at no cost. These programs provide developmental guidance, health and safety coaching, and referrals to additional services. The County of Riverside’s Children and Families Commission, known as First 5 Riverside County (F5RC), partners with key stakeholders and associated sector leaders to co-design a comprehensive system of home visiting throughout the county, offered in both English and Spanish. F5RC’s investments in family resiliency draw heavily on evidence-based and promising-practice models, most of which require national affiliation and entail the annual monitoring of outcomes and measurements to ensure program efficiency. This includes the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI) program, which pairs parents with home-based educators to learn age-appropriate activities that support school readiness; the Blindness Support Services program, which assists children who are blind, visually impaired, or have other sensory disabilities using a tactile approach to learning; and other programs such as Healthy Families America (HFA), Parent Child Plus (PC+), and the Nurturing Parent Program (NPP).

Research shows that participation in an HVP has immense benefits to children under 2 years old and their families—such as better maternal and infant health, reduced emergency room visits, and increased safety practices. For children who participate in HVP until the age of 5, research

shows improved language and cognitive development, improved math and reading scores, reduced absenteeism, and decreased school suspensions. For every \$1 invested into an HVP, communities receive a benefit of up to \$5.70 in savings in child welfare, K-12 education, and community safety.¹

SB 1396 would extend the enrollment timeframe from a child under 24 months of age to a child under 36 months of age. This bill also removes the 24 month statutory limit on participation in HVPs for children in CalWORKs families and instead allows those children to continue to participate through the duration of the applicable HVP model. This will help to keep dropout rates low and ensure that families will not miss out on the critical developmental benefits that comes from continued participation in HVPs. Finally, SB 1396 allows children whose participation would otherwise be terminated because the family no longer meets CalWORKs income, eligibility, or need criteria to continue through the duration of the program or for up to an additional 12 months, whichever is longer.

For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports SB 1396 as this bill will maximize the health and developmental benefits of this highly effective program. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

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

¹ Home Visiting: Improving Outcomes for Children. <https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/home-visitingimprovingoutcomes-for-children>



Board of Supervisors

District 1	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	Yxstian Gutierrez 951-955-1050

July 2, 2024

The Honorable Senator Scott Wilk
1021 O Street, Room 7140
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1233 (Wilk) - University of California: veterinary medicine: spay and neuter techniques
As amended 04/16/24 – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Wilk,

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to express our strong support for SB 1233—your measure that establishes a framework to create a first-in-the-nation High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVSN) certification programs at the University of California and Western University of Health Sciences, California’s two accredited schools of veterinary medicine.

As you are aware, in California, there is a pet overpopulation crisis in California straining all our county-run animal shelters, that is only exacerbated by lack of access to veterinary care. As a statewide survey in 2023 highlighted, there are 344,000 shelter animals in California that did not have adequate access to veterinary care staff, and 40% of shelters could not provide consistent access to spay and neuter services.¹

The framework established in SB 1233 will play a seminal role in addressing overcrowding at animal shelters and the pet overpopulation crisis in California by providing both short- and long-term solutions for the shortage of veterinary care. First, the establishment of certification programs at both veterinary schools will open two no-cost/low-cost centers in Northern and Southern California. These surgical centers will directly serve pet owners who demonstrate a financial need while also training and licensing veterinary students, practicing veterinarians, and registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) to perform HQHVSNs—a minimally invasive surgical technique that allows for large numbers of spay and neuter procedures to be performed in a safe and cost-effective manner. This will both immediately add to the population of qualified

¹ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5ae46f84f8c3438d9c32126d54681936>

veterinary professionals who join the spay/neuter effort and, over the long-term, shift the

SB 1233 (Wilk)

County of Riverside – SUPPORT

Page 2

dynamics of California’s veterinary workforce so that HQHVSN is a core and essential skill that can be deployed at shelters, non-profits, and in private practice across the state. This will improve the efficiency, access, and quality of spay and neuter services—improving animal welfare and ensuring more pets can live healthy lives.

The establishment of two HQHVSN certification programs will directly support the County of Riverside Department of Animal Services’ (DAS) efforts to combat the pet overpopulation crisis and aid in our goal of achieving a 90% live release rate. For these reasons, the County of Riverside supports SB 1233. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Carolina Herrera, Director of Legislative Advocacy & Governmental Affairs at the Riverside County Executive Office (951) 955-1180 or csherrera@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Chuck Washington

Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together

July 25, 2024

The Honorable Dave Cortese, Chair
Senate Transportation Committee
California State Senate
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 637 (Jackson)– **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Allen:

We, the undersigned coalition, write to express support for AB 637, which would provide public and private fleets with additional options to meet the zero emission vehicle (ZEV) procurement requirements under the Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) regulation, adopted by the CA Air Resources Board on April 28, 2023.

Unfortunately, the ACF regulation does not allow a fleet owner to claim compliance credit for renting a zero emission truck over its internal combustion counterpart. This oversight unreasonably restricts the options available to fleet owners, particularly those with less resources and limited budgets, that are looking for cost-effective ways to meet the ACF's ambitious goals.

As a matter of policy, we believe that public and private fleets should have a variety of options available when developing their compliance plans. **For public and private entities that rent ACF covered trucks to supplement their existing fleets, we strongly believe that the rental of zero emission trucks should count towards the total compliance obligation for those fleets.** The increased utilization of zero emission trucks would benefit local air quality, reduce the investment costs for public and private entities electing to utilize those trucks, and provide much needed flexibility that will allow public and private fleets to better serve the needs of the public.

The urgency to adopt this proposal as soon as possible is clear especially for public fleets who will be making procurement decisions in the early part of 2024 in order to meet their compliance obligations for the ACF rule by the first milestone deadline of January 1, 2025.

For the foregoing reasons, we support AB 637 and respectfully ask for an AYE vote.

Sincerely,

Damon Conklin
League of California Cities

Nicole Hutchinson
CALSTART

Mark Neuburger
California State Association of Counties

Ben Palmer
Enterprise Mobility, Inc.

Anthony J. Tannehill
California Special Districts Association



July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 884 (Low) - Elections: language accessibility.
As Amended June 25, 2024 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED
To be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday, August 5, 2024.**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the Urban Counties of California (UCC), we write to share our respectful opposition to Assembly Bill (AB) 884 by Assembly Member Low unless amended to include an annual appropriation in the state budget act for county implementation and ongoing compliance to address the significant added costs imposed upon counties.

Counties believe in efficient and accessible voting for all. Our strength as a state and a country is derived from the diversity of our communities. The voices of all Californians are needed to express the people's will in its truest form. While we acknowledge the value of expanding ballot language accessibility, our concerns are primarily due to the considerable costs that would be imposed on elections officials and the lack of a funding plan to pay for those costs. Election officials perform the difficult work of conducting free and fair elections despite stretched budgets, limited staffing, and frequent changes to election laws. While it is difficult to estimate the full extent of costs imposed on counties given lack of readily available data, AB 884 would more than double the language services costs and demand on labor, materials, and contracted services in at least some counties.

This bill creates a new state-mandated local program. While counties are required to comply with all state mandates, counties only receive funding to carry out a select group of state-mandated programs in the form of after-the-fact reimbursement payments from the state. Counties comply with all other state mandates using local revenues. After a bill is signed into law, reimbursement for counties to comply with state-mandated programs is not automatic. Rather, counties initiate the process to receive reimbursement via the Commission on State Mandates, which may take a year or more to determine whether the new law meets the criteria for reimbursement—and even longer to establish a process and rate for reimbursement. Therefore, counties comply with new laws pending reimbursement status, often funding these programs alone for years, facing the uncertainty of reimbursement. In fact, according to the State Controller's Office, the state has accumulated a backlog of \$72.5 million in unpaid reimbursement claims owned to counties for costs incurred to comply with state-mandated programs and requirements to conduct elections.

Compounding these fiscal constraints for counties, the state has suspended some mandated programs to address state budget deficits. While a mandate is suspended, the requirement remains in statute, but local governments are not required to comply with the law in that fiscal year and the state has no reimbursement obligation.

However, to meet the expectations of the public and continue an existing level of service for the community, counties often continue to perform and pay for suspended state-mandated programs. This cost-shifting pattern wherein the state acknowledges fiscal responsibility for a program, the public subsequently expects and relies on that program, and then the state suspends funding has added pressure and needless complications to the management of elections by counties for years. Included below are three examples of existing suspended mandates that many counties continue to perform in the interest of the public good and promoting access to the democratic process although they no longer receive reimbursement from the state:

- [Absentee Ballots](#). *Mandate:* Absentee ballots shall be available to any registered voter. *Status:* Suspended.
- [Permanent Absent Voters II](#). *Mandate:* County elections officials shall make an application for permanent absent voter status available to any voter. *Status:* Suspended.
- [Voter Identification Procedures](#) *Mandate:* Elections officials shall compare the signature on each provisional ballot envelope with the signature on the voter's affidavit of registration. *Status:* Suspended.

To quote the Legislative Analyst's Office, which [opined](#) on this exact topic a few years ago, "...the process the state uses to achieve its local elections priorities—the mandates process—simply has not worked."

After years of layered responsibilities for county elections officials and insufficient financial support from the state, CSAC urges the Legislature to pair all new requirements with an appropriation in the state budget act for county implementation.

It is for these reasons that CSAC, RCRC, and UCC must respectfully oppose AB 884 unless amended, and respectfully request your "NO" vote. Should you have any questions about our position, please contact us at the email addresses below.

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
elawyer@counties.org
CSAC



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
jkh@hbeadvocacy.com
UCC



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
sdukett@rcrcnet.org
RCRC

cc: The Honorable Evan Low, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

July 3, 2024

The Honorable Pilar Schiavo
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 4140
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1820 (Schiavo) Housing Development Projects: Applications: Fees and Exactions
As amended on June 5, 2024 – Notice of Removal of Opposition/Neutral**

Dear Assemblymember Schiavo:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is pleased to remove our opposition to AB 1820. CSAC would like to thank the author’s office, committee staff, and sponsors for their dialogue and hard work in addressing our concerns with the measure. We appreciate the willingness of all interested stakeholders to work in a collaborative manner to find common ground on the issues at hand. Recent amendments have addressed our remaining concerns about what fees must be included in the fee and tax estimates, a timeline extension that is feasible for local governments, and legal protections that the estimates are non-legally binding and are for informational purposes only.

Due to these changes, CSAC is pleased to remove our opposition and move to *neutral* on the bill.

If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo, Chair, Senate Committee on Local Government
Members, Senate Committee on Local Government
Jonathan Peterson, Consultant, Senate Local Government
Ryan Eisberg, Senate Republican Caucus



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

July 25, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1878 (E. Garcia) Housing programs: tribal housing program.
As amended on June 17, 2024 – Support
Set for Hearing – August 5, 2024 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, along with the American Planning Association (APA) California Chapter, are proud to support AB 1878, which would create the Tribal Housing Advisory Committee within the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH), which upon appropriation by the Legislature, creates an advisory committee composed of federally recognized tribal governments with the knowledge, experience, and expertise in tribal housing, tribal land, tribal government, tribal policy, and tribal law to close the gap of inconsistencies and barriers for tribes to successfully access state-funded grant programs.

The bill would also require HCD to take specified actions with respect to state housing programs that have ties to federal housing programs, create tribal set-asides within each funding program, defer loans made by HCD to tribal sponsors, and forgive loans made by HCD to tribal sponsors if all conditions for the loans have been satisfied. Further, the bill would require that tribally designated housing entities, as defined, be allowed to submit one competitive application per tribe within the same funding program when applying for HCD funds, as specified.

Counties and tribes have shared interests in promoting economic development and self-sufficiency for their overlapping constituencies, promoting the general health, safety, well-being of the entire community, and infrastructure that is beneficial to all. Additionally, counties continue to advocate for more federal and state support to build and maintain housing for low-income Californians and develop creative financing models to increase the feasibility for more projects. AB 1878 help tribes achieve sustainable, safe, and affordable homes while reconstituting on ancestral lands where they can prosper and preserve their cultural heritage.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. AB 1878 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

Counties are committed to promoting and supporting the development of positive working relationships between counties and tribes to the mutual benefit of both parties and the communities they respectively serve. For these reasons, CSAC and APA are proud to support AB 1878. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,



Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Erik de Kok, AICP
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

CC: The Honorable Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
The Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1879 (Gipson) – Electronic signatures.
As Amended June 13, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in California, I write in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 1879 by Assemblymember Mike Gipson, which would allow the acceptance of electronic signatures by county assessors.

Counties strive to simplify interactions with local fiscal offices whenever possible. AB 1879 will benefit taxpayers and improve the ability of county assessors to serve their constituents, especially those facing transportation or mobility challenges. The use of electronic signatures will simplify the tasks of local government agencies and alleviate the burdens for taxpayers associated with sending government documents via mail.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 1879 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eric Lawyer'.

Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Mike Gipson, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Robert Ingenito, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ryan Eisberg, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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July 3, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1948 (Rendon, Santiago, and Gipson): Homeless multidisciplinary personnel teams.

As Amended March 12, 2024 – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

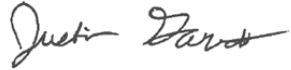
On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing to request your signature on Assembly Bill 1948 by Assembly Members Rendon, Santiago, and Gipson. This measure deletes the January 1, 2025 sunset date on current statute that gives seven counties the authority to exchange personal information of individuals at risk of experiencing homelessness for the purposes of service delivery and prevention, and expands that authority to the County of San Mateo.

Prior to the passage of Assembly Bill 728 (Chapter 337, Statutes of 2019), counties only had statutory authority to share data within multidisciplinary personnel teams (MDT) for individuals who are homeless. AB 728 expanded MDT authority to include sharing of information for individuals at risk of homelessness while maintaining strong privacy protections, allowing coordination among personnel in county agencies to keep individuals safely housed. AB 728 included a sunset date of January 1, 2025, meaning counties currently operating these MDTs will soon lose a critical tool utilized for early intervention and homelessness prevention.

Recognizing the growing humanitarian crisis of homelessness across the state, CSAC released the AT HOME plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation & Economic Opportunity) last year. This plan outlines clear responsibilities and accountability aligned to authority, resources, and flexibility for all levels of government within a comprehensive homelessness response system. It includes a full slate of policy recommendations to help build more housing, prevent individuals from becoming homeless, and better serve those individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness. AB 1948 aligns with the recommendations included in the Outreach and Mitigation pillars of AT HOME.

As counties work collaboratively with local, state, and federal partners to address the state's growing number of unhoused residents, it is critical to preserve existing tools that aid in prevention and help stem the inflow of individuals entering or returning to homelessness. It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 1948. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Anthony Rendon
The Honorable Miguel Santiago
The Honorable Mike Gipson
Martha Guerrero, Los Angeles County Legislative Representative
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Jith Meganathan, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



July 29, 2024

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The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2050 (Pellerin): Voter registration database: Electronic Registration Information Center
As Amended May 20, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties, representing all 58 counties in California, I am pleased to support Assembly Bill (AB) 2050 by Assemblymember Pellerin. This measure would improve the efficiency of conducting elections, improve maintenance of voter rolls, and aid in voter outreach by allowing California to enroll in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) voter registration database:.

California counties play a crucial role in voter registration by overseeing the processing of voter registration forms, updating voter rolls, and ensuring eligible residents are registered to vote. Additionally, counties amongst a myriad of other duties, administer elections, including managing polling places, distributing ballots, counting votes, and conducting voter outreach and education campaigns.

Existing law requires the Secretary of State to establish a statewide system to remove duplicate or prior voter registrations. This system aims to facilitate reporting election results and voter and candidate information and enhance election administration. As per the Secretary of State's determination, certain voter registration information should be provided to individuals for election, scholarly, journalistic, political, or governmental purposes.

This measure would authorize the Secretary of State to apply for ERIC membership, ensuring that counties maintain their ability to provide voters with the benefits of their services. If approved, the Secretary of State can execute a membership agreement with the Electronic Registration Information Center on behalf of the state. While membership in ERIC would require some upfront costs and annual dues, the costs are *de minimis* compared to the value of improving voter outreach and better-maintaining voter rolls.

AB 2050 would also require the Secretary of State to ensure the confidentiality of any information or data provided by another state. Moreover, the Secretary of State can securely transmit certain confidential information or data under that agreement. The bill will also allow the Secretary of State to develop regulations necessary to implement these provisions in consultation with the California Privacy Protection Agency.

For these reasons, CSAC supports AB 2050 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org.

The Honorable Anna Caballero

July 29, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer

Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Gail Pellerin, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Robert Ingenito, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Cory Botts, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2061 (Wilson) Sales and Use Tax: exemptions: zero-emission public transportation ferries.
As Amended May 1, 2024 - SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities) are pleased to support Assembly Bill (AB) 2061 (Wilson), which would establish, from January 1, 2025, until January 1, 2030, a new exemption for the purchase of zero-emission ferries by public transit agencies from the state portion of the sales and use tax.

This proposal would expand on previous legislative actions to exempt from the state portion of the sales and use tax the purchase of zero-emission buses purchased by public transit agencies through AB 784 (Mullin, Chapter 684, Statutes of 2019) and AB 2622 (Mullin, Chapter 353, Statutes of 2022). Importantly for cities and counties, the bill would aid local governments in complying with California Air Resources Board regulations that require local agencies to transition to full zero-emission ferry operations by December 31, 2025. While the regulations are important to improving local air quality, they are expensive and difficult for local agencies.

The local portion of the statewide sales and use tax helps fund a broad variety of county and city services ranging from anti-poverty programs, behavioral health services, and communicable disease control to regional parks, veterans' services, and weights and measures, among a litany of programs and services. AB 2061 would specify that this sales and use tax exemption does not apply to those state sales and use tax rates imposed or dedicated for local government funding, including those rates for which revenues are deposited into the Local Revenue Funds (i.e., 1991 and 2011 Realignment).

CSAC and Cal Cities appreciate Assemblymember Wilson's efforts in crafting AB 2061 in a manner that protects local services and realignment funds while recognizing that the biggest portion of the sales and use tax (and thus the biggest benefit for the buyer) is the state's share. As a result, the measure aids local governments in improving their local air quality and complying with state regulations, without reducing local revenue.

For these reasons, CSAC and Cal Cities are pleased to support AB 2061 and urge your AYE vote. If you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact us at elawyer@counties.org and btriffo@calcities.org.

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of
Counties



Ben Triffo
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities

- cc. The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Robert Ingenito, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ryan Eisberg, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



July 24, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 2149 (Connolly) – Oppose Unless Amended
As Amended July 3, 2024
Set to be heard August 5, 2024 - Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and the League of California Cities (CalCities), we must regrettably oppose Assembly Bill 2149 (Connolly), unless amended to address our fiscal and policy concerns. This measure creates a requirement for local agencies to regulate and enforce safety provisions set forth in the bill on new and some existing gates that weigh more than 50 pounds and are over 48 inches wide or are more than 84 inches high and meet exceedingly vague public access criteria, which capture a massive variety and number of gates.

AB 2149 creates an entirely new regulatory and enforcement burden on local agencies at a scale that is unworkable. As currently drafted, the bill's definition of a regulated gate covers newly installed gates as well as the replacement of existing gates, which would likely create enforcement duties over a significant number of gates in each jurisdiction. This would create the need to train existing inspectors, hire new staff or utilize contract inspectors to perform the enforcement duties required by this bill. With the wide universe of gates involved and the industry incentive to compel the installation of the hardware required by this bill, it is likely that local government inspector staffing and contractor costs statewide would gradually increase to over \$7 million annually. This estimate is based on data from the State Controller, which indicates local government inspectors have salaries of approximately \$75,000 per year and over 100 inspectors would be re-trained, hired or brought on as contractors by cities and counties within the first few years of the bills effective date.

We want to stress that a jurisdictions population won't guide impact of this bill given that this bill captures a large number of existing gates in rural areas and the replacement of these gates will require compliance with this bill's regulatory requirements. For urban and suburban

counties, we note that businesses, places of worship and other community facilities are installing new fencing and gates to address legitimate security concerns will significantly drive workload for city and county inspectors in these areas. Further, with the central role that industry contractors have in the bill, we are greatly concerned with the high potential for these entities to engage in predatory behavior. The provisions of this measure place local governments in the difficult position of determining whether a complaint filed by a private inspector or fence contractor is meritorious or part of a pattern of profit seeking behavior.

We also note that the bill will require cities and counties to make existing park gates immediately compliant with its provisions or remove them. We are still gathering information on the full costs of making gates compliant with this bill but it is likely to range in the millions of dollars. This is based on the reality that there are thousands of gates in city and county parks coupled with the fact that local governments must comply with public works contracting and prevailing wage statutes for this work; which will drive the costs of addressing existing gates well in excess of the \$50 part costs cited by the sponsor. Additionally, city and county staff have indicated that if they are unable to obtain the funds to bring the gates into compliance with this bill, they will be forced to take them down. Local government staff note that removing access control or other types of gates may have significant consequences, including the need to close the facility to the public to ensure that all safety concerns are addressed.

The bill's definition of a regulated gate covers a wide universe of barriers that would likely create enforcement duties over thousands of gates in each jurisdiction. For example, if a faulty gate was reported by a private inspector to the local building department, inspectors may have to delay enforcement due to staff shortages and a continuous push by the state to streamline a variety of permits in California. This can result in long delays for enforcing state regulations, putting local governments at risk for future litigation. Although the bill currently focuses on owners and private contractors to inspect the gate and make repairs, the local building department may be required to step in should health and safety measures not be addressed during the initial inspection. As a result, if another unfortunate situation occurs where someone is injured or killed by a gate, local governments may be liable if they did not take action due to delays or a lack of staff resources. Although lawsuits like this are difficult to quantify, we note the City of Oakland paid \$32.7 million to family's impacted by the 2016 Ghost Ship fire in connection with the city's inspection authority and duties in that incident.

Finally, this bill creates a new state-mandated local program. While cities and counties are required to comply with all state mandates, they only receive funding to carry out a select group of state-mandated programs in the form of after-the-fact reimbursement payments from the state. Cities and counties absorb all other state-mandated costs using local revenues. After a bill is signed into law, reimbursement for local governments to comply with state-mandated programs is not automatic. Rather, cities and counties initiate the process to receive reimbursement via the Commission on State Mandates, which may take a year or more to determine whether the new law meets the criteria for reimbursement—and even longer to establish a process and rate for reimbursement. Therefore, cities and counties comply with new

laws pending reimbursement status, often funding these programs alone for years, facing the uncertainty of reimbursement.

After years of layered responsibilities for counties and insufficient financial support from the state, we urge the Legislature to pair all new requirements with an appropriation in the state budget act for city and county implementation.

For these reasons, CSAC, RCRC and CalCities are regrettably opposed to AB 2149 unless amended to address our concerns. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Rhine (RCRC) trhine@rcrcnet.org, Mark Neuburger (CSAC) mneuburger@counties.org, or Brady Guertin (Cal Cities) bguertin@calcities.org.

Sincerely,



Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Tracy Rhine
Senior Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California



Brady Guertin
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities

cc: The Honorable Damon Connolly, Member of the California State Assembly
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ryan Eisberg and Kalya Williams, Consultants, Senate Republican Caucus



June 19, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 7620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: *AB 2337 (Dixon) - Workers' compensation: Electronic Signatures*
SUPPORT

Dear Chair, Caballero:

The undersigned organizations are proud to **SUPPORT AB 2337** which seeks to address a critical issue concerning the use of electronic signatures in proceedings before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board (WCAB). AB 2337 would authorize the use of certain electronic signatures in workers' compensation proceedings on a permanent basis, a practice that was temporarily permitted by Governor Newsom's emergency order during the COVID-19 state of emergency. This measure is vital as it will ensure efficiency and consistency in WCAB proceedings.

The current requirement under the Labor Code mandates a compromise and release of a workers' compensation claim to contain the "signature" of the employee or other beneficiary, attested by two disinterested witnesses, or acknowledged before a notary public. During the COVID-19 state of emergency, WCAB temporarily authorized the use of electronic signatures on compromise and release forms. Unfortunately, when the state of emergency was lifted by the Governor, WCAB automatically rescinded the authorization for electronic signatures.

During the COVID-19 state of emergency, electronic signatures proved to be effective in workers' compensation proceedings. By making this practice permanent, AB 2337 improves the administrative efficiency of California's workers' compensation system.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT AB 2337** as a sensible step forward in streamlining processes in the workers' compensation system.

Sincerely,

Dominic Russo, Acclamation Insurance Management Services (AIMS)

Dominic Russo, Allied Managed Care (AMC)

Laura Curtis, American Property Casualty Insurance Association

Sarah Bridge, Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD)

Faith Borges, California Association of Joint Powers Authorities

Ashley Hoffman, California Chamber of Commerce

Jason Schmelzer, California Coalition on Workers' Compensation

Jeff Rush, California Joint Powers Insurance Authority

Aaron Avery, California Special Districts Association

Kalyn Dean, California State Association of Counties

Johnnie Piña, League of California Cities

Jen Hamelin, Public Risk Innovation Solutions and Management

Jean Hurst, Urban Counties of California



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July 15, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2432 (Gabriel) Corporations: criminal enhancements.
As Amended June 13, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing 8/5/24 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) writes in support of AB 2432 by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel. This measure would establish the California Crime Victims Fund (CVF) in the California State Treasury and authorizes courts to impose additional fines on corporations convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, known as the corporate white-collar criminal enhancement, with the fines deposited into the California Crime Victims Fund. Thus, AB 2432 supports victims of crime through additional and separate restitution fines.

The existing federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) facilitates funding for the delivery of essential crime victim services via the VOCA Crime Victims Fund (CVF). The CVF is a nontaxpayer source of funding that is financed by monetary penalties associated with federal criminal convictions, as well as penalties from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements. Deposits into the CVF fluctuate based on the number of criminal cases that are handled by the United States Department of Justice, with Congress determining on an annual basis how much to release from the CVF to states. Unfortunately, funding through VOCA has steadily declined in recent years. As such, a tangible impact will undeniably be felt by California’s victim service providers, with many being forced to lay off staff, cut programs, and shut down operations unless there is supplemental support.

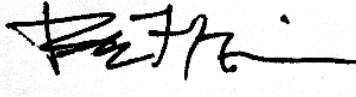
The positive impact of victim services across California cannot be understated. This can include health and higher education access for victims of gender-based violence, legal and housing services for victims of human trafficking, a wide range of culturally appropriate victim services programs, and plenty more. Accordingly, AB 2432 will provide a crucial source of revenue to support the provision of victim services in California by helping address reductions in federal dollars through the imposition of enhanced penalties of up to \$25 million for corporations convicted of white-collar crimes.

It is for these reasons that CSAC is in strong support of AB 2432. Should you have any questions regarding CSAC’s position, please do not hesitate to contact Ryan Morimune at CSAC (rmorimune@counties.org). Thank you for your consideration.

The Honorable Anna Caballero
AB 2432 (Gabriel) – In Support
Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,

Ryan Morimune

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Morimune". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Legislative Advocate, CSAC

CC: Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, California State Assembly
Members and Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee



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July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2455 (Gabriel) – Whistleblower protection: state and local government procedures.
As Amended June 27, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in California, I write in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 2455 by Assemblymember Gabriel. This measure would modernize the Whistleblower Protection Act and will help local agencies prevent the misuse of government resources by extending its protections to activities related to government contractors, among other changes.

Local government agencies increasingly depend on private contractors to aid in delivering services to their communities. To ensure the Whistleblower Protection Act can fulfill its mission to prevent the waste of government resources, it is crucial to safeguard whistleblowers, not only when exposing misconduct within government operations, but also for the companies they enlist as contractors.

In 2002, the California legislature passed the Whistleblower Protection Act to protect employees who report unlawful activities. This legislation inspired local governments to implement whistleblower hotlines that provide a location to file reports that disclose fraudulent and wasteful activity, in hopes of saving taxpayers money and making government operations more efficient. AB 2455 modernizes the law by providing clarity to ensure that whistleblowers know their activity is protected not just when reporting improper governmental activities by phone, but also when submitting complaints via online portals or email.

Finally, the bill improves governmental efficiency by allowing the designees of county auditors, controllers, and auditor-controllers to review and investigate whistleblower complaints.

As counties increasingly rely on private contractors, AB 2455 would modernize the current whistleblower laws to help protect local resources and improve accountability for governments and their contractors alike.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2455 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at elawyer@counties.org.

The Honorable Anna Caballero

July 29, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ryan Eisberg, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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CEO

Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2469 (Committee on Emergency Management) Emergency Management Assistance Compact: California Wildfire Mitigation Financial Assistance Program As Amended June 27, 2024 – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, I write in support of AB 2469 (Committee on Emergency Management). This bill would extend the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) sunset by ten years.

The EMAC is a national interstate mutual aid agreement that enables states to share resources during times of disaster. Climate change and a multitude of other factors are having a monumental impact on states’ resources – including both inside and outside of California. Reliance on emergency aid resources outside of a state’s borders will only increase if current trends continue. The EMAC serves as an additional tool to assist local jurisdictions in case of an emergency.

CSAC supports legislative proposals that maximize California counties’ ability to effectively mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters. Emergency management and homeland security policies should be designed to permit maximum flexibility, so that services can best target individual community needs, hazards, threats, and capacities. As such, CSAC advocates for improved coordination between state and local offices of emergency services and state and local departments. AB 2469 accomplishes this by allowing the EMAC to operate until 2038.

Additionally, CSAC supports efforts around supplementing the state’s response to mitigating the risks of fire as the California Wildfire Mitigation Financial Assistance Program aims to do. Therefore, extending the program’s repeal date as the bill would require is imperative in achieving these goals. It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2469 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate

Cc: Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez



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Graham Knaus

July 25, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2485 (J. Carrillo) Regional housing need: determination.
As amended on July 3, 2024 – Support
Set for Hearing – August 5, 2024 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support AB 2485, which would establish procedures for the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), to publicize its data sources, analyses, and methodology before finalizing a region’s regional determination and would require HCD to establish and convene a panel of experts to advise the department on its assumptions, data, and analyses before making its final determination on a region.

Given the potential for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process to help alleviate the state’s housing crisis, accompanied by the sheer magnitude of needed housing compared to what has been built in the past, there is severe risk to the credibility of the process if it is insufficiently transparent, credible, and robust. An accountable system to address homelessness requires transparency. Improved data systems are important to improve effectiveness of countywide systems.

Regional agencies in California play an important role in the allocation of regional housing need numbers, programming of Federal and State transportation dollars, in addressing air quality non-attainment problems, and climate change to name a few. Regional collaboration remains important to address issues associated with growth in California, such as revenue equity issues, service responsibilities, a seamless and efficient transportation network, reducing GHGs and tackling climate change, job creation, housing, agricultural and resource protection, and open space designation.

If a local Housing Element is based on an inaccurate RHNA determination, that could directly translate to housing units that are unaccounted for and thus remain unbuilt. This is made even more critical given that RHNA accounts for future growth as well as current need. In a March 2022 letter to the Legislature, the California State Auditor found that two of the three COG regions it studied had received underassessed housing needs. Therefore, it is imperative that the determinations provided to each region, and the housing allocation provided to each jurisdiction, be as accurate as possible, while ensuring that the communities using these numbers are confident in that accuracy.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. AB 2485 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing and Transparency pillars.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support AB 2485. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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CEO

Graham Knaus

August 1, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2501 (Alvarez) Water quality control plans: donations and grants.
As Amended, May 16, 2024 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, I write in support of AB 2501 (Alvarez) which would authorize the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to accept funding from public agencies in the jurisdiction of the State Water Board and on behalf of a Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Specifically, AB 2501 authorizes the State Water Board, on behalf of itself or a Regional Water Quality Control Board to accept moneys from donations, grants, or contributions, or through contractual agreements, from public agencies. The bill provides common sense measures for accountability related to non-state funding. The bill also requires the State Water Board, before accepting any moneys pursuant to this bill, to provide notice of its intent to accept those moneys and provide a description of the associated public benefit of those moneys.

Counties spend significant amounts of money to advance public interest projects. Counties support the advancement of critical climate adaptation and restoration projects that are often funded together with project proponents, state agencies, and local philanthropic organizations. At times, the state may hold up a project due to state administrative challenges. This bill provides a common sense, optional approach to supporting public partners, to expedite critical projects— saving the state and local agencies money and time.

AB 2501 continues the work of counties to increase and expedite public benefit projects with careful consideration of accountability and transparency. For these reasons CSAC is proud to support AB 2501 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 662-6400 or cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate

Cc: Assemblymember David Alvarez
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee



July 24, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
 Senate Appropriations Committee
 1021 O Street, Suite 7620
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **AB 2557 (Ortega): Local agencies: contracts for special services and temporary help: performance reports**
As amended 7/3/24 – OPPOSE
Set for hearing 8/05/24 – Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the League of California Cities (CalCities), the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), the Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD), the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD), the California Association of

Sanitation Agencies (CASA), the County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), the County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA), the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the California School Boards Association (CSBA), the Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (MVCAC), the California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA), the Coalition for Adequate School Housing (CASH), the California Association of Joint Powers Authorities (CAJPA), the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), the American Institute of Architects (AIA), California Building Officials (CALBO), Transportation California, the Southern California Contractors Association (SCCA), the American Public Works Association (APWA), the California Geotechnical Engineering Association (CalGeo), California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs), the Fire Districts Association of California (FDAC), Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and Management (PRISM), the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED), the California and Nevada Civil Engineers and Land Surveyors (CELSA), National Society of Professional Engineers - California (NSPE-CA), California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH), California County Superintendents, Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), the California Association of County Veterans Services Officers (CACVSO), the Emergency Medical Services Administrators' Association of California (EMSAAC), the County Records' Association of California (CRAC), the California State Sheriffs' Association (CSSA), the American Society of Civil Engineers-Region 9, the California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO), the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), the County of Los Angeles, the County of Santa Clara, the City of Santa Rosa, and the Child Support Directors Association (CSDA), we write to inform you of our opposition to Assembly Bill 2557, Assembly Member Liz Ortega's measure relating to contracting by local agencies. Even after considerable amendments from the sponsors, AB 2557 remains overly burdensome, exceptionally costly, and inappropriately inflexible, likely resulting in worse outcomes for vulnerable communities and diminished local services for our residents and students.

Broad application has costly implications. There are more than 4800 local agencies in the state, most of which rely – at least in part – on contractors to provide a variety of local programs and services that, given our current public sector workforce shortages, would be difficult to provide without their capable assistance. Make no mistake: the provisions of AB 2557 will be costly to implement. At a time when the state and local agencies are facing significant fiscal challenges, it is difficult to fathom that the extensive reporting, posting, and contracting requirements of the bill are worth the investment of scarce public resources. With the proposed requirements of AB 2557 for local agencies with represented workforces and for their contractors, we anticipate (1) fewer non-profit providers, community-based organizations, and other private service providers willing to engage with local agencies, (2) exacerbated already-demanding caseloads and workloads for our existing staff, and (3) increased costs for local agencies.

Given the extensive application of the measure, we easily anticipate costs associated with this measure to reach the several millions of dollars statewide, which includes Proposition 98 funds, resulting from the initial implementation of the bill and on-going mandates. AB 2557 continues to apply broadly to a wide range of local services, including, but not limited to, jail health care, forest and wildfire prevention and management, public works surveyors, family reunification services, 9-1-1 dispatching, permitting, engineering, outside counsel, accounting, payroll, IT/Cybersecurity, RFP consulting services, real estate consulting, scientific monitoring and research, special education assistants, school nurses, and data collection, among others.

Proposed requirements are burdensome, duplicative, and impractical. AB 2557 requires reporting by contractors to be included in the contractual agreement. This means that contractors will continue to have to provide considerable information that may not be directly applicable to the work that they are contracted to do or may be duplicative of other mandated reporting requirements associated with their work. Amendments to AB 2557 remove a prior exemption for contracts between governmental entities, creating ambiguity that the bill could be interpreted to apply to government-to-government contracts, and consequently, requiring local agencies to spend time and resources addressing challenges.

While internet posting is already occurring for most contracts per statutory requirements to post meeting materials under the Ralph M. Brown Act, AB 2557 would now require that contracts and any related documents be posted separately on local agencies' internet websites. This is an expensive endeavor that would require considerable investment in IT infrastructure and staff for local agencies, a cost that may potentially be subject to an SB 90 mandate claim or included in the school block grant mandate reimbursement. Further, to the extent that such documents include sensitive, private information about contractors, their employees, and the clients they serve, we remain concerned about the potential for wrongdoing by making these materials broadly available online.

The measure also fails to recognize that some special districts are not required to have websites pursuant to Senate Bill 929 (McGuire, 2018).

Unclear terminology creates confusion, invites disputes. We remain concerned that the timeframes provided are impractical; as we have previously communicated, local agencies often are unaware of the need for a procurement process in a consistent timeframe. While the bill includes the requirement for a "reasonable" notification to the employee representative, we are unclear as to what exactly this requirement means. Arguably, parties naturally at odds on the general issue of contracting will disagree as to what is "reasonable," making this requirement at best a subject of a dispute, and at worst, an infeasible obligation. Further, the emergency exemption provided in the bill appears to only apply to portions of the notice provisions and is defined narrowly. Please consider that local agencies are first responders to any public emergency, including very real-world examples of a natural disaster, a global pandemic, and an unanticipated need to care for those crossing our southern border seeking asylum; in addition, local agencies respond to road hazards, infrastructure failures, and other emergent issues that may not meet the standard in the bill. Local agencies must have flexible, accessible means for contracting with a clear understanding by all parties of what is required prior to doing so in order to protect lives and property.

Further, AB 2557 includes provisions that are sufficiently vague and introduce confusion into a process that is generally well-understood and executed by practitioners. For example, the language is unclear about what is meant by "beginning a procurement process." It is also unclear how the bill applies to sole-source contracts, contracts under the threshold for a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, or contracts for on-call services. Amendments for noticing requirements would also expand the bill's application to "functions, duties, responsibilities, or services" that are currently performed, or were in the previous five years performed, by represented employees. This expansion will also create ambiguity with the bill's provisions applicable to website posting and contractual requirements, both of which apply to "functions" performed by represented employees. Sections 4 and 5 of the bill apply to apply to cities, special districts, school districts, and other non-county agencies, but require contractors and subcontractors to "maintain records related to performance of the contract that ordinarily would be maintained by the **county** in performing the same functions."

Public agencies are already subject to statutory limitations on contracting. It is important to note that local agencies are already subject to the statutory provisions of the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act (MMBA), the Educational Employment Relations Act, and related provisions of state law. These laws establish that local agencies cannot contract out work currently being performed by bargaining unit employees simply to save money and most contracting-out decisions are already subject to meet-and-confer requirements. There are exceptions to the meet-and-confer requirement in cases of compelling necessity (like an emergency) or when there is an established past practice of contracting out particular work.

In addition, recent amendments would dramatically expand local agencies' notice provisions. Under existing MMBA requirements, local agencies notify bargaining units of the intent to contract out for items within the scope of representation. The bill would expand those requirements for every covered contract

even when it is clearly not in the scope of representation, increasing staff workload and lengthening the amount of time it takes to enter into a contract. More broadly, any of the requirements of this bill, if desirable to local agency employees and their representatives, can be negotiated at the bargaining table. Our position is that all of these issues are better addressed at the bargaining table where local conditions can be appropriately considered.

Finally, AB 2557 has already been amended **seven** times throughout the legislative process. For example, as recently as July 3, the bill was amended to create a new exception for small contracts of less than \$100,000 for services for “a function or activity for which the employer has not had a classification within the last five years prior to the initiation of the contract whose duties include the function or activity.” This exception appears to largely restate the types of contracts already excluded from the bill, and adds ambiguity by relying on “classifications” while the bill’s triggering provisions do not. In no instance have the many amendments to the bill addressed the overarching significant concerns of the local agencies responsible for implementing the bill, nor have they addressed any of the considerable challenges faced by local agencies in attracting and retaining a robust public sector workforce. Further, these additional burdens continue to undermine a collaborative and productive working relationship with private sector and non-profit partners, who local agencies regard as essential to meeting our statutory obligations and effectively serving our respective communities.

AB 2557 represents a sweeping change to the fundamental work of local governments, but we remain unaware of a specific, current problem that this measure would resolve or prevent. We are keenly aware, though, of the very real harm that could result from this measure. AB 2557 will not improve services, reduce costs, or protect employees. As a result, we are opposed to AB 2557. Should you have any questions about our position, please reach out directly.

Sincerely,



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
Urban Counties of California



Aaron Avery
Director of State Legislative Affairs
California Special Districts Association



Alyssa Silhi
Legislative Advocate
California Association of Recreation and Park
Districts




Johnnie Pina
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities



Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez
Chief Policy Officer
California State Association of Counties



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California



Sarah Bridge
Legislative Advocate
Association of California Healthcare Districts



Jessica Gauger
Director of Legislative Advocacy & Public Affairs
California Association of Sanitation Agencies



Joe Saenz
Deputy Director of Policy
County Health Executives Association of California



Amer W. Rashid
Legislative Advocate
County Behavioral Health Directors Association



Eileen Cubanski
Executive Director
California Welfare Directors Association



Dorothy Johnson
Legislative Advocate
Association of California School Administrators



Chris Reefer
Legislative Director
California School Boards Association



Conlin Reis
President
Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California



Danielle Blacet-Hyden
Deputy Executive Director
California Municipal Utility Association



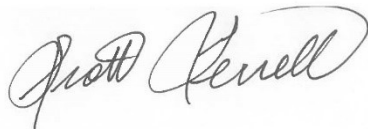
Ian Padilla
Legislative Director
Coalition for Adequate School Housing



Faith Borges
Legislative Representative
California Association of Joint Powers Authorities



Tyler Munzig
Director of Government Affairs
American Council of Engineering Companies Ca



Scott Terrell
Director of Government Relations
American Institute of Architects, California



Andrew Mendoza
Director of Public Affairs
California Building Officials



Mark Watts
Legislative Advocate
Transportation California



Todd A. Bloomstine
Legislative Advocate
Southern California Contractors Association



Joubin Pakpour, P.E.
Director
APWA Region VIII



Michael Cazeneuve, P.E., CEG
President
CalGeo



Julee Malinowski Ball
Legislative Advocate
California Fire Chiefs Association
Fire Districts Association of California



Gurbax Sahota, ACE
President & CEO
California Association for Local Economic
Development



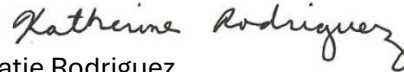
Jason Schmelzer
Legislative Advocate
Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and
Management



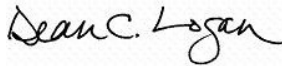
Cory M. Salzillo
Legislative Director
California State Sheriffs' Association



Eric Angstadt
Executive Secretary
California and Nevada Civil Engineers and Land
Surveyors



Katie Rodriguez
Senior Director of Policy
California Association of Public Hospitals and
Health Systems



Dean Logan
President, County Recordors Association of
California
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, Los Angeles
County



David O. West II
President
California Association of County Veterans Service
Officers



Kristopher M. Anderson, Esq.
Senior State Relations Advocate
Association of California Water Agencies



Michael Ozatalar, P.E.
President
NSPE-California



Gayle Garbolino-Mojica
President
California County Superintendents



John Poland, Paramedic
EMSAAC Legislative Chair
Regional Executive Director, Sierra – Sacramento
Valley EMS Agency



Yazdan Emrani
Director
American Society of Civil Engineers - Region 9



James Corless
Executive Director
Sacramento Area Council of Governments



Mishaal Gill
Director of Policy and Advocacy
California Association of School Business Officials



Marcus Mitchell
Interim Director
Child Support Directors Association



Marvin Deon
Chief Legislative Representative
County of Los Angeles



David Campos
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
County of Santa Clara



Natalie Rogers
Mayor
City of Santa Rosa

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Liz Ortega, California State Assembly
The Honorable Mike McGuire, Senate President pro Tempore
Mary Hernandez, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Cesar Diaz, Consultant, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Misa Lennox, Consultant, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire



July 2, 2024

The Honorable David Alvarez
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5320
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2560 (Alvarez) Density Bonus Law: California Coastal Act of 1976.
Notice of OPPOSITION *(As Amended July 1, 2024)*

Dear Assemblymember Alvarez,

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully submit our **oppose position on AB 2560 (Alvarez)**, as amended on July 1, 2024. The committee amendments at the June 24, 2024 Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee (SNRW) present a significant shift in housing oversight and state authority and are extremely problematic for local governments. While we recognize the amendments were not author amendments and were provided by the committee, our organizations – representing all 61 coastal cities and 18 coastal counties – now strongly oppose the bill. As amended, the bill will make it extremely challenging to develop affordable housing on the coast – counter to the author's clear intention of the bill.

As introduced, AB 2560 would clarify that Density Bonus Law applies to developments within the coastal zone, as defined by the California Coastal Act. Density Bonus Law requires local governments to provide bonuses, concessions, waivers, reductions, or incentives to affordable housing projects if there is a minimum number of affordable units proposed in the project. Our organizations were neutral on the original bill where Density Bonus Law would apply on the coast; however, with the committee amendments the following will present an extremely challenging reality that will mire local governments in planning approvals, preventing the actual development of affordable housing in the coastal zone:

1) Two different state regulators will take the helm enforcing housing policies for coastal communities.

Local governments are required to develop housing elements and seek compliance with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). In the coastal zone, local coastal programs (LCPs) are required to include specific and limited land use and zoning information, and cities and counties must gain certification from the California Coastal Commission (Commission) under the California Coastal Act (Act). The CCC was stripped of its housing authority just five years after the Act was codified in statute. As amended, the bill would reinstate housing authority for the Commission and thrust two very different state regulatory agencies – HCD and the Commission – would

be in a position to require specific housing policy and program information and outcomes of cities and counties, independent of one another. This would open the floodgates for duplicative planning efforts, dueling regulatory oversight, doubling down on locals with housing requirements, and most importantly – stalling the actual development of affordable housing in the coastal zone. This change is fraught with potential litigation and without any statutory direction, opens the door for the Commission to demand significantly more housing policy and program information in local-developed LCPs, further hamstringing local governments to meet their housing goals.

2) A more stringent standard than existing law will be needed to implement Density Bonus Law in the coast.

After a recent court decision¹, the California Legislature codified into statute² that coastal protection requirements under the Act be harmonized with Density Bonus Law. This was intended to support local governments in achieving their goals of increasing affordable housing in the coastal zone while also protecting coastal resources and coastal access. While 'harmonization' is currently undefined in law, as amended, AB 2560 would now impose a new standard of needing to provide that Density Bonus Law is implemented in a way that does not result in significant adverse impacts to coastal resources. This sets a different standard than codified and defended in the courts. This would also allow the Commission to enforce that to that standard. With the exemptions already included subdivision (m) of the bill, significant adverse impacts would not be anticipated to the coastal resources and environmentally sensitive areas in the coast. This would only allow for the Commission to require greater justification and analysis in the LCP when applying Density Bonus Law and would include a more stringent review of coastal development permits for projects using Density Bonus Law. This will make it harder for cities and counties to use Density Bonus Law to meet their currently mandated housing goals in the coast.

3) Unfunded and mandated LCP amendments and certification will delay affordable coastal housing development.

By requiring all 61 cities and 18 counties to update their LCPs by July 1, 2026 is an unfunded mandate that will inundate the Commission and delay the certification of LCPs to move forward with affordable housing projects that incorporate Density Bonus Law. LCP amendments are costly and time-consuming. Each amendment can range anywhere from several hundred thousand dollars to over a million dollars of local government staff time, local resources, and support. Local governments can and have already incorporated Density Bonus Law into their LCPs, without any change to existing law; therefore, mandating that all local governments do so will only add time delays and financial burdens on local governments without actually increasing affordable housing.

¹ Kalnel Gardens, LLC v. City of Los Angeles, (2016) 3 Cal.App.5th 927

² Assembly Bill 2797 (Chapter 904, Statutes of 2018)

For these reasons, Cal Cities and CSAC **oppose AB 2560** (Alvarez). If you have any questions, please contact Cal Cities Legislative Affairs Lobbyist Melissa Sparks-Kranz at msparkskranz@calcities.org or CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate Catherine Freeman at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,



Melissa Sparks-Kranz
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities



Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



July 19, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2560 (Alvarez) Density Bonus Law: California Coastal Act of 1976.
Notice of OPPOSITION *(As Amended July 1, 2024)*

Dear Senator Caballero,

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully submit our **oppose position on AB 2560 (Alvarez)**, as amended on July 1, 2024. The committee amendments at the June 24, 2024 Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee (SNRW) present a significant shift in housing oversight and state authority and are extremely problematic for local governments. While we recognize the amendments were not author amendments and were provided by the committee, our organizations – representing all 61 coastal cities and 18 coastal counties – now strongly oppose the bill. As amended, the bill will make it extremely challenging to develop affordable housing on the coast – counter to the author's clear intention of the bill.

As introduced, AB 2560 would clarify that Density Bonus Law applies to developments within the coastal zone, as defined by the California Coastal Act. Density Bonus Law requires local governments to provide bonuses, concessions, waivers, reductions, or incentives to affordable housing projects if there is a minimum number of affordable units proposed in the project. Our organizations were neutral on the original bill where Density Bonus Law would apply on the coast; however, with the committee amendments the following will present an extremely challenging reality that will mire local governments in planning approvals, preventing the actual development of affordable housing in the coastal zone:

1) Two different state regulators will take the helm enforcing housing policies for coastal communities.

Local governments are required to develop housing elements and seek compliance with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). In the coastal zone, local coastal programs (LCPs) are required to include specific and limited land use and zoning information, and cities and counties must gain certification from the California Coastal Commission (Commission) under the California Coastal Act (Act). The CCC was stripped of its housing authority just five years after the Act was codified in statute. As amended, the bill would reinstate housing authority for the Commission and thrust two very different state regulatory agencies – HCD and the Commission – would

be in a position to require specific housing policy and program information and outcomes of cities and counties, independent of one another. This would open the floodgates for duplicative planning efforts, dueling regulatory oversight, doubling down on locals with housing requirements, and most importantly – stalling the actual development of affordable housing in the coastal zone. This change is fraught with potential litigation and without any statutory direction, opens the door for the Commission to demand significantly more housing policy and program information in local-developed LCPs, further hamstringing local governments to meet their housing goals.

2) A more stringent standard than existing law will be needed to implement Density Bonus Law in the coast.

After a recent court decision¹, the California Legislature codified into statute² that coastal protection requirements under the Act be harmonized with Density Bonus Law. This was intended to support local governments in achieving their goals of increasing affordable housing in the coastal zone while also protecting coastal resources and coastal access. While 'harmonization' is currently undefined in law, as amended, AB 2560 would now impose a new standard of needing to provide that Density Bonus Law is implemented in a way that does not result in significant adverse impacts to coastal resources. This sets a different standard than codified and defended in the courts. This would also allow the Commission to enforce that to that standard. With the exemptions already included subdivision (m) of the bill, significant adverse impacts would not be anticipated to the coastal resources and environmentally sensitive areas in the coast. This would only allow for the Commission to require greater justification and analysis in the LCP when applying Density Bonus Law and would include a more stringent review of coastal development permits for projects using Density Bonus Law. This will make it harder for cities and counties to use Density Bonus Law to meet their currently mandated housing goals in the coast.

3) Unfunded and mandated LCP amendments and certification will delay affordable coastal housing development.

By requiring all 61 cities and 18 counties to update their LCPs by July 1, 2026 is an unfunded mandate that will inundate the Commission and delay the certification of LCPs to move forward with affordable housing projects that incorporate Density Bonus Law. LCP amendments are costly and time-consuming. Each amendment can range anywhere from several hundred thousand dollars to over a million dollars of local government staff time, local resources, and support. Local governments can and have already incorporated Density Bonus Law into their LCPs, without any change to existing law; therefore, mandating that all local governments do so will only add time delays and financial burdens on local governments without actually increasing affordable housing.

¹ Kalnel Gardens, LLC v. City of Los Angeles, (2016) 3 Cal.App.5th 927

² Assembly Bill 2797 (Chapter 904, Statutes of 2018)

For these reasons, Cal Cities and CSAC **oppose AB 2560** (Alvarez). If you have any questions, please contact Cal Cities Legislative Affairs Lobbyist Melissa Sparks-Kranz at msparkskranz@calcities.org or CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate Catherine Freeman at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,



Melissa Sparks-Kranz
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities



Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable David Alvarez
Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kerry Yoshida, Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



July 25, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2561 (McKinnor) Local public employees: vacant positions. – OPPOSE
As Amended July 3, 2024
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California Transit Association (CTA), County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA), County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA), California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), California Association of Recreation and Parks Districts (CARPD), Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and Management (PRISM), Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD), Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH), California State Sheriffs' Association (CSSA), and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities) respectfully oppose Assembly Bill (AB) 2561. This measure requires local agencies with vacancy rates exceeding 15% for permanent full-time positions for more than 180 days (approximately 6 months) within a bargaining unit to, at the request of the bargaining unit, meet with the bargaining unit within 21 days and hold a public hearing within 90 days to discuss, among other specified items, the public agency's strategy to fill the vacancies.

The undersigned organizations recognize the recent amendments to AB 2561 seeking to address some of the concerns communicated to the author's office. We respect and appreciate the time and effort on the part of the author's office to work with local public agencies on this critical issue. Regrettably, the recent amendments do not reflect a workable path forward in the best interests of local public servants. Local agencies agree with the author that the status quo is not sustainable. However, in its current form, the measure does not address the root causes of low labor force participation rates in California across all sectors. Instead, the measure will create additional layers of bureaucracy that detract from meaningful efforts to recruit and retain the public sector workforce.

Labor Force Participation Rates and Barriers to Work

Vacancies are unavoidable for both the public and private sectors. A nonexistent vacancy rate for any duration of time is an unreasonable expectation in our modern labor market, particularly for public agencies that lack the financial resources to encourage recruitment and remote work flexibility enjoyed by many employers in the private sector. Public agencies have been frustrated by persistent high vacancy rates in certain fields despite prolific efforts to bolster the public sector workforce. It is an unfortunate reality that many of the contributing factors that affect public sector hiring are forces of the market that are outside of our immediate control. California's growing workforce needs are constrained by the labor supply.

California's labor force participation rate is at a historic low—62%. Labor force participation—which includes both employed workers and those who are unemployed but looking for work—remains below pre-pandemic levels both statewide and across many of California's diverse regions and populations.¹ However, economic factors have been found to not be the root cause of low labor force participation. In the past year, California's unemployment rate has remained steady between 4.5% and 5.5%, a range that is considered to be a healthy marker for the labor market.² If the labor force participation rate is low and the unemployment rate is not high, there is an undeniable labor shortage that cannot be addressed with more local public hearings and taxing the time of existing human resources staff.

Regrettably, AB 2561 does nothing to address the factors that are suppressing the labor force participation rate. California needs legislation and large-scale, statewide investments that reduce barriers to work. California's aging population is shrinking the workforce and is expected to continue to shrink the workforce in the coming years. Presently, the lack of affordable education, childcare, and housing are all barriers to work that remain unaddressed.

Recent Budget Cuts Exacerbate the Problem

The following 2024 Budget Act reductions withdraw critical resources needed to address California's growing workforce needs:

- **\$746 million reduction** over five years to a variety of healthcare workforce programs, a sector that is in dire need of support and intervention to increase the labor pool.
- **\$110 million reduction** to Middle Class Scholarship Program grants.
- **\$150 million reduction** to the California Jobs First initiative, which would have supported resilient, equitable, and sustainable regional economies.
- **\$40 million reduction** for the Apprenticeship Innovation Fund.
- **\$10 million reduction** for the Emergency Medical Technician training program.
- Temporary **suspension of the “cost of doing business”** increases for county Medi-Cal eligibility administration. Suspending support for the county workforce that provides essential services to California's most vulnerable populations will certainly worsen staffing challenges.

Most notably, AB 2561 omits the state from its requirements. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the vacancy rate for the State of California has consistently been above 10% for at least the past 20 years. As of February 2024, the vacancy rate for California state jobs is about 20%.³

¹ [Public Policy Institute of California: Labor Force Participation in California \(February 2024\)](#)

² [California Employment Development Department \(June 2024\)](#)

³ <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4888>

Local Public Agencies Are Addressing Labor Shortages Directly Every Day

Local government decision makers and public agency department heads recognize the impact that long-term vacancy rates have, both on current employees and those who receive services from those departments. Many specialty positions like nurses, licensed behavioral health professionals, social workers, probation officers, police, teachers, and planners are experiencing nationwide workforce shortages and a dwindling pipeline for new entrants, driven by both an expansion of services and an aging workforce. To further complicate recruitment, local governments are competing with both the private sector and other government agencies. While local governments have been implementing innovative ways to try to boost recruitment and retention (e.g., sign-on bonuses, housing stipends, etc.), they inevitably lack the financial resources and flexibility enjoyed by private sector employers.

In spite of these efforts, vacancies persist; driven by several distinct circumstances outside of the labor market. In conjunction with delivering on the policies and priorities set by the state during the pandemic, counties specifically, have been burdened with several simultaneous overhauls of county service delivery, as mandated by the state. There is no doubt a correlation between the county programs dealing with the largest realignments of service delivery and structural overhaul as mandated in State law and those departments with the highest vacancy rates. Employees have experienced burn-out, harassment from the public, and a seemingly endless series of demands to transform systems of care or service delivery while simultaneously providing consistent and effective services, without adequate state support to meet state law. Obviously, it is difficult to retain staff in those conditions.

If the true intent of AB 2561 is to provide a path for public agencies to reduce staff vacancies, diverting staff away from core service delivery and mandating they spend time preparing for additional meet and confer requirements and public hearings on their vacancy rates will not achieve that goal. Adding another unfunded mandate on public agencies will not solve the problem this bill has identified. It is just as likely to create even more burn-out from employees tasked with producing the very report the bill mandates.

It is important to note that the new meet and confer requirements are not merely procedural in nature to facilitate conversations on vacancy rates. The requirements could result in demands to reopen MOUs, and might even lead to arguments that this bill voids bargained-for no strike and “entire agreement” (i.e., “zipper”) clauses in existing MOUs, thereby exposing local agencies to impasse procedures, fact finding, and strikes during the MOU term. Certainly, there will be additional time and cost pressures for local agencies related to this requirement, potentially leading to adjudication before the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB).

We Are Committed to Partnership to Identify Better Solutions

Local agencies are committed to continuing the work happening now between all levels of government and the workforce to expand pipeline programs, build pathways into public sector jobs, modernize the hiring process, and offer competitive compensation. We cannot close the workforce shortages overnight; it will take investment from educational institutions, all levels of government, and the private sector to meet the workforce demands across the country. We must use our limited human resources staff to hire employees rather than diverting resources to prepare for unnecessary public hearings that will tell us what we already know.

We welcome partnering on workforce strategies and believe there is a more productive and economical pathway than AB 2561. For those reasons, CSAC, UCC, CSDA, RCRC, CTA, CHEAC,

The Honorable Anna Caballero
AB 2561 (McKinnor)
Page 4 of 5

CMUA, CBHDA, CWDA, PRISM, CARPD, ACHD, CPOC, CAPH, CSSA and CalCities respectfully oppose AB 2561. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez
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California State Association of Counties
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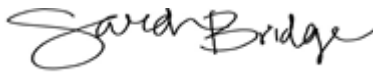
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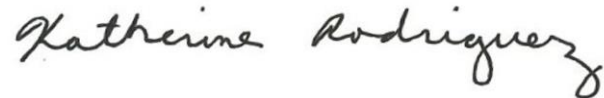
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cc: The Honorable Tina McKinnor, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Robert Ingenito, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus
Malik Gover, Legislative Aide, Assembly Member McKinnor's Office



July 22, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2564 (Boerner) Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Fund.
Notice of SUPPORT (02/14/2024)

Dear Chair Caballero,

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) are pleased to **support** AB 2564 by Assembly Member Boerner, which would reinstate General Fund support for the Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Program (PTP), by requiring an annual transfer of General Fund moneys when the balance of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Fund (Fund) is less than \$15 million.

Existing law establishes the PTP Program within the State Controller's Office (SCO), which allows homeowners who are seniors or have a disability (who meet specified criteria) to defer current-year property taxes on their principal residence. This deferred payment is secured by a lien against the property that is later repaid when the property is sold or refinanced, and the property taxes are paid by the SCO.

Due to numerous reasons, the PTP Program is in jeopardy of being unable to fund all eligible applicants. AB 2564 remedies this problem by providing ongoing General Fund support to the Fund by ensuring the Fund's balance is never below \$15 million at the start of the fiscal year. While we acknowledge there is a significant budget problem, AB 2564 would have negligible impacts on future budgets. AB 2564 is an incremental yet meaningful investment in preventing losses in homeownership among our most vulnerable residents. For these reasons, Cal Cities and CSAC supports AB 2564. If you have any questions, please contact us at btriffo@calcities.org or elawyer@counties.org.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Triffo".

Ben Triffo
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Lawyer".

Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Cc: The Honorable Tasha Boerner
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Chantele Denny, Member, Republican Caucus



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August 2, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2660 (Committee on Emergency Management) Office of Emergency Services:
federal grant funding.
As Amended June 18, 2024 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, I write in support of AB 2660 (Committee on Emergency Management), which would require the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to allocate the maximum local share of specified federal grant funding to local operational areas and allowing for 3% of funds received to be retained by Cal OES for administrative purposes.

Counties typically serve as the lead agency of an operational area during a disaster. As such, CSAC supports legislative proposals that maximize California counties’ ability to effectively prepare for and respond to natural and man-made disasters and public health emergencies. This includes supporting full funding for on-going emergency preparedness and all hazard planning at the state and local level.

AB 2660 bolsters the capability of counties to respond to emergencies. The proposed measure maximizes the local share of grant programs that aim at sustaining core capabilities focused on prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery mission areas, including the evolving threats and risks associated with climate change.

It is for these reasons CSAC is proud to support AB 2660 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 662-6400 or cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate

Cc: Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee



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August 2, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2704 (Zbur): In-home supportive services: criminal background checks.
As Amended April 25, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 2704 by Assembly Member Rick Chavez Zbur. This measure prohibits the Department of Justice (DOJ) from assessing a fee on an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) provider, applicant to become a provider, or a county for the purposes of conducting an investigation or criminal background check of an IHSS provider or applicant.

California’s population of older adults aged 65 and older is projected to reach 25 percent of the population, or 8.6 million Californians, by 2030. IHSS is an essential program in meeting the goals of the Master Plan for Aging to enable this growing population to age with dignity and independence, as well as assisting adults with disabilities. Currently, about 680,000 IHSS providers deliver services to over 775,000 recipients in the state.

In order to become an IHSS provider, applicants must submit fingerprint images to the DOJ for a criminal background check. The DOJ currently sets this fee at \$32, which is in addition to third-party vendor costs to perform fingerprinting. This cost creates a financial barrier for those seeking to become IHSS providers, many of which are low-income.

AB 2704 waives the DOJ criminal background check fee for IHSS providers without shifting the financial burden to counties. This measure reduces the financial barrier of becoming an IHSS provider and will aid efforts to recruit and retain the state’s caregiving workforce. As the number of Californian’s receiving services through the IHSS program is expected to continue to grow, it is critical to ensure California has a qualified and prepared workforce to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2704. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Rick Chavez Zbur, California State Assembly
Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



SENATE FLOOR LETTER

July 25, 2024

To: Members, California State Senate

From: Jean Kinney Hurst, UCC
Sarah Dukett, RCRC
Eric Lawyer, CSAC

Re: **AB 2715 (Boerner): Ralph M. Brown Act: closed sessions
As amended 4/24/24 - SUPPORT**

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), we respectfully urge your “aye” vote on Assembly Bill 2715, Assembly Member Tasha Boerner’s measure that would authorize local agency governing bodies to convene a closed session to consider or evaluate matters related to cybersecurity.

Local agencies are subject to a wide range of cybersecurity risks, from elections and patient data to critical infrastructure and emergency communications. The extensive range of risks and the increasing sophistication of cyber-criminals makes us exceptionally vulnerable to a security breach. Existing law is unclear about whether current exemptions can be used to hold a closed session discussion about a local agency’s cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities when a cyber-attack is not imminent or underway. Therefore, local agencies do not currently have a method of privately discussing their cybersecurity, which increases local agencies’ vulnerability to such attacks.

Our obligations to sustain reliable and effective services that protect the health and safety of the public are paramount. Allowing discussion of cybersecurity in closed session helps facilitate discussion of effective and safe mechanisms to ensure the safety of public information and infrastructure. As exists for current closed session items, any decision that results from such a closed session must be disclosed in an open session, ensuring the public is aware of the decision that has been made.

AB 2715 represents an important modernization of the Brown Act and, as such, we are supportive of the measure and respectfully request your “aye” vote.

cc: The Honorable Tasha Boerner, California State Assembly



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together



LEAGUE OF
**CALIFORNIA
CITIES**



June 27, 2024

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing
1021 O Street, Room 3330
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2729 (Patterson) – Oppose [As Amended June 5, 2024 and proposed to be amended]

Dear Senator Skinner:

California Special Districts Association (CSDA), representing nearly 1,000 independent special districts throughout the state, California Fire Chiefs Association (CFCA – CalChiefs), Fire Districts Association of California (FDAC), and California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD), California State Association of Counties, and League of California Cities respectfully oppose Assembly Bill 2729 as amended June 5th and proposed to be amended in Senate Local Government Committee, respectfully oppose **Assembly Bill 2729 (Patterson)**.

Development impact fees are those fees authorized by the Mitigation Fee Act that are assessed to mitigate the impact of development and help fund the infrastructure needed to provide essential services to growing communities. These fees are used to help local agencies purchase real property (such as land for parks, open space, fire stations, or other uses). Fees may also be spent on related facilities and equipment. This could include a fire station and equipment, or a community park and recreation facility with playgrounds and athletic fields.

AB 2729 would, as in print today, among other things,

- Generally, require that development impact fees be locked-in at a point in the process that could be far from completion of the development,
- Generally, prohibits collection of fees until the issuance of a certificate of occupancy,
- Prohibits charging interest on those deferred fees, and
- Otherwise puts a “shot-clock” on local communities’ efforts to develop infrastructure should the fees be paid sooner, under certain conditions.

These features risk delaying or denying vital community improvements.

- Reduces the flexibility for communities to work with, and partner with, development proponents to build the thriving and equitable communities that the residents deserve.
- Reduces the ability to right-size the timeline of delivery of payments and the associated improvements putting private developers in the driver's seat when determining the outlay and timing for infrastructure, facilities and other equipment to serve the community.
- Shifts risks from the private sector to local communities ill-suited to absorb such risk.
- Creates one-size-fits-all approach for all communities and projects contemplated in this measure.

For these reasons we oppose **AB 2729**.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns at anthonyt@csda.net

Sincerely,



Anthony Tannehill, Legislative Representative
California Special Districts Association



Brady Guertin, Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities



Julie Malinowski-Ball, Legislative Advocate
California Fire Chiefs Association
Fire Districts Association of California



Mark Neuburger, Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Alyssa Silhi, Legislative Representative
California Association of Recreation and Parks Districts

CC: The Honorable Joe Patterson
 Members, Senate Committee on Housing
 Hank Brady, Principal Consultant, Senate Committee on Housing
 Kerry Yoshida, Consultant, Republican Caucus
 Brody Borcharding, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



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July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2736 (Carrillo, J) - Veterans: benefits.
As Introduced February 15, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties of California, I write in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 2736 by Assemblymember Juan Carrillo. This measure would improve access to higher education for family members of disabled veterans by allowing them to receive additional educational benefits at the same time as federal educational benefits or duplicate assistance from any other government source.

Improving access to higher education for family members of disabled veterans by allowing them to receive the California College Fee Waiver at the same time as the federal Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) is important to ensuring the California College Fee Waiver can fulfill its mission as the cost of higher education and living expenses continue to increase.

California established the College Fee Waiver in 1935 to provide support for family members of disabled veterans who wanted to pursue higher education. Similarly, the DEA program was created by the federal government in 1956 and was meant to encourage veterans to attend college by providing monthly payments to veterans enrolled in higher education, career training certification programs, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training. In 1972, a bill was passed that prohibited the acceptance of both benefits at the same time under College Fee Waiver Plan A, one of the four plans under which dependents may be eligible, despite the right to both forms of aid.

Spouses and children of disabled veterans with a 100% service-connected disability rating meet the eligibility requirements for both programs due to the severity of the veterans’ injuries during their time of service. In acknowledgment of the valuable contributions and sacrifices made by veterans and their families, it is imperative to extend support to the spouses and children of disabled veterans. AB 2736 aims to rectify an outdated restriction that prevents beneficiaries covered under Plan A of the California College Fee Waiver from concurrently receiving monthly payments from the DEA program. By removing this prohibition, this bill seeks to improve accessibility to financial and educational assistance for these deserving individuals, thereby fostering greater opportunities for personal and professional advancement.

The Honorable Anna Caballero
July 29, 2024
Page 2 of 2

County Veteran Service Offices (CVSOs) frequently serve as the first point of contact in the community for veterans needing help in identifying federal, state, and local benefits accessible to them and their dependents. CVSOs assist with information regarding medical, pension, educational benefits, home loans, help with claims, advocacy, and more. CVSOs are critical to providing California's veterans with the support and assistance they need to be able to take advantage of programs like DEA.

The economic challenges posed by factors such as increasing living expenses, escalating tuition fees, and the profound impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly heightened financial vulnerabilities for veterans and their dependents. These circumstances have exacerbated the pressing need for individuals to receive multiple support programs for which they are already entitled. For veterans and their families, these economic pressures can be particularly burdensome considering the additional costs associated with disabilities and the unique circumstances they face stemming from their time of service. California recognizes the substantial benefits that higher education programs offer to veterans and their families. Therefore, there is a compelling imperative to eliminate barriers that impede access to both programs simultaneously.

AB 2736 offers individuals the opportunity to pursue higher education goals by removing outdated language in Section 896.1 of the Military and Veterans Code, the provision that prohibits spouses and children of disabled veterans with a one hundred percent service-connected disability rating to receive monthly payments concurrently from the DEA under Plan A of the California College Fee Waiver.

For these reasons, CSAC supports AB 2736 and respectfully requests your "AYE" vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Juan Carrillo, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Lenin Del Castillo, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Todd Moffitt, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2774 (Grayson): Childcare for Working Families Act.
As Amended June 24, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on August 5, 2024 – Senate Appropriations**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 2774 by Assembly Member Grayson. This measure would establish the Childcare for Working Families Task Force, convened by the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), with the purpose of establishing recommendations aimed at addressing challenges faced by working families in accessing childcare.

Counties have long supported efforts to help families obtain accessible and affordable childcare. Quality early care and education can have significant, positive lifelong impacts on a child, particularly during the critical early years of development. Effectively meeting the childcare needs of a community also promotes parental employment, family self-sufficiency, and overall economic development. While significant progress is being made through recent legislation and budget investments, access to affordable childcare remains challenging for many working and low-income families.

AB 2774 establishes a Childcare for Working Families Task force comprised of a comprehensive array of stakeholders and funded by nongovernmental sources to evaluate the various childcare programs throughout the state, analyze existing gaps and unmet needs, and set benchmarks to measure the state’s progress toward closing these gaps. The inclusion of a county representative on the Task Force allows for important local input, as counties support and administer various early childhood programs throughout the state.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2774. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Tim Grayson
Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



July 30, 2024

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The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2871 (Maienschein): Overdose fatality review teams.
As Amended April 24, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties of the state, I am writing in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 2871 by Assembly Member Brian Maienschein. This measure would allow counties to establish overdose fatality review teams to engage in system-wide team review when there is a drug fatality, promote information sharing between county agencies and local stakeholders and experts, and strengthen the integration of local prevention efforts.

California is facing an overdose epidemic, which has been exacerbated by the increased availability of fentanyl over the last decade. In 2022 alone, 7,385 Californians died as a result of an opioid overdose, with nearly 88 percent of those deaths related to fentanyl. Addressing this growing crisis requires a system-wide effort from local health departments, social services and public safety agencies, community-based groups, and other stakeholders with expertise. Although overdose fatality reviews can currently be conducted to a limited degree, the ability to share information about individuals is limited under existing law.

Existing death review teams authorized under current law, such as teams for children, domestic violence, and elder abuse, have yielded tremendous results and influenced system-wide policy changes. AB 2871 builds on these successful models and provides the specific statutory authorization needed to create overdose fatality review teams, which will allow for greater sharing of information needed to further identify issues and gaps in addressing the overdose fatality crisis. Importantly, recent amendments ensure privacy protections for the deceased and the deceased’s family remain in place.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2871. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 591-5308 or jonodera@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Brian Maienschein
Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



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July 25, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2934 (Ward) Residential developments: building standards: review.
As amended on May 16, 2024 – Support
Set for Hearing – August 5, 2024 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support AB 2934 (Ward), which requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to convene a working group to research and consider identifying and recommending amendments to state building standards to allow residential developments between three and 10 units to be built under the California Residential Code, and then will require HCD, no later than December 31, 2026, to provide a one-time report of its findings to the Legislature in the annual report.

With construction costs increasing due to interest rates, material costs and labor, in addition to building standards, counties believe that looking at different ways to promote a full range of housing in all communities will serve as an important resource to address the state's housing crisis. Counties support the streamlining of a variety of existing development and construction-related statutes and codes to reduce the complexity of planning, permitting, and constructing affordable housing.

Promoting a full range of housing will require cooperative effort from the beginning of the planning and approval process. AB 2934 will require HCD, if the working group identifies and recommends amendments to building standards in the report, to research, develop, and consider proposing for adoption by the California Building Standards Commission such standards for the next triennial update of the California Building Standards Code that occurs on or after January 1, 2026.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. AB 2934 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

CSAC supports reforms that facilitate the ability of counties to provide for the construction of affordable housing. For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support AB 2934. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 1, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 3023 (Papan): Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force: interagency funding strategy: state watershed restoration plans: forest resilience plans: grant program guidelines.
As Amended June 20, 2024—SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, I write to support AB 3023 (Papan) relative to state watershed and wildfire plans and grant guidelines. AB 3023 would move the state further toward aligning watershed restoration plans and initiatives with forest resilience actions to achieve greater integration and benefits at the local level. The bill would allow the state to align grant guidelines of climate change, forest, fire, and watershed restoration programs to promote greater program coordination and integrate planning and outcomes.

Counties are on the front lines of water and wildfire disasters. Over the past several years, counties have experienced the brunt of increasingly volatile weather events, drought and flood whiplash, and wind-driven wildfire events. Throughout these changing times, counties have partnered with the state to increase wildfire and community resilience, drought preparedness, and decrease risks to all communities. CSAC also serves as a member of the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, which is making progress integrating local, state, and federal actions.

However, counties are still challenged by legacy integration and coordination issues in our state agency silos. Grants and state assistance programs vary by agency, board, and department. Even if a county has a grant coordinator, the reality is that application processes and reporting requirements can be a significant burden and a deterrent to success. Progress has been made in several departments, including with the Department of Water Resources' groundwater grants, where simplification of the process and reporting resulted in good or better outcomes for policy. Streamlining across state agencies, boards and departments makes sense for everyone.

On behalf of CSAC, we support AB 3023 and its policy goals to align and streamline the grant process, for these reasons we respectfully request your AYE vote. Should you have any questions about our position, please don't hesitate to contact me at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: Assembly Member Diane Papan
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee



August 1, 2024

SENATE FLOOR ALERT
AB 3025 (Valencia): County employees' retirement: disallowed compensation:
benefit adjustments.
As Amended June 27, 2024 – OPPOSE

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and League of California Cities (Cal Cities), we regretfully urge you to vote no on Assembly Bill (AB) 3025, which would place a significant financial burden on member agencies of county retirement systems by requiring member agencies, including counties, cities, and special districts, to pay substantial penalties for decisions they did not make and over which they had no authority.

Following the passage of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA), county retirement systems took varying approaches to comply with the provisions of PEPRA regarding the types of compensation that may be included in retirement benefit calculations. On July 30, 2020, the California Supreme Court issued a decision in the case *Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Assn. v Alameda County Employees' Retirement Assn.*, otherwise known as the "Alameda decision," in which the Court upheld provisions of PEPRA related to disallowed forms of compensation for retirement calculations. Over the last four years, the impacted '37 Act systems have been working to comply with *Alameda* and recalculate retirement benefits for members who retired after January 1, 2013.

AB 3025 unfairly places the financial consequences of the Court's decision on counties and other agencies by requiring '37 Act system employers to pay a "penalty" equal to 20 percent of the current actuarial value of retiree benefits deemed unlawful. The penalty, which will result in affected agencies owing millions of unbudgeted dollars to retirees for what the Court found to be an illegal benefit, implies those agencies decided to misapply the law. In reality, they simply complied with the pension agreements established between employees, employers, and retirement systems.

For the reasons stated above, we urge you to vote no on AB 3025. The fiscal impact on affected agencies will place a significant strain on general fund dollars, resulting in reductions to critical programs including public safety, transportation, and behavioral health. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to reach out to Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Representative at elawyer@counties.org; Jean Kinney Hurst, UCC Legislative Advocate at jkh@hbeadvocacy.com; Aaron Avery, CSDA Director of State Legislative Affairs at aarona@csla.net; Sarah Dukett, RCRC Policy Advocate at sdukett@rcrcnet.org; and Johnnie Pina, Cal Cities Legislative Affairs Lobbyist at jpina@calcities.org.

cc: The Honorable Avelino Valencia, California State Assembly
Spencer Winkle, Floor Manager, Senate Republican Caucus
Jesse Herzer, Floor Manager, Senate Republican Caucus



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July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 3134 (Chen) – Property taxation: refunds.
As Amended June 18, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5, 2024**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in California, I write in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 3134 by Assemblymember Chen, which will benefit both government efficiency and taxpayers.

Property tax refunding typically refers to the process where property owners receive a refund or adjustment on their property taxes. Refunds could happen for various reasons, such as overpayment of property taxes, incorrect assessment of property value, or eligibility for property tax exemptions or credits.

Under existing law, counties can proactively contact a taxpayer eligible and issue them a property tax refund if the owed amount is below \$5,000. This measure would increase that cap and allow counties to initiate refunds under \$10,000 without the taxpayer filing a claim, leading to improved and expedited service for the public.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support AB 3134 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Phil Chen, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Robert Ingenito, Principal Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ryan Eisberg, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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July 26, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 3253 (Committee on Business and Professions) Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists: licensees.

**As amended on June 25, 2024 – Support with Suggested Amendments
Set for Hearing – August 5, 2024 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Caballero:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, has a support in concept position on AB 3253, which extends the authority for the Board of Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) to license and regulate professions established under the Professional Engineers Act, the Professional Land Surveyors’ Act, and the Geologist and Geophysicist Act, respectively, to January 1, 2029, and expands the Board’s authority to enforce against certain unlicensed activities.

Members of the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) Fall Policy Conference have expressed that their staff members are experiencing exceptionally long wait times for a decision by the Board to be licensed as a civil engineer, stating that applicants have to wait 8-12 months before being officially licensed by the state.

CSAC spoke with the Board to discuss these issues and we want to thank the Board for taking the time to explain the reason for the backlog and their priority to review applications on a quicker scale. With that said, the Board has indicated that the current process to license applications is still 6-7 months, and if the application has any issues, it could be easily extended to 12 months.

Counties are finding it difficult to hire and retain the skilled workers they need for infrastructure work in their communities due to budget constraints. Further, counties are already continuously challenged by the national labor shortage due to a limited supply of potential engineers.

CSAC also spoke with the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee and the Assembly Business and Professions Committee, who reiterated that the large influx of applications and limited staffing was most likely the issue for the problem. **We respectfully request that AB 3253 be amended to require the Board to develop a strategy and/or a working plan to reduce the timeline to process applications.**

CSAC is pleased to support SB 3253, and respectfully urges you to consider our suggested policy as the bill moves through the process. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 37 (Caballero): Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities Housing Stability Act.
As Amended January 22, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on August 15, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing in support of Senate Bill 37 by Senator Anna Caballero. This measure would, upon appropriation of the Legislature, establish the Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities Housing Stability Pilot Program. This pilot program would offer competitive grants in up to five geographic regions or counties to administer housing subsidies for older adults and adults with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

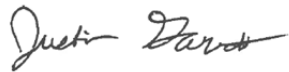
As California continues to grapple with the growing homelessness crisis, vulnerable populations such as older adults and adults with disabilities are disproportionately impacted. According to a recent report by the UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, the proportion of adults age 50 and older who are experiencing homelessness has risen faster than any other age group in the past few decades, and the proportion of people over the age of 65 experiencing homelessness is expected to triple between 2017 and 2030. These populations often live on fixed incomes that are insufficient to cover California’s skyrocketing housing costs and waitlists for housing vouchers can take years before a housing subsidy becomes available. SB 37 seeks to tackle this issue by establishing a grant program for housing authorities, continuums of care, area agencies on aging, and community-based organizations to provide targeted housing subsidies for older adults and adults with disabilities experiencing homelessness or most at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Recognizing the growing humanitarian crisis of homelessness across the state, CSAC released the AT HOME plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation & Economic Opportunity) last year. This plan outlines clear responsibilities and accountability aligned to authority, resources, and flexibility for all levels of government within a comprehensive homelessness response system. It includes a full slate of policy recommendations to help build more housing, prevent individuals from becoming homeless, and better serve those individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness. SB 37 aligns with the recommendations included in the Housing and Mitigation pillars of AT HOME.

While the state’s investments into homelessness programs in recent years has enabled the successful transition of many unhoused individuals into permanent housing, the inflow into

homelessness continues to outpace our collective efforts. SB 37 establishes a critical tool to not only house California's aging and dependent adult populations, but to also prevent new entrances into homelessness. It is for these reasons that CSAC supports SB 37. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Anna Caballero
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 440 (Skinner) – Regional Housing Finance Authorities
As Amended on June 30, 2023 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing – August 15, 2024 – Assembly Committee on Appropriations - Suspense**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 of the state's counties, writes in support of SB 440 by Senator Nancy Skinner, which would authorize two or more local governments to establish a regional housing authority for purposes of raising, administering, and allocating funding and provide technical assistance at a regional level for affordable housing development.

In addition, CSAC supports exempting all permanent supportive housing, shelters, and transitional housing that meet specified criteria from CEQA review. Specifically, this bill would exempt actions taken by a regional housing authority to raise, administer, or allocate funding for affordable housing preservation, new affordable housing production, or to provide technical assistance consistent with the authority's purpose from CEQA.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to effectively address homelessness at every level – state, local, and federal. Through the AT HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes necessary to build a comprehensive homelessness system that is effective and accountable, including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. SB 440 aligns with our AT HOME efforts to advocate for more federal and state support to build and maintain housing for low-income Californians and develop creative financing models to increase the feasibility of more projects.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports SB 440 and respectfully urges your support. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to reach me at mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Senator, 9th District
The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Jennifer Swenson, Principal Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
William Weber, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



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July 25, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 768 (Caballero) California Environmental Quality Act: Transportation Agency:
vehicle miles traveled: study.
As amended on May 29, 2024 – Support
Assembly Committee on Appropriations – Suspense File**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support SB 768 (Caballero), which tasks the Transportation Agency with conducting a study of implementation and impact of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), a CEQA traffic analysis for new construction.

Counties recognize that climate change and the release of greenhouse gasses (GHG) into the atmosphere have the potential to dramatically impact our environment, land use decisions, transportation networks, and the economy. It is of statewide interest to provide for a balanced, seamless, and multi-modal transportation system on a planned and coordinated manner, consistent with social, economic, political, and environmental goals of the state.

SB 768 will task the Transportation Agency with evaluating the implementation and impacts of VMT and report back to the Legislature by January 2028. The study will be conducted with a comprehensive group of stakeholders including, but not limited to, the Office of Planning and Research, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Transportation, the California Air Resources Board, local and regional governments, and key industry stakeholders.

Transportation systems must be fully integrated with planned land use; support the lifestyles desired by people; and be compatible with the environment by considering GHG emissions, air and noise pollution, aesthetics, ecological factors, cost benefit analyses, and energy goals. This study will allow a better understanding of how VMT has been implemented, and will review a variety of areas, including, but not limited to: An analysis of the methodology used to create VMT reduction targets; An analysis of how VMT impacts and mitigation measures are identified and measured; An analysis between the differences in VMT mitigation used in rural and urban areas; An analysis of the

relationship between VMT reduction and greenhouse gas emission reduction, housing, transportation, and economic development.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support SB 768. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Neuburger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



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July 25, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 983 (Wahab) Energy: gasoline stations and alternative fuel infrastructure.
As amended on June 24, 2024 – Support
As referred to – Assembly Committee on Appropriations**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support SB 983, which would require the California Energy Commission (CEC) to convene an Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Taskforce, and would require the task force to submit a report to the Legislature with recommendations for deploying alternative fuels infrastructure at existing gas stations. Specifically, the task force includes members from county government, which CSAC strongly supports.

Counties recognize that climate change will have a harmful effect on our environment, public health and economy. Although there remains uncertainty on the pace, distribution and magnitude of the effects of climate change, counties also recognize the need for immediate actions to mitigate the sources of greenhouse gases. In conjunction, counties recognize that adaptation and mitigation are necessary and complementary strategies for responding to climate change impacts. CSAC encourages the state to develop guidance materials for assessing climate impacts that includes adaptation options.

SB 983 seeks to conduct a study on policies to facilitate and accelerate the development of alternative fuels infrastructure at retail gasoline fueling stations, while identifying barriers to this goal and working to ensure compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. This information is critical for counties to better understand how shifting away from fossil fuels will impact our local communities.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support SB 983. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



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July 26, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1032 (Padilla) Housing finance: portfolio restructuring: loan forgiveness.
As amended on May 16, 2024 – SPONSOR
As referred to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to sponsor SB 1032, which will give the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) the authority to forgive specific legacy loans, per HCD's discretion, if a borrower demonstrates that the loan is impeding the ability to maintain and operate the project for affordable housing or senior housing.

The bill limits loan forgiveness to loans held by non-profit organizations which have legacy HCD regulatory agreements that are either expired or are within two years of expiration. In addition, for the property receiving loan forgiveness, the housing agency must maintain the same number of affordable housing units as required by the term of the loan being forgiven for the remaining useful life of the project. CSAC is working with HCD on amendments to address the fiscal concerns they have raised.

HCD administers a number of loan programs authorized by the Legislature in the 1980's and 1990's that were created to preserve existing affordable housing across the state. These programs offered loans to public housing providers (housing agencies) with terms that attempted to strike a balance between providing impactful funding and ensuring the rents charged by the housing agencies on these properties would remain affordable. All of these programs are closed and no longer offer loans.

While it was easy to obtain the loan, terms that allowed housing agencies to forgo making principal and interest payments on the loan effectively trapped these housing agencies in an endless debt cycle with no exit path. The loans were set up with the premise that in rare cases the housing provider would only need to pay the HCD monitoring fee. It was assumed that housing entities could use excess future cash flows to pay down the principal and interest. Over the decades it has become clear that affordable housing units seldom experience excess cash flows, due to the loan programs rent affordability restrictions and maintenance costs. These combined financial challenges led many housing providers only paying the HCD monitoring fee with interest balances growing significantly. Given that the exception has become the rule, it is time to give HCD the authority to forgive these loans as a means to provide relief to the impacted housing agencies.

In a high number of cases, housing agencies that would benefit from loan forgiveness serve as the main affordable housing providers in their regions. Without loan forgiveness, these housing agencies will default on these loans, effectively increasing the possibility that a housing agency will need to close affordable housing sites which serve the most vulnerable residents of their communities, which will ultimately lead to more homelessness across the state.

Housing is an important element of economic development and essential for the health and wellbeing of our communities. SB 1032 would not require HCD to forgive any specific loans, but instead will give them the authority to choose to forgive certain legacy loans that are most at risk, per their discretion. Specifically, SB 1032 will allow housing providers to preserve current affordable housing units without the need to evict low-income residents out of their homes.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. SB 1032 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support and sponsor SB 1032. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,



Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Jennifer Swenson, Principal Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Alexis Castro, Legislative Director, Office of Senator Stephen Padilla
Cece Sidley, Fellow, Office of Senator Stephen Padilla



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together



ACHD
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTHCARE DISTRICTS



PRISM
Public Risk Innovation,
Solutions, and Management



CAJPA
California Association of
Joint Powers Authorities



July 12, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1034 (Seyarto): California Public Records Act: state of emergency
As Amended June 5, 2024 – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD), Public Risk Innovations, Solutions, and Management (PRISM), the California Association of Joint Powers Authorities (CAJPA), the City Clerks Association of California (CCAC), and the California Association of Recreation and Parks Districts (CARPD) are pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 1034 by Senator Seyarto. This measure would amend the definition of “unusual circumstances,” in the California Public Records Act (CPRA) to include the need to respond to a CPRA request during a state of emergency.

The California Public Records Act serves as a vital tool for the public to hold their governments and elected leaders accountable. California’s public agencies take their responsibilities under the CPRA seriously, devoting substantial resources to responding thoroughly and promptly to public records requests.

Public agencies at all levels of government have reported a significant increase in the quantity and breadth of CPRA requests. A variety of public agencies reported a 73% increase in the volume of CPRA requests over the past five years. A vast majority of those agencies reported receiving CPRA requests that required an inordinate amount of staff time, with more than 90% reporting CPRA requests that diverted local resources away from local programs and services.

These requests can be costly and time-consuming for local agencies, as they can require significant staff time to discover, review, and redact records, often requiring the specific subject matter experts on an issue to dedicate substantial time outside of their core

responsibilities to ensure the agency fully responds to a CPRA request. Counties have reported single CPRA requests seeking decades of 911 call transcripts or decades of correspondence from local officials. One small, rural county reported a single requestor who has submitted hundreds of CPRA requests over the past few years, including a single request that required the county to review over 621,000 records. The county estimates that responding to a portion of the requests would cost the county over \$1.8 million and require a minimum of 34 employees working around the clock for a year to honor the request.

Furthermore, due to the modernization of how public sector work is conducted, there has been a significant increase in the volume of disclosable records (e.g., emails, text messages, inter-office direct chat messaging platforms, etc.) created by routine government work. In response, there has been a proportionate increase in the complexity and sophistication of the work necessary to respond to CPRA requests due to the staff time spent searching for records and redacting material that is exempt or prohibited from disclosure (e.g., confidential attorney-client correspondence, social security numbers, criminal history, trade secrets, medical records, etc.).

The heightened use of the CPRA – and the subsequent heightened impacts to governments – has occurred over the same period that saw local governments lose revenue sources that absorbed some of the cost pressures of CPRA requests through passage of Proposition 42 and a 2020 court case that restricts the use of fees imposed by local agencies for the costs of complying with CPRA requests.

SB 1034 will provide some narrow, limited relief to counties when they receive CPRA requests during an emergency. While other reforms to the CPRA could both improve public access to records and reduce impacts on local agencies, we appreciate any effort to reform the CPRA, including this narrow, but beneficial improvement.

For these reasons, CSAC, ACHD, UCC, RCRC, PRISM, CAJPA, CCAC, and CARPD support SB 1034 and respectfully request your signature. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact us at the below email addresses.

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties
elawyer@counties.org



Sarah Bridge
Vice President
Association of California Healthcare Districts
sarah@deveauburrgroup.com



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
Urban Counties of California
jkh@hbeadvocacy.com



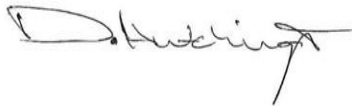
Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California
sdukett@rcrcnet.org



Jen Hamelin
Chief Claims Officer - Workers' Compensation
Public Risk Innovations, Solutions, and
Management
jhamelin@prismrisk.gov



Faith Lane Borges
Legislative Advocate
California Association of Joint Powers Authority
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Dane Hutchings
Legislative Representative
City Clerks Association of California
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Alyssa Silhi
Director of Government Affairs
California Association of Recreation and Park
Districts
asilhi@publicpolicygroup.com



Marcus Detwiler
Legislative Representative
California Special Districts Association
marcusd@cnda.net

cc: The Honorable Kelly Seyarto, California State Senate
Brady Borcharding, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



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Graham Knaus

July 25, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1077 (Blakespear) Coastal resources: local coastal program: amendments: accessory and junior dwelling units.

As amended on June 27, 2024 – Support

As referred to - Assembly Committee on Appropriations

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support SB 1077 (Blakespear), which requires the California Coastal Commission (Commission) by July 1, 2026, in coordination with the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD), to develop and provide guidance for local governments to facilitate the preparation of amendments to a local coastal program (LCP) to clarify and simplify the permitting process for accessory dwelling units (ADU) and junior accessory dwelling units (JADU) in the coastal zone.

Counties within the Coastal Zone are subject to the California Coastal Act which is implemented via cooperative agreements between the California Coastal Commission and counties and cities. Most development in the Coastal Zone requires a coastal development permit issued by local agencies with a certified Local Coastal Plan (LCP) or by the Commission in the absence of a cooperative agreement. LCPs link statewide coastal policies to local planning efforts with the goal of protecting the quality and environment of California’s coastline.

The State, counties, and cities should mutually encourage, seek, and support efforts to streamline, improve, and modernize coastal development permit and local coastal planning processes, without compromising or undermining the original intent and tenets of these laws. SB 1077 clarifies the process for the Commission to develop and provide guidance to local jurisdictions to update LCPs to facilitate ADU and JADU permitting in the coastal zone, and would require the Commission, in coordination with HCD to convene at least one public workshop to receive and consider public comments on the draft guidance before the finalization of the guidance document and to post the guidance document on the Commission’s and HCD’s internet websites.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the ‘[AT HOME](#)’ Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and

sustainable funding. SB 1077 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support SB 1077. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



July 1, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8140
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **SB 1134 (Caballero): Surplus land**
As amended 6/10/24 – SUPPORT IF AMENDED

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

On behalf of Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), we write to express our position of “support if amended” on Senate Bill 1134, which would delete the statutory exemption from the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) for the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to administer the Surplus Lands Act (SLA). Local agencies continue to be challenged by implementation of carefully negotiated language in the Surplus Lands Act in numerous bills over the last five years. Requiring HCD to utilize the APA process will provide important opportunities for stakeholder input in the spirit of transparency, clarity on the law, and improved understanding of implementation procedures.

Counties, cities, and special districts have worked in good faith to address legislative concerns about use of the SLA, including clarifying statutory definitions of “exempt surplus lands”. As a result, we are concerned about a proposed amendment to Section 54222.3 in the current version of the bill that suggests that HCD has authority to regulate the disposal of exempt surplus lands via utilizing the APA. We understand that this language was an inadvertent drafting error that will be corrected in a future version of the measure and appreciate the author’s responsiveness to our concerns.

To that end, we respectfully urge your “aye” vote on SB 1134 if the bill is amended to remove the new language included in Section 54222.3. Please contact us if you have any questions about our position.

Senate Bill 1134 (Caballero)

Sincerely,



Aaron Avery
California Special Districts Association



Mark Neuberger
California State Association of Counties



Jean Kinney Hurst
Urban Counties of California



Tracy Rhine
Rural County Representatives of California



Jessica Gauger
California Association
of Sanitation Agencies



Julia Bishop Hall
Association of California Water Agencies

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Anna Caballero, California State Senate
Ronda Paschal, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom



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July 25, 2024

The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1187 (McGuire) Housing programs: Tribal Housing Reconstitution and Resiliency Act.

**As introduced on February 14, 2024 – Support
Assembly Committee on Appropriations – Suspense File**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is proud to support SB 1187, which would create a new tribal housing program, the Tribal Housing Grant Program (THGP), in the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the construction and rehabilitation of rental and for-sale housing.

Counties and tribes promote a full range of housing in all communities for shared interests in promoting economic development and self-sufficiency for their overlapping constituencies, promoting the general health, safety, well-being of the entire community, and infrastructure that is beneficial to all. Counties support identifying and generating a variety of permanent financing resources and subsidy mechanisms for affordable housing, including a statewide permanent source for affordable housing. Currently, tribal governments struggle to meet the requirements for housing grants because these programs are not set up to meet the needs of tribal communities. SB 1187 will advance funding for tribal housing and will help address the unique needs of California tribal governments.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the ‘[AT HOME](#)’ Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. SB 1187 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

Counties are committed to promoting and supporting the development of positive working relationships between counties and tribes to the mutual benefit of both parties

and the communities they respectively serve. For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support SB 1187. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: The Honorable Senator Pro Tempore Mike McGuire
The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



July 22 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1261 (Alvarado-Gil)—SUPPORT

Dear Chair Wicks:

This coalition, comprised of representatives of the fair industry, local government, agricultural and community groups, write in support of SB 1261 (Alvarado-Gil), which will enhance an existing fund source for California's network of fairs and offer much needed financial support for fair projects involving public health and safety, infrastructure, deferred maintenance, and reinvestment into the state's 76 fairs.

Fairgrounds are an important public asset, especially important in rural areas, often providing the only space available for enhancing commercial enterprises, hosting affordable and accessible community gatherings, and providing invaluable emergency support. They are also substantial economic drivers, providing a wide variety of services and supporting hundreds of small businesses that rely on a solid network to create thousands of jobs and millions in tax revenue for California. The fair industry reflects California's diversity like no other. Women, minorities, and veterans are all represented in this humble business sector, and they all rely on the solvency of the fairground.

For more than 75 years, California's fairs had a stable source of funding from horse racing license fees and supplementary General Fund resources. These fund sources were eliminated in the 2011-12 state budget, requiring all fairs to become self-sufficient. With the lapse in funding, many fairs suffered from deferred maintenance, while concurrently becoming more necessary as climactic and community emergencies increased. In response in 2017, the Legislature authored, and the Governor signed AB 1499, which offered an opportunity for fairs to retain three-quarters of 1% (0.75%) of sales and use tax revenues generated on fairgrounds. Through these limited revenues some fairs have been able to benefit, however the amount of revenue is not sufficient to serve as a statewide fiscal solution as currently crafted. And as a result, many of our fairgrounds remain in jeopardy.

SB 1261 makes a simple change by increasing the fairs' share of tax revenues generated from on-fairground sales from 0.75% to 3%.

This measure will result in long-term sustainable funding for the operations and maintenance of the fairgrounds enabling the network to serve California communities, from the fun and excitement of fair time to the times of flood and fires.

For these reasons, we respectfully request an "Aye" vote and appreciate your ongoing support of California fairs.

Sincerely,



Matthew Patton, Executive Director
California Agricultural Teachers' Association



Christopher Reardon, Director of Legislative Affairs
California Farm Bureau Federation



Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Sidd Nag, Legislative Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California



Sarah Cummings, President & CEO
Western Fairs Association
California Fairs Alliance

Cc: The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil, California State Senate
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee



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July 1, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1319 (Wahab): Skilled nursing facilities: approval to provide therapeutic behavioral health programs.
As Amended May 16, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on July 2, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1319 by Senator Aisha Wahab. This measure streamlines the approval process for skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) seeking to offer behavioral health services for residents by creating a process for SNFs to apply simultaneously to the multiple state departments that require approval for a SNF to provide special treatment program services.

There are currently three state departments that have a role in approving a special treatment program service unit of a SNF: California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), and Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Special treatment program services are provided within SNFs that are designed to serve patients with chronic psychiatric impairment and need additional support than what could be provided in a regular SNF. In order for a SNF to convert or expand existing facilities to offer special treatment program services, SNF providers must obtain approvals from multiple state departments, resulting in a protracted and costly process for providers seeking to offer this level of care.

A key factor in addressing California’s behavioral health crisis is ensuring the adequate availability of treatment facilities and infrastructure. Although significant investments have been made in recent years, California still lacks the facilities needed to provide behavioral health treatment and care for all who need it, particularly for those with acute needs. SB 1319 simplifies and expedites the approval process for building or converting SNF units to special treatment program service units, reducing an administrative barrier that prevents the efficient buildout of these much-needed treatment beds.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports SB 1319. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 591-5308 or jonodera@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jolie", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Aisha Wahab, California State Senate
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1322 (Wahab): Foster youth: Chafee Educational and Training Vouchers Program.
As Amended May 16, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for Hearing on August 7, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

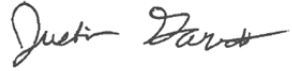
On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1322 by Senator Aisha Wahab. This measure would expand the age of youth eligible for a grant under the Chafee Educational and Training Vouchers Program to youth who were in foster care at some point between the ages of 15-18 years old.

The Chafee Program is a federal program that receives both federal and state funding to assist youth aging out of foster care cover the costs of attending postsecondary education or vocational training. Although federal criteria for the program requires that foster youth must have been in care between the ages of 14 and 18, California restricts eligibility to those who were in care between the ages of 16 and 18.

SB 1322 amends California eligibility requirements to include foster youth who left care at the age of 15, expanding the number of former foster youth who are eligible to receive postsecondary education and vocational training grants under the Chafee program beginning in 2025-26. To ensure youth currently eligible do not lose funding, the expansion is contingent upon appropriation of sufficient funds.

Chafee vouchers provide California’s foster youth with flexible, financial support, allowing thousands of young adults to pursue postsecondary education or vocational training each year. Expanding the population eligible for this support will increase education and economic opportunities for additional foster youth. It is for these reasons that CSAC supports SB 1322. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Aisha Wahab, California State Senate
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1396 (Alvarado-Gil): CalWORKs: Home Visiting Program
As Amended April 8, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing on August 15, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing to share our support for Senate Bill 1396 by Senator Alvarado-Gil. This measure would extend the enrollment timeframe for the CalWORKs Home Visiting Program (HVP) from a child under 24 months to a child under 36 months and would extend the amount of time that families can participate in the program.

CalWORKs HVP is a voluntary program supervised by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and administered by participating counties. Currently, 41 out of 58 counties administer CalWORKs HVP, which matches trained professionals with expecting and new parents to assist with the early development of their children. HVPs follow evidence-based models that provide positive health development and well-being for low-income families that expand future educational, economic, and financial outcomes and improve the likelihood that they will exit poverty.

While HVP models managed by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) through the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) allow families to remain in a program through an HVP’s recommended duration, CalWORKs HVP can only be offered to families for 24 months or until a child reaches their second birthday. SB 1396 would align the CalWORKs HVP participation timeline with CHVP participation timelines and allow families participating in CalWORKs HVP models to participate in programs for the full duration, maximizing the health and development benefits for vulnerable families.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports Senate Bill 1396. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
County Welfare Directors Association



July 30, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1397 (Eggman): Behavioral health services coverage.
As amended on April 15, 2024 – SUPPORT
Assembly Appropriations Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

On behalf of the state's 58 counties, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), and Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) are pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 1397 by Senator Susan Eggman. This measure establishes a mechanism for county behavioral health agencies to recoup reimbursement from commercial plans for privately insured clients referred to services through Full Service Partnerships (FSPs).

FSPs provide comprehensive, intensive, community-based services and case management to those facing severe mental health conditions and play a critical role in preventing long-term institutionalization. All counties offer FSP services, which are unique for their low staff to client ratio, 24/7 availability, and "whatever it takes" approach tailored to the individual needs of a client. FSPs have been proven to help prevent costly hospitalizations, criminal justice involvement, and homelessness among clients.

Although the primary focus of county behavioral health agencies is to serve Medi-Cal beneficiaries, they often serve the commercially insured who are unable to access certain specialty behavioral services through their commercial insurance, including crisis intervention services, first episode psychosis, FSPs, or other critical behavioral health services. Although counties fund services to individuals with commercial plans to the extent resources are available, they must prioritize their Medi-Cal plan responsibilities.

SB 1397 will create a reimbursement mechanism for county behavioral health agencies to recover the costs of providing lifesaving behavioral health services to commercially insured clients through FSPs. It is for these reasons that CSAC, UCC, and RCRC support this measure. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations.

Sincerely,



Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate
CSAC
jonodera@counties.org



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Advocate
UCC
kbl@hbeadvocacy.com



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
RCRC
sdukett@rcrcnet.org

cc: The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman, Senator
Honorable Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
Anna Billy, Office of Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman



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August 1, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1441 (Allen): Examination of petitions: time limitations and reimbursement of costs
As Amended April 4, 2024 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on August 7, 2024**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in California, is pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 1441 by Senator Ben Allen. This measure would preserve local election resources by establishing reasonable timeframes for the examination of failed petitions and protect those vital public resources by allowing local election officials to recover the costs of the examinations.

Existing law, [Government Code section 7924.110](#), states that a petition proponent has up to 21 days after certification of insufficiency to commence an examination of disqualified petition signatures. However, the statute does not provide proponents of a failed petition with a time limit to review the insufficient signatures. Also, the law is silent about cost recovery by the county for staff time and other public resources utilized during the examination process.

Election officers have been tasked with managing increasingly complex and expensive elections. In recent years, election officers have navigated rapidly changing election laws, conducted elections during a global pandemic, endured harassment by the public and direct threats to their safety, and have needed to counter the rampant spread of misinformation. Policies that are core to our democratic values, like the laws allowing the recall of public officials who have lost the faith of their constituents, are exploited by those who can consume local resources that deplete public resources that could otherwise be utilized to improve our communities.

Current law has enabled petition proponents in some jurisdictions to abuse this access to public resources through indefinite time for examination of failed petitions without any obligation to reimburse the county's costs. In one egregious case, the 14-month examination by proponents of a failed petition resulted in over \$1 million taxpayer dollars spent to hire additional staff.

SB 1441 is a fair and reasonable approach to address the abuses of the failed petition examination process. The bill builds on established policies, like [Elections Code section 15624](#), which establishes cost recovery for voter-initiated recount efforts. Broadly, the bill helps local election officials preserve the resources necessary to conduct free and fair elections that are accessible to all voters.

For these reasons, CSAC is proud to support SB 1441 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at elawyer@counties.org.

The Honorable Buffy Wicks

August 1, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Lawyer". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "E" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Ben Allen, California State Senate
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Jay Dickerson, Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



*****SENATE FLOOR ALERT*****

AB 1827 (Papan): Low-Water User Protection Act- Support

We, the above coalition of associations and water suppliers, respectfully request your support and urge your “Yes” vote on AB 1827, which would ensure water suppliers can continue to use meter size and peaking factors to proportionally allocate the costs associated with providing water service among customers.

AB 1827 affirms existing law that allows water suppliers to use these reasonable and well-accepted methods of assessing the incremental costs associated with higher water usage demands to high water users. Because of lawsuits that threaten California water providers’ ability to use these well-accepted methods of cost allocation, this measure is critical to preventing these costs from being passed on to low-water users.

A water supplier must maintain and invest in a water system and water supplies capable of meeting the maximum possible demand on any given day to ensure customers have reliable water service when they turn on their tap. Water customers that use more water than other similarly situated customers increase a water supplier’s overall cost of providing water service

due to the higher costs associated with building, operating, and maintaining a larger water system that can meet those larger water demands.

Water agencies across the state are being sued to challenge the long-standing methods of cost allocation. The lawsuits essentially allege that appropriately charging customers that use more water for the additional cost of that higher use is prohibited by Article XIII D of the California Constitution (i.e. "Proposition 218"). However, Proposition 218's proportionality requirements allow water suppliers to charge customers with higher water usage to recoup legitimate costs attributable to those higher water users.

In our opinion, these lawsuits are without merit. Our property-related service charges are legitimate under existing law, but in order to avoid lengthy and expensive legal battles with costs that will be passed on to our customers, further clarification of existing law should be affirmed by the Legislature for the understanding of the courts and others.

Proposition 218 placed provisions into the California Constitution that limit local governments' authority to impose and increase taxes, fees, assessments, and charges. We faithfully abide by the requirements of Proposition 218 and are serious about our responsibility to provide services to our customers in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

While collectively, all customers pay for the costs associated with a community's water service, AB 1827 reinforces our authority under the law to impose fees or charges for property-related water services that include the incrementally higher costs of water service due to higher water usage demand, maximum potential water use, and projected peak water usage of parcels. AB 1827 does this by amending Proposition 218's implementing statute to confirm that the long-standing cost allocation methods used by water agencies can be used consistent with Proposition 218.

Our organizations respectfully request your "aye" vote on AB 1827.



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☐☐
CEO
Graham Knaus

August 6, 2024

SENATE FLOOR ALERT

**AB 2257 (Wilson): Property-related Water and Sewer Fees and Assessments: Remedies
As Amended August 5, 2024 – SUPPORT
Senate Third Reading File**

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in California, we support Assembly Bill (AB) 2257 by Assemblymember Wilson. This measure would allow ratepayers to participate in property-related water and sewer assessments and help local agencies avoid costly lawsuits related to Proposition 218 disputes.

The bill would also help local agencies avoid costly and time-consuming litigation by providing an administrative process to require the exhaustion of all remedies, a well-established principle in administrative law. This bill would also encourage local agencies to establish the remedies process by allowing agencies to narrow the basis for an objection and limiting the court’s review to the record of proceedings before the agency through the remedy process.

Access to a clean, reliable water source is necessary for communities to thrive and exist. Financing water management opportunities is vital to ensuring that California’s communities have access to a reliable water supply and maintain water quality for public and environmental health. AB 2257 would improve transparency and accountability of water management financing for local agencies.

For these reasons, CSAC supports AB 2257 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Advocate, at elawyer@counties.org.

cc: The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assembly



August 9, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
California State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2496 (Pellerin) – Liability claims: foster family agencies and noncustodial adoption agencies.
As Amended August 6, 2024 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the Urban Counties of California (UCC), we are writing to share that we regretfully have an Oppose Unless Amended position on AB 2496 authored by Assembly Member Pellerin. While we share the concerns of the author and sponsors regarding the ongoing viability of an insurance product that allows Foster Family Agencies to appropriately maintain their licensure, we believe that this challenge is best addressed in a thoughtful, collaborative manner that ensures the safety and well-being of children in foster care while balancing risk and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) are a critical partner of counties in caring for the well-being of children placed into foster care. Our associations recognize that there are significant challenges in the insurance market for FFAs and that this creates risks for their licensure. Counties support the goal of finding a solution to this issue so that FFAs can stay in business and continue serving vulnerable children and youth. However, we have several concerns with the approach outlined by this bill.

AB 2496 would, among other things, prohibit the use of certain types of indemnification agreements in contracts between counties and FFAs. Not all counties contract with FFAs for child welfare and adoption services, choosing instead to use simpler placement agreements with FFAs. Regardless of the scope of the contract, these agreements routinely include provisions allocating the inevitable risks between the parties, as negotiated by the parties themselves. The purpose of these provisions is not to hold FFAs responsible for the negligence of others. Indeed, even the broadest indemnity clauses typically exclude the county's own sole negligence from their scope. Rather, the principal purpose of an indemnification provision is to allow the parties to negotiate, in advance, their respective responsibilities in the vast majority of real-world cases where liability is disputed or shared. Many counties are self-insured for liability purposes, and it is critical these counties are allowed to negotiate their contracts as works best for their operations and their service providers.

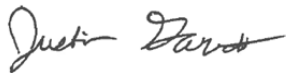
More broadly, counties regularly use indemnification clauses in their contracts with many entities, not just Foster Family Agencies. To make specific indemnification clauses, as a matter of public policy, void in FFA contracts opens the door to challenging these necessary contract provisions in other county agreements where negotiated language on indemnification is a standard contract term. We respectfully request amendments be taken to AB 2496 to remove the indemnification prohibition from the bill as proposed in Code of Civil Procedure 1062.33(b)(1) as identified on page 4, lines 35-40 and page 5, lines 1-4.

Additionally, given the complexities of this issue and the importance of protecting children placed into foster care, we believe that state leadership is needed. We respectfully request that this bill be amended to require that the relevant state agencies, including the California Department of Social Services and Department of Insurance, work collaboratively with all stakeholders to address the underlying insurance availability issues for FFAs so that we can continue to achieve our shared goal of best serving our families and children in the child welfare system.

With the recent amendments that reduced the scope of the bill, it's our understanding that the author and sponsor are aiming to work with stakeholders to identify a possible negotiated solution. Our associations have engaged in discussions and will continue to do so in a good faith effort to find a legislative approach that works for all stakeholders and that will allow FFAs to continue to operate and serve children and youth who need these vital services.

Our coalition appreciates your consideration of these amendments and looks forward to continued dialogue on AB 2496.

Sincerely,



Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate
CSAC



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
RCRC



Jean Hurst
Legislative Advocate
UCC

cc: The Honorable Gail Pellerin, California State Assembly
Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



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Graham Knaus

August 8, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2902 (Wood): Organic waste: reduction regulations: exemptions.
As Amended June 20, 2024 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), which represents all 58 counties in California, I write in support of Assembly Bill 2902 (Wood). One of CSAC’s top Legislative Priorities in 2024 is addressing the issues that counties face in their efforts to meet the state’s SB 1383 organic waste diversion goals. AB 2902 provides necessary flexibility for small and rural communities, where the regulations are especially difficult to comply with.

In passing SB 1383, the state established methane emission reduction targets statewide, with a goal of reducing methane producing organic waste in landfills by 50% by 2025. California counties are committed to doing their part in addressing methane emissions, but there is no “one size fits all” approach that will work in every community. By extending the existing rural exemption for counties with less than 70,000 residents, AB 2902 allows this progress to continue without laying undue burden on smaller, rural counties.

The rural exemption, which is set to expire in 2037, applies to 19 counties which collectively make up only around 1.5% of the state’s total population. Counties with low populations totals have different organic waste profiles and management strategies compared to larger suburban and urban counties. AB 2902 creates a pathway for smaller counties to innovate and submit alternative organic waste management plans that are better suited to the realities of these smaller counties.

California is a diverse state both in identity and geography, AB 2902 takes this truth into consideration. Many California counties’ entire populations reside in mountainous and high-altitude areas, where bear and human populations must coexist. The exemption process provided by this bill for jurisdictions in higher altitude areas remedies the threats posed to public health by organic waste bins due to bears.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 2902 and respectfully requests your “AYE” vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at awaelder@counties.org.

The Honorable Anna Caballero

August 8, 2024

Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ada W". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the top and a vertical stroke on the left.

Ada Waelder

Legislative Advocate

California State Association of Counties

Cc: The Honorable Jim Wood
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee



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August 9, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 952 (Dahle): Personal Income Taxes: Fire Safe Home Tax Credits Act
As Amended April 4, 2024 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, I write in support of SB 952 (Dahle) which would authorize a new personal income tax credit for fire safe home expenditures, starting in 2025 and lasting for five years. Qualifying costs allowable for credits include home hardening and qualified vegetation management to increase the amount of fire safe hardened homes in areas at risk of wildfires.

Counties are on the front lines of wildfire emergencies and support measures that maximize California counties’ ability to effectively mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters and public health emergencies. Increasing the number of hardened homes in wildfire prone areas will reduce overall fire risks but the costs of hardening a home pose a financial challenge for many of our residents.

CSAC supports policies, practices, and funding designed to promote innovation at the local level and to permit maximum flexibility, so that services can best target individual community needs, hazards, threats, and capacities. SB 952 addresses this by creating a tax credit that would incentivize home hardening projects with the goal of reducing wildfire risks.

Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 662-6400 or cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Brian Dahle



August 1, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 1064 (Laird) – SUPPORT
As Amended May 16, 2024**

Dear Chair Wicks:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), League of California Cities (Cal Cities), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and California Cannabis Industry Association (CCIA), we are pleased to support Senate Bill 1064 (Laird), which aims to modernize the state licensing structure for cannabis. This measure represents a crucial step forward in achieving two primary objectives: to encourage economic growth and stability in the legal cannabis industry, and to incentivize local governments to permit commercial cannabis activity by establishing clear responsibilities and a streamlined process, thereby expanding much-needed access to legal retail.

SB 1064 addresses several key challenges faced by cannabis businesses operating in California. One of the most pressing issues is the complexity and inefficiency of the current licensing system, which requires businesses to obtain multiple licenses for different activities conducted at a single location. This not only creates unnecessary administrative burdens for businesses but also increases processing times and costs for both applicants and regulatory agencies.

By replacing the current system with a streamlined process that issues a single premises license for each location, SB 1064 will significantly reduce complexity and streamline the licensing process for cannabis businesses. This will not only make it easier for businesses to comply with regulatory requirements but also improve the efficiency of oversight and enforcement efforts by regulatory agencies.

Additionally, SB 1064 clarifies the roles of state and local governments in the licensing and oversight of cannabis businesses, ensuring that each level of government focuses on its respective areas of expertise. Under current law, state and local government roles in licensing and oversight of cannabis businesses are not well defined and distinguished; as a result, the licensing reviews conducted at the state often duplicate the

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Senate Bill 1064 (Laird)
August 1, 2024
Page 2

reviews conducted by the local government, particularly as it relates to land use and environmental review. As a result, businesses undergo environmental review twice – once at the local level and again at the state level – and each of the business’s owners are often required to complete criminal background checks twice – at both the local and state levels.

This bill would clarify state and local roles as it pertains to licensing of cannabis businesses by focusing state-level review on the operator and cannabis-specific activities performed and returning land use review to local governments. This leverages the state and local governments’ expertise: setting statewide market standards and determining “time, place and manner,” respectively.

Overall, this bill seeks to reduce unnecessary complexity and duplication within the cannabis regulatory environment which is impeding government’s ability to license businesses in a reasonable timeframe and complicating efforts to enforce the law. By doing so, it seeks to reduce challenges and barriers to basic compliance for businesses. We support the efforts by Senator Laird and the Department of Cannabis Control to further refine the proposal to achieve streamlined licensing.

For the above reasons, our organizations are pleased to support SB 1064, and respectfully request your “Aye” vote when this measure is heard before your committee. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



SARAH DUKETT
Policy Advocate
RCRC
sdukett@rcrcnet.org



JOLENA VOORHIS
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
Cal Cities
jvoorhis@calcities.org



ADA WAELDER
Legislative Advocate
CSAC
awaelder@counties.org



AMY O’GORMAN JENKINS
Legislative Advocate
CCIA
amy@precisionadvocacy.co

cc: The Honorable John Laird, Member of the California State Senate
Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Allegra Kim, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Bill Lewis, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus



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August 8, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1143 (Allen): Household Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Support – As Amended June 10, 2024

Dear Chair Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I write in support of SB 1143, which will establish Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Household Hazardous Waste (HHW).

HHW is a broad category of many common products which require special handling and disposal. Improperly disposed HHW exposes recycling and waste workers to avoidable dangers and increases insurance costs to operators. California’s HHW collection and management system hinges on the work of local governments who are drastically under-resourced for this monumental task.

Local governments are responsible for the operation of local household hazardous waste collection programs and provide drop off services, oftentimes free of cost, to residents. This is an important public service and prevents improper disposal of hazardous waste. The cost to manage some of the waste streams are significant and put serious financial pressure on the programs and local governments that operate them. This cost is not only burdensome for local governments, but increases the risk of improper disposal which puts the health of Californians at risk.

Extended producer responsibility programs for other HHW including thermostats, paint, medications, and batteries have already proven successful in California. SB 1143 will shift the costs from local jurisdictions, which have no control over what products are sold on the market, to the producers who choose to make them. This will not only support local governments, but also enhance consumer convenience and increase proper disposal. For these reasons, we support SB 1143 and appreciate all your work on this issue. If you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at awaelder@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Ada Waelder
Legislative Advocate

Cc: Honorable Members & Staff, Assembly Appropriations Committee



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August 8, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1175 (Ochoa Bogh): Organic Waste: Local Jurisdiction Waivers
As Amended May 13, 2024 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) representing all 58 counties in the state, we are pleased to support your SB 1175. One of CSAC’s top legislative priorities in 2024 is addressing the issues that counties face in their efforts to meet the state’s SB 1383 organic waste diversion goals. SB 1175 would provide much needed flexibility around low population waivers for organic waste collection.

In passing SB 1383 (Lara, Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016), the Legislature established statewide methane emission reduction targets, with a goal of reducing methane producing organic waste in landfills by 50% by 2025. California counties are committed to doing their part in addressing methane emissions, but there is no “one size fits all” approach that will work in every community. Counties with low populations totals have different organic waste profiles and management strategies compared to larger suburban and urban counties, and they can have an especially difficult time complying with regulations.

This is why SB 1383 established a pathway for rural communities to seek an exemption. However, under current law, CalRecycle may only grant waivers based on population at the census tract level. Census tracts are used only by the U.S. Census Bureau with a primary purpose of providing stable statistical data. Their use in granting low population waivers disqualifies many communities who are objectively sparsely populated. SB 1175 would allow local jurisdictions to submit proposed boundaries that better represent the needs of their communities.

It is for these reasons that we support SB 1175 and thank you for your work on this important issue. If you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at awaelder@counties.org.

Sincerely,

Ada Waelder
Legislative Advocate



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August 9, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1390 (Caballero): Groundwater Recharge: floodflows diversion
As Amended: June 26, 2024—SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties, representing all 58 California Counties, I write to support SB 1390 (Caballero). This measure builds upon the progress made in the past year to enable California to divert flood flows for groundwater recharge by clarifying when these flows may be captured for the benefit of aquifers, what planning requirements are necessary for local agencies pursuing recharge, and expanding reporting requirements for diversions made under existing law.

In recent years, weather conditions have worsened and are becoming an increasing problem for California. Facing whiplash from drought, our counties experienced historic flooding, coastal erosion, and record snowpack. Counties are on the front lines of support when water emergencies, drought and flood occur. Our communities are dependent upon reliable water supply and flood control planning and distribution at the state and local level. While recent years have been marked by flooding and historic snowpack levels, it is clear that these types of wet years are unreliable, and California will need to adapt to extremes in future flood and drought cycles.

In March 2023, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order, authorizing water agencies, with a set of reporting requirements and safety parameters, to divert excess flood flows on rivers and streams for the purposes of groundwater recharge, without the need to obtain a costly and time-consuming permit. The process established by this Executive Order was later codified in SB 122 (Committee on Budget, 2023), with additional requirements for diverters to better protect groundwater quality and downstream water users.

CSAC supports projects and programs that invest in water supplies through a variety of means – from recycling to stormwater capture. Groundwater recharge during high flood flow events is one of the most effective ways to move water into long-term storage, and to bring over drafted basins into balance. CSAC encourages legislation that focuses on movement to groundwater sustainability through the local implementation of SGMA, dedicated groundwater recharge, and expedited permitting for recharge events.

SB 1390 carries forward the progress of the Executive Order and SB 122 by allowing more recharge projects to be completed in a safe and responsible manner. Should you have any questions about our position, please don't hesitate to contact me at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Freeman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Catherine Freeman
Senior Legislative Advocate



August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 262 (Holden): Children's camps: safety and regulation
Enrolled on August 29, 2024 – **Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), and the Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), we write to respectfully request your signature on AB 262, authored by Assembly Member Chris Holden, which would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), subject to an appropriation from the Legislature, to prepare a report on approaches for children's camp health and safety regulation and oversight.

Previous legislative proposals relating to children's camps have inappropriately assigned responsibility to local health departments (LHDs) – which exist to protect communities from public health threats, like COVID-19 – to regulate child supervision and safety at children's camps. CHEAC has long advocated that children's camps in California should be regulated by an agency with the applicable training and expertise in child supervision and safety.

AB 262 sets out a process, led by CDSS, to engage with other relevant state agencies, such as the California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Education, as well as stakeholders such as children's camps representatives, parent advocates, and local public health and environmental health departments, to gather information and develop recommendations to define a children's camp, determine the government agency or agencies to adopt and enforce children's camps regulations, and define minimum health and safety protections to protect children attending these camps. This process will identify the appropriate agencies and/or entities, with applicable expertise, to ensure children's safety and supervision when attending these day camps.

CDSS is well suited to lead this process given their expertise in regulating facilities that provide care to children, including childcare facilities and children's residential care facilities.

Our organizations believe ensuring children's safety while attending day camps is paramount and that it is vital for an entity with appropriate expertise to oversee their operation. AB 262 is the first step towards achieving that goal. For the above reasons, CSAC, UCC, RCRC, CHEAC, and HOAC strongly SUPPORT AB 262, and respectfully request your signature on the measure.

Respectfully,



Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties
(CSAC)



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Urban Counties of California (UCC)



Sarah Dukett
Legislative Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California
(RCRC)



Michelle Gibbons
Executive Director
County Health Executives Association of
California (CHEAC)



Kat DeBurgh
Executive Director
Health Officers Association of California
(HOAC)

cc: The Honorable Chris Holden, Member, California State Assembly
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Samantha Lui, Deputy Secretary, Legislative Affairs, California Health & Human Services Agency



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August 27, 2024

SENATE FLOOR ALERT

**AB 653 (Reyes) Public housing authorities: reports
As Amended – August 23, 2024 – SUPPORT
Senate Third Reading File**

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, respectfully requests your “AYE” vote on AB 653 (Reyes), which will require all public housing authorities to report specified data, including their monthly success rates as of the first of each month, to the Department of the Housing and Community Development (HCD) beginning on July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter.

Additionally, the bill would require HCD to convene a group of housing authorities to discuss factors that impact success rates and recommendations for state and local intervention and require the Department, in consultation with participants in the Housing Choice Voucher program and other stakeholders to publicly publish a report with recommendations for state and local interventions to improve success rates.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the ‘[AT HOME](#)’ Plan. The six-pillar plan is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. CSAC is in support of this bill, as we believe this bill provides meaningful policy changes that support county efforts to address significant barriers in providing housing to low-income individuals, which ultimately prevents individuals from becoming homeless.

Unfortunately, California’s voucher families face significant barriers to using their vouchers because they can’t compete in the state’s competitive rental housing market. Further, because of the way the program is funded, failure to utilize all our federally allocated vouchers can result in lower rental subsidy funding for California jurisdictions in future years. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

CSAC respectfully requests an “AYE” vote on AB 653 (Reyes)

cc: The Honorable Eloise Gomez Reyes, California State Assembly



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Graham Knaus

August 29, 2024

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1053 (Gabriel): Housing programs: multifamily housing programs:
expenditure of loan proceeds.
As Enrolled on August 28, 2024 – Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, respectfully requests your signature on AB 1053 (Gabriel), which would allow housing developers to receive state loans for construction financing, permanent financing, or a combination of both.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) makes rental housing affordable by providing financing in the form of 55-year deferred loans. HCD funds these loans after construction is complete when the development converts to permanent financing. AB 1053 significantly reduces construction period interest expenses by allowing developers to receive HCD loan funds during the construction period.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to effectively address homelessness at every level – state, local, and federal. Through the AT HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes necessary to build a comprehensive homelessness system that is effective and accountable, including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding.

AB 1053 aligns with our AT HOME efforts to advocate for more federal and state support to build and maintain housing for low-income Californians and develop creative financing models to increase the feasibility of more projects.

By reducing the costs of each development, AB 1053 will stretch precious state resources to create more affordable homes.

For these reasons, CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 1053. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Neuburger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
The Honorable Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, 46th Assembly District



August 26, 2024

Via email: leg.unit@gov.ca.gov

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
 Governor, State of California
 1021 O Street, Room 9000
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1827 (Papan): Low-Water User Protection Act- REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

We, the undersigned coalition of water suppliers, are writing to request your signature on AB 1827, which was authored by Assemblymember Diane Papan. This crucial measure, backed by a wide-ranging coalition of statewide associations, environmental organizations, water suppliers, and regional stakeholders affirms the authority of public water agencies to use meter size and peaking factors to allocate the costs of providing water service among customers.

AB 1827 affirms existing law that allows water suppliers to use these reasonable and well-accepted methods of assessing the incremental costs associated with higher water usage demands to high water users. Because of lawsuits that threaten California water providers' ability to use these well-accepted methods of cost allocation, this measure is critical to preventing these costs from being passed on to low-water users.

A water supplier must maintain and invest in a water system and water supplies capable of meeting the maximum possible demand on any given day to ensure customers have reliable water service when they turn on their tap. Water customers that use more water than other similarly situated customers increase a water supplier's overall cost of providing water service due to the higher costs associated with building, operating, and maintaining a larger water system that can meet those larger water demands.

Water agencies across the state are being sued to challenge the long-standing methods of cost allocation. The lawsuits essentially allege that appropriately charging customers who use more water for the additional cost of that higher use is prohibited by Article XIII D of the California Constitution (i.e. "Proposition 218"). However, Proposition 218's proportionality requirements allow water suppliers to charge customers with higher water usage to recoup legitimate costs attributable to those higher water users.

In our opinion, these lawsuits are without merit. Our property-related service charges are legitimate under existing law, but in order to avoid lengthy and expensive legal battles with costs that will be passed on to our customers, further clarification of existing law should be affirmed by the Legislature for the understanding of the courts and others.

Proposition 218 placed provisions into the California Constitution that limit local governments' authority to impose and increase taxes, fees, assessments, and charges. We faithfully abide by the requirements of Proposition 218 and are serious about our responsibility to provide services to our customers in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

While collectively, all customers pay for the costs associated with a community's water service, AB 1827 reinforces our authority under the law to impose fees or charges for property-related water services that include the incrementally higher costs of water service due to higher water usage demand, maximum potential water use, and projected peak water usage of parcels. AB 1827 does this by amending Proposition 218's implementing statute to confirm that the long-standing cost allocation methods used by water agencies can be used consistent with Proposition 218.

Thank you for your consideration, and we strongly urge your signature on AB 1827. Please do not hesitate to contact Christine Compton with IRWD at (949) 453-5338, Cody Phillips with CCKA at (310) 339-3691, or IRWD's Sacramento advocate Pilar Oñate-Quintana at (916) 230-4470 if you have questions regarding this measure.

Sincerely,

Adam Quiñonez
State Relations Director
Association of California Water Agencies

Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate – Government Finance and
Administration
California State Association of Counties

Danielle Blacet
Deputy Executive Director
California Municipal Utilities Association

Katie Valenzuela
Councilmember, District 4
Chair, Law and Legislation Committee
City of Sacramento

Marcus Detwiler
Legislative Representative
California Special Districts Association

John Bosler, P.E.
General Manager
Cucamonga Valley Water District

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
August 26, 2024
Page 3

Joe Mouawad, P.E.
General Manager
Eastern Municipal Water District

Jose Martinez
General Manager
Otay Water District

Dave Youngblood
General Manager
East Orange County Water District

Lynda Noriega
Board President
San Gabriel Valley Water Association

Paul A. Cook
General Manager
Irvine Ranch Water District

Charley Wilson
Executive Director
Southern California Water Coalition

Jeremy Wolf
Legislative Program Manager
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

Matthew Litchfield
General Manager
Three Valleys Municipal Water District

Justin Scott-Coe
General Manager
Monte Vista Water District

Fernando Paludi
General Manager
Trabuco Canyon Water District

Harvey De La Torre
General Manager
Municipal Water District of Orange County

Mark Toy, P.E. * BC.WRE
General Manager
Yorba Linda Water District
*Licensed in Arizona and Virginia

cc: The Honorable Diane Papan, California State Assembly, 21st District
Brady Borcharding, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Christian Monsees, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Governor



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

August 27, 2024

The Honorable Senator Steve Glazer
State Capitol, Room 407
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1878 (E. Garcia) Housing programs: tribal housing program.
As set for hearing - August 27, 2024 - Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee
As Amended on August 23, 2024 – Support**

Dear Senator Glazer:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, along with the American Planning Association (APA) California Chapter, are in support of AB 1878, which would create the Tribal Housing Grant Program Trust Fund Advisory Committee within the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), and upon appropriation by the Legislature, creates an advisory committee composed of members who are representatives of federally recognized tribal governments and have knowledge, experience and expertise in the area of tribal housing, tribal land, tribal government, tribal policy, and tribal law.

This bill would require the committee to identify and report annually to HCD specified information, including barriers that exist for tribes when applying for funds from a specified fund. The bill would also require HCD to provide input and guidance to assist in the creation of a standard grant agreement to be used by the department for a specified program.

Counties and tribes have shared interests in promoting economic development and self-sufficiency for their overlapping constituencies, promoting the general health, safety, well-being of the entire community, and infrastructure that is beneficial to all. Additionally, counties continue to advocate for more federal and state support to build and maintain housing for low-income Californians and develop creative financing models to increase the feasibility for more projects. AB 1878 help tribes achieve sustainable, safe, and affordable homes while reconstituting on ancestral lands where they can prosper and preserve their cultural heritage.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific

recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. AB 1878 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

Counties are committed to promoting and supporting the development of positive working relationships between counties and tribes to the mutual benefit of both parties and the communities they respectively serve. For these reasons, CSAC and APA are in support of AB 1878. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Respectfully,



Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



Erik de Kok, AICP
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

CC: The Honorable Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, 36th Assembly District



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Graham Knaus

August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1975 (Bonta): Medi-Cal: medically supportive food and nutrition interventions.
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, I am writing to request your signature on Assembly Bill 1975 by Assembly Member Mia Bonta. This measure would, upon appropriation by the Legislature and subject to federal approval, make medically supportive food and nutrition interventions a covered benefit under Medi-Cal fee-for-service and managed care delivery systems.

Adequate food and nutrition are key to preventing and treating many health conditions, including preventable chronic conditions that disproportionately affect low-income communities and people of color. Healthy nutrition can significantly improve an individual's quality of life and reduce lifelong health care costs. Recognizing the important connection between nutrition and health outcomes, medically tailored meals and supportive food are included as one of 14 pre-approved Community Supports available through CalAIM. Over a 12-month reporting period between 2023-2024, medically tailored meals and supportive food was the most utilized Community Support, with nearly 40,450 Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan (MCP) members receiving this benefit. Despite the high utilization, not all MCPs offer medically tailored meals and supportive food as a Community Support and the federal approval to offer this benefit is currently only effective through December 31, 2026.

No sooner than July 1, 2026, and upon an appropriation made by the Legislature and subject to federal approval, AB 1975 would add medically supportive food and nutrition interventions as a covered Medi-Cal benefit if determined to be medically necessary by a health care provider or health plan. In addition, this measure requires the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to establish a stakeholder group to advise DHCS on the qualifying medical conditions for this benefit, rate setting, and other guidance on benefit design.

Counties are deeply invested in improving health outcomes and health equity for Californians. Counties also support preventative health interventions that

reduce avoidable healthcare costs. AB 1975 will expand a highly utilized and cost-effective health benefit to all Medi-Cal recipients, reduce long-term healthcare spending, and advance health equity. It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 1975. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 591-5308 or jonodera@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jolie", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Mia Bonta, California State Assembly
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



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Riverside County



CEO

Graham Knaus

August 26, 2024

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2199 (Berman) CEQA Exemption: Residential and Mixed-Use Housing Projects
As Enrolled on August 22, 2024 – Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, respectfully requests your signature on AB 2199 (Berman), which extends the sunset date for an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for infill residential and mixed-use housing projects in urbanized unincorporated areas.

AB 2199 extends the exemption created by AB 1804 (Berman, 2018) until 2032. Since 2018, this exemption has been used to accelerate the environmental review and approval of nine multifamily residential and mixed-use projects consisting of 378 housing units.

To ensure that the exemption applies only to the most environmentally beneficial housing projects in unincorporated county areas, AB 2199 includes all the same protections as the existing categorical CEQA infill exemption for cities. In addition, AB 2199 includes protections for tribal cultural resources and minimum residential density requirements.

To make meaningful progress in helping those who are unhoused, CSAC developed the '[AT HOME](#)' Plan. The six-pillar plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic Opportunity) is designed to make true progress to effectively address homelessness at every level - state, local and federal. Through the AT-HOME Plan, CSAC is working to identify the policy changes needed to build a homelessness system that is effective and accountable including specific recommendations related to prevention, housing, the unsheltered response system, and sustainable funding. AB 2199 aligns with our AT HOME efforts, specifically as it relates to the Housing pillar.

AB 2199 will continue to help expedite and encourage infill growth in urbanized unincorporated county areas, thereby supporting state and local housing and climate goals.

For these reasons, CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 2199. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: Grant Mack, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
The Honorable Assemblymember Marc Berman, 23rd Assembly District



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Graham Knaus

August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2432 (Gabriel) California Victims of Crime Act.
As Enrolled – August 29, 2024 – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) writes in support of AB 2432 by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel. This measure, the California Victims of Crime Act, would establish the California Crime Victims Fund (CVF) in the California State Treasury and authorizes courts to impose additional fines on corporations convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, known as the corporate white-collar criminal enhancement, with the fines deposited into the California Crime Victims Fund. Thus, AB 2432 supports victims of crime through additional and separate restitution fines.

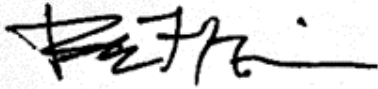
The existing federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) facilitates funding for the delivery of essential crime victim services via the VOCA Crime Victims Fund (CVF). The CVF is a nontaxpayer source of funding that is financed by monetary penalties associated with federal criminal convictions, as well as penalties from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements. Deposits into the CVF fluctuate based on the number of criminal cases that are handled by the United States Department of Justice, with Congress determining on an annual basis how much to release from the CVF to states. Unfortunately, VOCA funding has steadily declined in recent years. As such, a tangible impact will undeniably be felt by California's victim service providers, with many being forced to lay off staff, cut programs, and shut down operations unless there is supplemental support.

The positive impact of victim services across California cannot be understated. This can include health and higher education access for victims of gender-based violence, legal and housing services for victims of human trafficking, a wide range of culturally appropriate victim services programs, and plenty more. Accordingly, AB 2432 will provide a crucial source of revenue to support the provision of victim services in California by helping address reductions in federal dollars through the imposition of enhanced penalties of up to \$25 million for corporations convicted of white-collar crimes.

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
AB 2432 (Gabriel) – Request for Signature
Page 2 of 2

It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 2432. Should you have any questions regarding CSAC's position, please do not hesitate to contact Ryan Morimune at CSAC (rmorimune@counties.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RMorimune", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ryan Morimune
Senior Legislative Advocate, CSAC

CC: The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, California State Assembly
Jith Meganathan, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office



August 25, 2024

The Honorable Gail Pellerin
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6310
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2496 (Pellerin) – Liability claims: foster family agencies and noncustodial adoption agencies.
As Amended August 23, 2024 – REMOVE OPPOSITION**

Dear Assembly Member Pellerin:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the Urban Counties of California (UCC), we are writing to share that we are removing our opposition to your AB 2496. Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) are a critical partner of counties in caring for the well-being of children placed into foster care. Our associations are concerned that many FFAs are going to lose their insurance coverage and be at risk of closure as the primary insurance carrier has indicated they are going to stop renewing policies starting in September. This creates unstable situations for thousands of foster children unless their home can be quickly transitioned to the county or another FFA. Counties continue to support the goal of finding a long-term solution to the insurance crisis but must also be equipped to transition foster families and youth when needed with as little disruption as possible. While we retain strong concerns with a specific provision in the bill, the amended version now includes essential tools for counties to respond to situations where an FFA may lose insurance coverage.

Prohibition on Indemnification Agreements

Unfortunately, AB 2496 would still prohibit the use of certain types of indemnification agreements in contracts between counties and FFAs, though does now include language to make this provision inoperative in two years. We continue to have strong concerns with this provision, even with the two-year sunset, and it will do nothing to stop FFAs from losing insurance coverage.

Not all counties contract with FFAs for child welfare and adoption services, choosing instead to use simpler placement agreements with FFAs. Regardless of the scope of the contract, these agreements routinely include provisions allocating the inevitable risks between the parties, as negotiated by the parties themselves. The purpose of these provisions is not to hold FFAs responsible for the negligence of others. Indeed, even the broadest indemnity clauses typically exclude the county's own sole negligence from their scope. Rather, the principal purpose of an indemnification provision is to allow the parties to negotiate, in advance, their respective responsibilities in the vast majority of real-world cases where liability is disputed or shared. Many counties are self-insured for liability purposes, and it is critical these counties are allowed to negotiate their contracts as works best for their operations and their service providers.

Streamlining Transferring FFA Resource Family Home Approval

In response to the likelihood of some FFAs losing insurance coverage and closing, the bill now provides necessary tools to make this transition as seamless as possible. AB 2496 gives the California Department

of Social Services (CDSS) the authority to streamline the process of transferring resource family home approval from an FFA that closes to the county or another FFA. CDSS will have the ability to grant waivers on existing guidance in order to reduce timelines and other barriers. This bill also ensures that resource families will continue to receive the higher rates provided to FFA families during this transition. Taken together, these tools and flexibilities prioritize the safety and well-being of foster children and will allow counties to reduce disruption during this transition process.

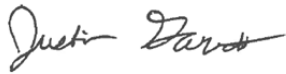
Work Toward a Long-Term Solution

While this bill does not identify a long-term solution to the insurance coverage crisis facing FFAs, it does start a process for working toward that solution. AB 2496 requires CDSS to examine options for insurance coverage, work with relevant departments and stakeholders, and report to the Legislature during next year's budget process. Our associations recognize that a thoughtful and collaborative approach is necessary to address insurance availability and affordability, and this bill takes a first step in that direction.

Conclusion

Despite our continued concerns with the prohibition on indemnification agreements, our associations are removing our opposition to AB 2496 given the inclusion of critically needed flexibilities for counties to respond to this crisis. Thank you for your leadership on this significant issue facing our communities and we look forward to continued engagement.

Sincerely,



Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate
CSAC



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
RCRC



Jean Hurst
Legislative Advocate
UCC

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Human Services Committee
Joe Parra, Senate Republican Caucus
Angela Pontes, Office of Governor Newsom
Brady Borcharding, Office of Governor Newsom



SENATE FLOOR ALERT
AB 2561 (McKinnor) – Local Public Employees: Vacant Positions
As Amended August 23, 2024 – OPPOSE

On behalf of a broad coalition of local government associations, we regretfully urge you to **vote no** on Assembly Bill 2561, which will impose expensive and unnecessary burdens on local agencies that will detract from efforts to recruit and retain the public workforce.

The recent amendments do not address our primary concerns, in some cases worsening the impacts of the bill. For these reasons, we remain opposed to AB 2561, which:

- Imposes an **expensive reimbursable state mandate** on thousands of public agencies, requiring every local agency to hold annual public hearings regardless of their vacancy rates or size.
- **Detracts from resources** needed to address vacancies and **distracts local governing boards** from addressing the needs of their communities.
- For agencies experiencing high vacancy rates, the bill **imposes burdensome and costly** reporting requirements.
- **Lacks any resources** to address root causes of vacancies and ignores recent cuts to funds and programs designed to address the vacancy problem among local agencies.

Vote NO on AB 2561



August 20, 2024

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Signature on Assembly Bill 2631 (M. Fong) – Local agencies: ethics training

Dear Governor Newsom:

The Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), and the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) respectfully request your signature on AB 2631 (M. Fong), relating to the FPPC's local agency ethics training course.

Existing law requires each local agency official to receive ethics training every two years that includes training on their ethical duties under the Political Reform Act of 1974 and on other ethics principles and laws. The Fair Political Practices Commission has voluntarily maintained an online local ethics training course that is available to all local officials free of charge. The training course is a highly beneficial resource for local agencies and is heavily relied on and used by local officials, with 88,900 users completing the course since 2010. With the passage of AB 2158 in 2022, about 2,000 additional agencies and several thousand additional agency officials will become subject to these training requirements starting in 2025, which the FPPC expects will result in increased usage of the training course.

AB 2631 would codify the FPPC's ethics training program in statute, thereby making it a permanent program that can be relied on by local officials indefinitely. The bill will ensure that local officials continue to have free and convenient access to a resource that educates these officials on important ethics laws that impact their work and decision-making.

If you have any questions, please contact Lindsey Nakano at LNakano@fppc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Adam Silver, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission

Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

Marcus Detwiler, Legislative Representative
California Special Districts Association

Johnnie Piña, Legislative Affairs Lobbyist
League of California Cities



FLOOR ALERT

To: Members of the California State Senate
Date: August 23, 2024
Re: **Assembly Bill 2643 (Wood) – SUPPORT
As Amended August 23, 2024**

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), California Cannabis Industry Association (CCIA), and California Special Districts Association (CSDA), we respectfully request your support for Assembly Bill 2643 (Wood). This measure addresses the critical issue of illicit cannabis cultivation and its detrimental impacts on California's natural resources. Local jurisdictions are on the front lines dealing with environmental degradation from illicit cannabis operators who sidestep regulations and undermine the health and safety of residents and our regulated cannabis businesses. We believe that AB 2643 is an important tool to mitigate the environmental harm caused by illicit cannabis cultivation.

Illicit cannabis cultivation poses a significant threat to the California ecosystem, often leading to habitat destruction, water diversions, and the use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers. Despite efforts to detect and eradicate these cultivation sites, the process of site restoration has been slow. The lack of restoration progress not only perpetuates environmental degradation but also undermines the long-term health and resilience of our natural landscapes.

AB 2643 requires the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to conduct a study and create a framework for cannabis site restoration, the bill aims to provide guidance for efforts, building on current eradication and reclamation operations. Furthermore, the bill will enhance reconnaissance efforts by assessing the use of new technologies, such as remote sensing and comprehensive mapping capabilities, to identify illicit cultivation sites on public lands. Improving data collection and sharing will enable more targeted and efficient enforcement actions.

AB 2643 represents a crucial opportunity to address the environmental challenges posed by illicit cannabis cultivation and promote the restoration and conservation of California's natural resources. For these reasons, RCRC, CSAC, Cal Cities, CCIA, and CSDA support AB 2643 and urge your "aye" vote.

Vote Yes on AB 2643



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CEO

Graham Knaus

August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2704 (Zbur): In-home supportive services: criminal background checks.
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing to request your signature on Assembly Bill 2704 by Assembly Member Rick Chavez Zbur. This measure prohibits the Department of Justice (DOJ) from assessing a fee on an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) provider, applicant to become a provider, or a county for the purposes of conducting an investigation or criminal background check of an IHSS provider or applicant.

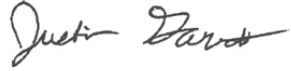
California's population of older adults aged 65 and older is projected to reach 25 percent of the population, or 8.6 million Californians, by 2030. IHSS is an essential program in meeting the goals of the Master Plan for Aging to enable this growing population to age with dignity and independence, as well as assisting adults with disabilities. Currently, about 680,000 IHSS providers deliver services to over 775,000 recipients in the state.

In order to become an IHSS provider, applicants must submit fingerprint images to the DOJ for a criminal background check. The DOJ currently sets this fee at \$32, which is in addition to third-party vendor costs to perform fingerprinting. This cost creates a financial barrier for those seeking to become IHSS providers, many of which are low-income.

AB 2704 waives the DOJ criminal background check fee for IHSS providers without shifting the financial burden to counties. This measure reduces the financial barrier of becoming an IHSS provider and will aid efforts to recruit and retain the state's caregiving workforce. As the number of Californian's receiving services through the IHSS program is expected to continue to grow, it is critical to ensure California has a qualified and prepared workforce to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 2704. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Rick Chavez Zbur, California State Assembly
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



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August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2995 (Jackson): Public health: alcohol and drug programs.
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, I am writing to request your signature on Assembly Bill 2995 by Assembly Member Corey Jackson. This measure deletes outdated substance use disorder terminology in existing law and replaces it with person-first terminology.

Research has shown that stigmatizing language is one barrier to people seeking treatment for substance use disorders. In addition, stigmatizing language can lead to intentional and unintentional discrimination against people living with substance use disorder conditions as they seek to obtain housing, access to services, education, and employment. As California continues to prioritize access and treatment for behavioral health services, it is important to update the state's statutory language so as not to perpetuate harmful stigma that creates additional barriers for people living with substance use disorder conditions.

It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 2995. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 591-5308 or jonodera@counties.org. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Respectfully,

Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Dr. Corey Jackson, Assembly Member
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



August 29, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 N Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 3025 (Valencia): County employees' retirement: disallowed compensation: benefit adjustments.
As Enrolled August 28, 2024 - REQUEST FOR VETO**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and League of California Cities (Cal Cities), we write to respectfully request that you veto Assembly Bill (AB) 3025, which would place a significant financial burden on member agencies of county retirement systems by requiring member agencies, including counties, cities, and special districts, to pay substantial penalties for decisions they did not make and over which they had no authority.

Following the passage of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA), county retirement systems took varying approaches to comply with the provisions of PEPRA related to which types of compensation may be included in retirement benefit calculations. On July 30, 2020, the California Supreme Court issued a decision in the case *Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Assn. v Alameda County Employees' Retirement Assn.*, otherwise known as the "Alameda decision," in which the Court upheld provisions of PEPRA related to disallowed forms of compensation for retirement calculations. Over the last four years, the impacted '37 Act systems have been working to comply with *Alameda* and recalculate retirement benefits for members who retired after January 1, 2013.

While the impacted compensation was bargained and mutually agreed upon by both employers and employees, AB 3025 unfairly places the financial consequences of the Court's decision on counties and other agencies. The bill requires '37 Act system employers to pay a "penalty" equal to 20 percent of the current

actuarial value of retiree benefits deemed unlawful. The penalty, which will result in affected agencies owing millions of unbudgeted dollars to retirees for what the Court found to be an illegal benefit, implies those agencies made the decision to misapply the law. In reality, they simply complied with the pension agreements established between employees, employers, and retirement systems.

The fiscal impact on affected agencies will significantly strain general fund dollars, resulting in reductions to critical programs including public safety, transportation, and behavioral health. For the reasons mentioned above, we respectfully urge you to veto AB 3025. Should you have any questions about our request, please contact us at the below email addresses.

Respectfully,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of
Counties
elawyer@counties.org



Aaron Avery
Director of State Legislative Affairs
California Special Districts Association
aarona@cstda.net



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
Urban Counties of California
jkh@hbeadvocacy.com



Sarah Duckett
Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California
sduckett@rcrcnet.org



Johnnie Pina
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
League of California Cities
jpina@calcities.org

cc: The Honorable Avelino Valencia, California State Assembly
Mary Hernandez, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary



August 26, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 3179 (Carrillo) Authorized emergency vehicles.
REUQEST FOR SIGNATURE *(As Amended June 27, 2024)*

Dear Governor Newsom,

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully requests your signature on **AB 3179 (Carrillo)**, which would amend the definition of "authorized emergency vehicle" to include certain vehicles essential for maintaining critical communication services during emergencies.

This measure addresses the significant challenge of ensuring reliable communication systems, which are vital for first responders and the restoration of essential services. By including bucket trucks in the definition of authorized emergency vehicles, AB 3179 provides local jurisdictions the ability to quickly respond to emergencies threatening our infrastructure in a cost-effective manner. Additionally, this measure helps cities and counties avoid any interruptions to accessing emergency vehicles due to a lack of manufacturing availability of new technologies.

Specifically, AB 3179 exempts these critical emergency vehicles from the state regulations requiring the procurement of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (ZEV). This exemption is crucial as the ZEV technology and availability of these larger bucket trucks is still relatively nascent. While we support this growing industry, the lack of available vehicles and the exceedingly high price point only create barriers for local jurisdictions to comply with the state mandate. These specific vehicles operate under diverse and often extreme conditions, and their performance and availability during major disruptions, such as severe weather or natural disasters, are paramount to public safety and the rapid restoration of communication networks.

For these reasons, Cal Cities and CSAC respectfully request your signature on AB 3179. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact either of us at dconklin@calcities.org or mneuburger@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Conklin", on a light-colored background.

Damon Conklin
Legislative Advocate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger", on a light-colored background.

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

cc: The Honorable Juan Carrillo
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office

CALBROADBAND
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ctia™



WIA Wireless Infrastructure Association



LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

USTELECOM

THE BROADBAND ASSOCIATION



FLOOR ALERT AB 3179 – SUPPORT

- ✓ VOTE AYE for **911 access for all Californians.**
- ✓ VOTE AYE for access to **communication during a disaster.**
- ✓ VOTE AYE for **evacuation** notifications.
- ✓ VOTE AYE for **access to first responders.**
- ✓ VOTE AYE for **earthquake, fire, and flood notifications.**
- ✓ VOTE AYE for access to the federal **Emergency Alert System.**





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Chuck Washington
Riverside County



CEO

Graham Knaus

August 29, 2024

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 3253 (Berman) Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists: licensees: professional land surveyors: surveying practices: monuments and corner accessories.
As Enrolled on August 28, 2024 – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, respectfully requests your signature on AB 3253, which extends the authority for the Board of Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) to license and regulate professions established under the Professional Engineers Act, the Professional Land Surveyors' Act, and the Geologist and Geophysicist Act, respectively, to January 1, 2029, and expands the Board's authority to enforce against certain unlicensed activities.

Members of the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) have expressed that their staff members are experiencing exceptionally long wait times for a decision by the Board to be licensed as a civil engineer. Some have indicated that applicants have waited 8-12 months before being officially licensed by the state.

CSAC spoke with the Board to discuss these issues, and we want to thank the Board for taking the time to explain the reason for the backlog and their priority to review applications on a quicker scale. However, the Board has indicated that the current process to license applications is still approximately 6 months, and if the application has any issues, it could be easily extended to 12 months.

Counties have experienced difficulty finding an adequate number of licensed engineers they require to build the infrastructure their communities need. We note that county challenges in this area are part of the broader national labor shortage due to a limited supply of licensed professionals, especially engineers.

CSAC also spoke with the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee and the Assembly Business and Professions Committee, who reiterated that the large influx of applications and limited staffing was most likely the issue for the problem. **We are hopeful that the administration will encourage the Board to develop a strategy and/or a working plan to reduce the timeline to process applications to address the severe backlog of civil engineer applications.**

CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 3253. If you need additional information, please contact 916.591.2764 or mneuburger@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mark Neuburger".

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties

CC: Sam Miller, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
The Honorable Assemblymember Marc Berman, 23rd Assembly District



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CEO

Graham Knaus

August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 37 (Caballero): Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities Housing Stability Act.
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am writing to request your signature on Senate Bill 37 by Senator Anna Caballero. This measure would, upon appropriation of the Legislature, establish the Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities Housing Stability Pilot Program. This pilot program would offer competitive grants in up to five geographic regions or counties to administer housing subsidies for older adults and adults with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

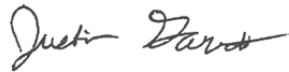
As California continues to grapple with the growing homelessness crisis, vulnerable populations such as older adults and adults with disabilities are disproportionately impacted. According to a recent report by the UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, the proportion of adults age 50 and older who are experiencing homelessness has risen faster than any other age group in the past few decades, and the proportion of people over the age of 65 experiencing homelessness is expected to triple between 2017 and 2030. These populations often live on fixed incomes that are insufficient to cover California's skyrocketing housing costs and waitlists for housing vouchers can take years before a housing subsidy becomes available. SB 37 seeks to tackle this issue by establishing a grant program for housing authorities, continuums of care, area agencies on aging, and community-based organizations to provide targeted housing subsidies for older adults and adults with disabilities experiencing homelessness or most at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Recognizing the growing humanitarian crisis of homelessness across the state, CSAC released the AT HOME plan (Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation & Economic Opportunity) last year. This plan outlines clear responsibilities and accountability aligned to authority, resources, and flexibility for all levels of government within a comprehensive homelessness response system. It includes a full slate of policy recommendations to help build more housing, prevent individuals from becoming homeless, and better serve those

individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness. SB 37 aligns with the recommendations included in the Housing and Mitigation pillars of AT HOME.

While the state's investments into homelessness programs in recent years has enabled the successful transition of many unhoused individuals into permanent housing, the inflow into homelessness continues to outpace our collective efforts. SB 37 establishes a critical tool to not only house California's aging and dependent adult populations, but to also prevent new entrances into homelessness. It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on SB 37. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Anna Caballero
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



LEAGUE OF
CALIFORNIA
CITIES



California Special
Districts Association

Districts Stronger Together



ACHD
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTHCARE DISTRICTS



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA



URBAN COUNTIES
OF CALIFORNIA



association of california
school administrators

ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT

SB 399 (Wahab) Employer communications: intimidation [As amended August 19, 2024]

OPPOSE

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD), and the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) request your **NO vote** on **Senate Bill 399 (Wahab)**. This bill will hinder routine local government and school operations and may subject public employers to costly litigation.

- SB 399 **applies to cities, counties, special districts, school districts, all other local government entities, and to the state.**
- SB 399 is **overly broad** and will pose serious concerns for local jurisdictions.
- SB 399 **would treat many routine government functions as political matters** and interfere with basic government operations.
- There is not a single **problem identified** involving local agencies forcing religious or political beliefs on their employees. Public employers are also already prohibited from deterring or discouraging union membership.
- SB 399 is **vague**, and the **exceptions are too narrow** to address the core concerns of public employers.
- SB 399 exposes local governments and schools to **risk of significant litigation expenses** for simply carrying out the public's business.

Senate Bill 399 is a “solution” in search of a problem for public agencies. For these reasons, our organizations respectfully **request your “NO” vote** on Senate Bill 399.

For more information, please contact Aaron Avery, California Special Districts Association: aarona@csda.net



LEAGUE OF
**CALIFORNIA
CITIES**



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together



ACHD
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTHCARE DISTRICTS



RCRC
RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA



**URBAN COUNTIES
OF CALIFORNIA**



association of california
school administrators

SENATE FLOOR ALERT

SB 399 (Wahab) Employer communications: intimidation [As amended August 19, 2024] OPPOSE

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD), and the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) request your **NO vote** on **Senate Bill 399 (Wahab)**. This bill will hinder routine local government and school operations and may subject public employers to costly litigation.

- SB 399 **applies to cities, counties, special districts, school districts, all other local government entities, and to the state.**
- SB 399 is **overly broad** and will pose serious concerns for local jurisdictions.
- SB 399 **would treat many routine government functions as political matters** and interfere with basic government operations.
- There is not a single **problem identified** involving local agencies forcing religious or political beliefs on their employees. Public employers are also already prohibited from deterring or discouraging union membership.
- SB 399 is **vague**, and the **exceptions are too narrow** to address the core concerns of public employers.
- SB 399 exposes local governments and schools to **risk of significant litigation expenses** for simply carrying out the public's business.

Senate Bill 399 is a “solution” in search of a problem for public agencies. For these reasons, our organizations respectfully **request your “NO” vote** on Senate Bill 399.

For more information, please contact Aaron Avery, California Special Districts Association: aarona@csda.net



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Ed Valenzuela
Siskiyou County



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Graham Knaus

August 28, 2024

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
Chair, Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism
1021 O St., Suite 152
Sacramento CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 620 (McGuire) Low-Impact Camping Areas
As Amended August 23, 2024 - SUPPORT**

Assembly Member Gipson:

I write on behalf of the California State Association of Counties in support of Senate Bill 620, which defines and creates standards for “low-impact camping areas” and in turn encourage recreation and promote rural tourism while maintaining counties’ ability to tailor these options to best meet the needs of their local communities.

Low-impact camping requires little or no infrastructure and is offered at every price point, which means more Californians can benefit from time outdoors. It can also diversify and supplement income for small farms and ranches, which are highly desirable locations for low-impact camping. Welcoming campers on working lands connects Californians to agricultural lands and lifestyles while simultaneously providing sustainable and diverse revenue to our small farmers and ranchers.

Importantly, SB 620 allows local governments to *opt-in* to the provisions of SB 620, ensuring that only counties who both want, and are able to support, low-impact camping sites will be affected.

CSAC supports efforts to promote agricultural, historic, and natural resources tourism throughout the state. SB 620 would be a valuable tool for local governments to promote tourism in their respective areas while also maintaining local control. Expanding tourism opportunities benefits counties by increasing local revenue and supporting jobs throughout the local economy.

It is for these reasons, we strongly support SB 620, and appreciate your work on this issue. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions to awaelder@counties.org or at [\(916\) 809-1044](tel:9168091044).

Sincerely,

Ada Waelder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Senate Pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism



August 29, 2024

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 768 (Caballero) California Environmental Quality Act: Department of Housing and Community Development: vehicle miles traveled: study.
As Enrolled on August 29, 2024 – Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), respectfully request your signature on SB 768 (Caballero), which tasks the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), in consultation with local governments and other interested parties to conduct a study on how vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is used as a metric for measuring transportation impacts of housing projects pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Counties and Cities recognize that climate change and the release of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere have the potential to dramatically impact our environment, land use decisions, transportation networks, and the economy. It is of statewide interest to provide for a balanced, seamless, and multi-modal transportation system on a planned and coordinated manner, consistent with social, economic, political, and environmental goals of the state.

SB 768 will task HCD with analyzing the differences in the availability and feasibility of mitigation measures to housing projects for vehicle miles traveled in rural, suburban, urban and low vehicle miles traveled areas, and report back to the Legislature by January 2028.

Transportation systems must be fully integrated with planned land use; support the lifestyles desired by people; and be compatible with the environment by

considering GHG emissions, air and noise pollution, aesthetics, ecological factors, cost benefit analyses, and energy goals.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your signature on SB 768. If you need additional information, please contact do not hesitate to contact Mark Neuburger at mneuburger@counties.org, John Kennedy at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org, and Damon Conklin at dconklin@calcities.org.

Respectfully,



Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties



John Kennedy
Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California



Damon Conklin
Legislative Representative
League of California Cities

CC: Grant Mack, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
The Honorable Senator Anna Caballero, 14th Senate District



August 27, 2024

The Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Member, California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6730
Sacramento, Ca 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 830 (Smallwood-Cuevas) – OPPOSE
As Amended August 15, 2024**

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), we write in concerned opposition to your Senate Bill 830 as amended on August 15, 2024. As local governments and local agencies that rely on complex supply chains in order to operate and maintain our facilities, as well as to implement state goals like providing shelter for the unhoused and other vulnerable communities, we are concerned that the augmented costs to sheet metal materials from this bill will make the construction and maintenance of local facilities more costly and difficult to achieve.

Our concerns over this legislation are several, but they largely source from a fundamental dynamic affecting local governments and agencies today: carrying out public goals like sheltering and housing, while meeting ongoing expectations to operate our facilities cost-effectively and efficiently, during a time of escalating costs of materials and construction. Local governments and agencies today are subject to a growing list of legislative and regulatory mandates that require significant investment in hard infrastructure and the materials that comprise it. These expectations including providing shelter to the unhoused, as well as safe facilities with necessary ventilation to respond to pandemic outbreaks, similarly safe and publicly-accessible facilities during heat and cold events from extreme climatic conditions, as well as the everyday operation of municipal facilities that provision the electricity, safe drinking water, and other services on which our citizens rely.

Despite the growing list of policy and regulatory rules with which we must comply, our budgets have only stagnated or shrunk in recent years, not dissimilar to our current state budget. Furthermore, the household budgets of our ratepayers are more stretched than ever. As a general matter, local governments and agencies are loathe to pass costs to our ratepayers unless truly necessary, and we are governed by strict constitutional standards if we do. Yet, our costs for new construction, retrofits, and maintenance of existing facilities only grow year on year, while financial support from state and federal partners do not meet the moment, leaving us in the unenviable position of having to uphold major policies beyond our basic duties without sufficient resources to achieve those policy goals.

Additionally, we fear this bill not only puts strain on our public responsibility to operate facilities financially prudently, it will likely lead to a rush of future laws that apply California labor and wage standards to all parts of the supply chain, regardless of where those supplies are sourced. We fear that costs for all sorts of facility and operational materials will skyrocket to levels far beyond what our procurement staff have currently budgeted.

We leave it to partners in our coalition to detail why California wages may not be appropriate or necessary for manufacturers and suppliers in other regions, states, and polities. We, instead, implore the Legislature to remember that adding complicated rules to the supply chain that support public services only accelerates the costs that must ultimately be borne by the public. While we understand the need for fair wages, we think this legislation far oversteps a balanced approach by incorrectly assuming prevailing wages at project sites are also the appropriate wage for workers in facilities hundreds or thousands of miles away, where labor markets differ greatly.

In short, many of our local operations are already approaching breaking points, especially budgetary cliffs. And we fear failure to provide services, because costs are burdensome, will only become a future political issue with which we (and ultimately the state legislature) must deal. We therefore ask that this legislation not be advanced at this time, and that we instead take a closer look at the existing drivers of costs that make confronting the housing shortage, heat events, sheltering, and pandemics already challenging to accomplish.

For these reasons, we must regretfully oppose your SB 830. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact Sidd Nag (RCRC) at snag@rcrcnet.org; Anthony Tannehill (CSDA) at anthonyt@csda.net; Mark Neuberger (CSAC) at mneuberger@counties.org; or Damon Conklin (Cal Cities) at dconklin@calcities.org.

Sincerely,



Sidd Nag
Policy Advocate
RCRC



Mark Neuberger
Legislative Advocate
CSAC



Anthony Tannehill
Legislative Representative
CSDA



Damon Conklin
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
Cal Cities



August 30, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 895 (Roth) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and Urban Counties of California (UCC) we respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 895 (Roth). This measure directs the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to establish a pilot program to allow up to 10 community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

The shortage of health professionals in California, and particularly the rural areas of the state, has been a persistent concern for many years, and has become more acute in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the aging of the health care workforce. Rural areas with smaller populations that are farther from urban centers often have the lowest supply of health professionals per capita. Further, rural California does not have a high concentration of the four-year universities needed for graduate degree health professionals; however, often these communities have access to community college programs. Health care workforce shortage problems are not isolated to rural areas. The Inland Empire and the Central Valley are two of the fastest growing regions in California, and they are the two areas that have the lowest per capita health workforce. It's also a challenge to recruit and retain people in the Central Valley and Inland Empire that reflect the diversity and language capabilities of these regions.

A recent [study](#) by the Healthforce Center at the University of California, San Francisco, which examines the healthcare workforce landscape in rural and the County Medical Services program (CMSP) counties, found that the Imperial Valley (Imperial), North Central region (Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Tehama), and the San Joaquin Valley (Kings, Madera, Merced, Tulare) sub-regions have the lowest ratios of RNs per capita in the state. Statewide estimates show California faces a shortage of about 36,000 licensed nurses.

California's current healthcare workforce development apparatus is not equipped to handle the growing nursing needs of the state, especially in

disadvantaged communities and in rural parts of the state. While California's Community College system does offer associate degrees in nursing, the needs of the healthcare workforce more frequently demand a bachelor's degree. This level of degree is exclusive in California to private institutions that are prohibitively expensive, or to the University of California and the California State University systems which have limited capacity and difficulty serving areas of the state with the highest need.

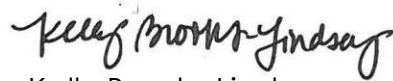
In order to meet our nursing workforce needs and extend these career opportunities to Californians throughout the state, we must expand the role of our community college system. SB 895 will take the first step in this process by allowing a limited number of community college districts to expand their nursing programs to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. This will expand the access and affordability of these degrees and will demonstrate how these offerings might be further expanded to additional community college districts.

For these reasons, our organizations respectfully request your signature on SB 895.

Respectfully,



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California
sdukett@rcrcnet.org
916-447-4806



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Advocate
Urban Counties of California
kbl@hbeadvocacy.com
916-753-0844



Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate
California State Association of Counties
jonodera@counties.org
916-591-5308

cc: The Honorable Richard Roth, Member of the California State Senate
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Nichole Munoz Murrillo, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of
the Governor



August 29, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1064 (Laird) – SUPPORT – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), League of California Cities (Cal Cities), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and California Cannabis Industry Association (CCIA), we respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 1064 (Laird), which aims to streamline the state licensing process for cannabis.

SB 1064 addresses several key challenges faced by cannabis businesses operating in California. One of the most pressing issues is the inefficiency of the current licensing system, which requires businesses to obtain multiple licenses for different activities conducted at a single location. This not only creates unnecessary administrative burdens for businesses but also increases processing times and costs for both applicants and regulatory agencies.

This bill will simplify the licensing scheme for commercial cannabis activities by adding a combined activities license classification, which allows for two or more commercial cannabis activities at the same premises to be authorized under a single license and streamlines the submission of owner-related information.

Overall, this bill seeks to reduce unnecessary complexity and duplication within the cannabis regulatory environment and reduce challenges and barriers to basic compliance for businesses.

For the above reasons, we respectfully request your signature on SB 1064.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Senate Bill 1064 (Laird)
August 29, 2024
Page 2



SARAH DUKETT
Policy Advocate
RCRC
sdukett@rcrcnet.org



JOLENA VOORHIS
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
Cal Cities
jvoorhis@calcities.org



ADA WAELDER
Legislative Advocate
CSAC
awaelder@counties.org



AMY O'GORMAN JENKINS
Legislative Advocate
CCIA
amy@precisionadvocacy.co

cc: The Honorable John Laird, Member of the California State Senate
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



SENATE FLOOR ALERT

Senate Bill 1072 (Padilla) Proposition 218: Remedies

SUPPORT CONCURRENCE VOTE

Members of the California State Senate:

We, the undersigned coalition of water suppliers and retail water agencies, are writing to express our support for Senate Bill (SB) 1072, as it returns to the Senate for concurrence with Assembly amendments that remove the declaratory of existing law provision. SB 1072 will protect public agencies from costly legal challenges to their water, sewer, and refuse collection service fee structures. This bill will also protect future ratepayers whose bills would be increased to pay for these lawsuits.

Proposition 218, approved by voters in 1996, amended the California Constitution and requires water, sewer, and refuse collection rates to be reasonably proportional to the costs of providing those services to a given property. The legislature enacted SB 919 "The Proposition 218 Omnibus Implementation Act" to clarify specific provisions of the proposition. SB 1072 seeks to further clarify the types of remedies available to customers who challenge water, sewer, and refuse collection rates.

Writs of mandate, declaratory relief, and injunctive relief – which direct a public agency to change their rates in the future - are the traditional and appropriate remedies that courts have imposed for violations of Proposition 218. In contrast to these remedies, new class-action lawsuits have sought multi-million-dollar refunds, which, if ordered by a court, would force public agencies who merely recover annual costs and receive no profit to raise rates on future ratepayers in order to pay refunds to past users.

No part of Proposition 218 provides for a refund. SB 1072 will declare and clarify that if a court determines that a fee or charge for a property-related service, including water, sewer, and refuse collection, violates Section 6 of Article XIII D of the California Constitution, then the local agency shall, in the next procedure to impose or increase the fee or charge, credit the amount of the fee or charge attributable to the violation against the amount of the revenues required to provide the property-related service unless a refund is explicitly provided for by statute.

Therefore, a challenger's remedy will be to require the agency to change their rate structure going forward. This will significantly help agencies maintain predictable rates for water, sewer, and refuse collection services and ensure that low water users are not paying refunds to high water users, by making it clear in the Government Code that a remedy shall be prospective, except when refunds are explicitly provided for in law, or in the case of billing errors.

For these reasons, we strongly support SB 1072. If you have any questions regarding, please do not hesitate to contact Tenille Otero with the Otay Water District at totero@otaywater.gov or (619) 670-2256 or Baltazar Cornejo with Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP at bcornejo@bhfs.com or (916) 594-9705. Thank you for your consideration.

We urge your "AYE" vote on SB 1072 for Concurrence

CAL-NV American Water Works Association
California Municipal Utilities Association
California State Association of Counties
Association of California Water Agencies
California Special Districts Association
City of San Diego
Coachella Valley Water District
Desert Water Agency
El Dorado Irrigation District
Fallbrook Public Utility District
Helix Water District
League of California Cities
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Otay Water District

Padre Dam Municipal Water District
Palmdale Water District
Rainbow Municipal Water District
Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District
Rowland Water District
San Diego County Water Authority
San Gabriel Valley Water Association
Santa Fe Irrigation District
Sweetwater Authority
Trabuco Canyon Water District
Vallecitos Water District
Valley Center Municipal Water District
Valley Sanitation District
Walnut Valley Water District



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Susan Ellenberg
Santa Clara County

Past President

Chuck Washington
Riverside County



CEO

Graham Knaus

August 30, 2024

The Honorable John Laird
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 8720
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1272 (Laird): California Environmental Quality Act: program
environmental impact report: clean energy infrastructure projects
As Amended: August 27, 2024–SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Laird,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 California Counties, we write to support SB 1272. This bill provides an expedited process for the construction of solar, wind, energy storage, and clean energy manufacturing projects while maintaining environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

SB 1272 requires the California Energy Commission to prepare a program environmental impact report (EIR) to analyze the impacts of different classes of facilities, including solar, terrestrial wind, energy storage, and clean energy manufacturing projects that result in a capital investment of at least \$250 million. The bill seeks to facilitate this goal without compromising California's environmental review processes.

The program EIR as proposed in SB 1272 is designed to be utilized by projects meeting the specific criteria under the final document. Project-specific impacts are not precluded in the program EIR, but the baseline project criteria and CEQA process itself are streamlined allowing for reduced costs, time and legal cost savings.

Under SB 1272, the Energy Commission's program EIR will evaluate potential project locations for that class of facilities, potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures, cumulative impacts, and project alternatives. SB 1272 essentially front loads comprehensive analyses and identification of mitigation measures and allows a public agency reviewing the actual project to avoid having to cover issues and impacts that were already examined and mitigated in the program EIR. Ultimately, SB 1272 will help reduce project delays related to environmental review and litigation without compromising the rigor or detail of environmental analysis and protection. Of equal importance, SB 1272 could help local governments more quickly evaluate and permit the types of projects

covered by the Energy Commission's EIR and assist in meeting the state's clean energy goals.

For these reasons, CSAC supports SB 1272 which streamlines the environmental review process for specific renewable energy, energy storage and clean energy manufacturing projects. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at awaelder@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ada W".

Ada Waelder
CSAC Legislative Advocate

cc: Members & Consultants, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Members & Consultants, Senate Environmental Quality Committee



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Graham Knaus

August 29, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1319 (Wahab): Skilled nursing facilities: approval to provide therapeutic behavioral health programs.
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, I am writing to request your signature on Senate Bill 1319 by Senator Aisha Wahab. This measure streamlines the approval process for skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) seeking to offer behavioral health services for residents by creating a process for SNFs to apply simultaneously to the multiple state departments that require approval for a SNF to provide special treatment program services.

There are currently three state departments that have a role in approving a special treatment program service unit of a SNF: California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), and Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Special treatment program services are provided within SNFs that are designed to serve patients with chronic psychiatric impairment and need additional support than what could be provided in a regular SNF. In order for a SNF to convert or expand existing facilities to offer special treatment program services, SNF providers must obtain approvals from multiple state departments, resulting in a protracted and costly process for providers seeking to offer this level of care.

A key factor in addressing California's behavioral health crisis is ensuring the adequate availability of treatment facilities and infrastructure. Although significant investments have been made in recent years, California still lacks the facilities needed to provide behavioral health treatment and care for all who need it, particularly for those with acute needs. SB 1319 simplifies and expedites the approval process for building or converting SNF units to special treatment program service units, reducing an administrative barrier that prevents the efficient buildout of these much-needed treatment beds.

It is for these reasons that CSAC respectfully requests your signature on SB 1319. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 591-5308 or jonodera@counties.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jolie", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jolie Onodera
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Aisha Wahab, California State Senate
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor



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August 28, 2024

ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT
SB 1390 (Caballero): Groundwater Recharge: floodflows diversion
As Amended – August 22, 2024 – SUPPORT
Assembly Third Reading File

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties, representing all 58 California Counties, we write to support SB 1390 (Caballero). This measure builds upon the progress made in the past year to enable California to divert flood flows for groundwater recharge by clarifying when these flows may be captured for the benefit of aquifers, what planning requirements are necessary for local agencies pursuing recharge, and expanding reporting requirements for diversions made under existing law.

In recent years, weather conditions have worsened and are becoming an increasing problem for California. Facing whiplash from drought, our counties experienced historic flooding, coastal erosion, and record snowpack. Counties are on the front lines of support when water emergencies, drought and flood occur. Our communities are dependent upon reliable water supply and flood control planning and distribution at the state and local level. While recent years have been marked by flooding and historic snowpack levels, it is clear that these types of wet years are unreliable, and California will need to adapt to extremes in future flood and drought cycles.

In March 2023, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order, authorizing water agencies, with a set of reporting requirements and safety parameters, to divert excess flood flows on rivers and streams for the purposes of groundwater recharge, without the need to obtain a costly and time-consuming permit. The process established by this Executive Order was later codified in SB 122 (Committee on Budget, 2023), with additional requirements for diverters to better protect groundwater quality and downstream water users.

CSAC supports projects and programs that invest in water supplies through a variety of means – from recycling to stormwater capture. Groundwater recharge during high flood flow events is one of the most effective ways to move water into long-term storage, and to bring over drafted basins into balance. CSAC encourages legislation that focuses on movement to groundwater sustainability through the local implementation of SGMA, dedicated groundwater recharge, and expedited permitting for recharge events.

SB 1390 carries forward the progress of the Executive Order and SB 122 by allowing more recharge projects to be completed in a safe and responsible manner. For any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Catherine Freeman at cfreeman@counties.org.



August 26, 2024

The Honorable Ash Kalra, Chair
Assembly Committee on Judiciary
1020 N Street, Room 104
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1400 (Stern): Criminal procedure: competence to stand trial.
AS AMENDED August 26, 2024 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Chair Kalra:

On behalf of the state's 58 counties, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA) write to respectfully oppose Senate Bill (SB) 1400 due to the substantive changes made to the bill on August 26, with only five days remaining in the 2023-24 legislative session. At a minimum, such significant policy changes that have a direct impact on California counties should be fully vetted through the legislative process; thus we strongly urge that the amendments making considerable changes to the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act be removed for deliberation at a later date. Alternatively, we request these changes be thoroughly considered through a working group process, with recommendations to be submitted to the Legislature by January 10, 2025.

Regretfully, the late-breaking nature of these amendments leave inadequate time for comprehensive policy and fiscal committee review or any meaningful stakeholder engagement. To date, there has been no justification for the urgency of these amendments at this late juncture, nor has an explanation been provided to counties for the increased requirements, despite counties and our related county associations meeting and communicating regularly with the California Health and Human Services Agency and the Governor's Office regarding CARE Act implementation. The latest revisions are of particular concern given counties are primarily responsible for implementing the Act's provisions, but again, were never consulted during the development of the new provisions and were not even engaged until after amendments were in-print. Counties regularly meet with the Administration regarding CARE court, including the CARE Court Implementation Working Group, the CARE Court Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation Ad Hoc Group, frequent meetings with Cohort 1 counties, and monthly meetings with CalHHS and county associations. None of these groups were utilized to vet the proposal or even notified of these significant amendments by the Administration. To be clear, the proposed changes will impact all 58 counties and were made without consultation of the very organizations charged with implementation. (Note that the Newsom Administration's first discussion with counties about the amendments occurred on August 26.)

As a reminder, the CARE Act is an entirely new program that is still in its infancy. With nine counties currently implementing the CARE Act, and statewide implementation rapidly approaching by December

1, 2024, making any sudden and significant changes as all counties are coming online will disrupt current planning and create additional challenges at a crucial time when counties need stability, consistency, and partnership from the state. The intense level of planning, resources, and training required to stand up the first cohort of seven counties alone has taken over a year since the passage of SB 1338 in 2022. If this measure passes and is signed into law, counties will have insufficient time to develop the guidance, capacity, and necessary data elements, creating added pressure on overburdened county departments and their dedicated staff that are working in the community and our courtrooms every day.

Upon initial review, counties have significant concerns with the expanded and new data collection and reporting requirements specified under the CARE Act. To be clear, counties do not object to data collection and reporting; counties are invested in the success of the CARE Act and strongly believe that appropriate reporting will highlight the positive impact that the Act is having on Californians. However, our associations have identified the following specific concerns with the proposed amendments:

- **Expanded tracking and reporting of all active and former CARE participants for an unspecified time period.** The amendments require county behavioral health agencies to report on the following data elements for an expanded group of active and former participants in the CARE process without a clear limitation on how long following the “conclusion of CARE program services” an individual would need to be tracked:
 - Services and supports ordered and provided, and ordered but not provided
 - Housing placements
 - Treatments continued and terminated
 - Substance use disorder rates and rates of treatment
 - Detentions and other LPS involvement
 - Criminal justice involvement
 - Deaths, including cause of death

Currently, CARE participant data is limited to tracking individuals with a CARE plan for at least one year following termination of their plan. The proposed amendments modify and expand these existing requirements by not only including all active and former participants, but also by removing the requirement for counties to track these elements for one year following CARE plan participation, leaving the duration to be an unspecified length of time determined by the Department of Health Care Services. Further, it is unclear whether the tracking of former CARE participants is now expanded beyond those with a CARE plan to also include those with CARE agreements or potentially others given that “CARE program services” is undefined.

Tracking former participants’ activities for an unspecified period of time will not only require additional county administrative resources, but it also raises considerable policy questions around imposing potentially invasive tracking requirements for an extended period of time on individuals who are no longer under a CARE plan.

- **“Potentially eligible” terms undefined.** The amendments require counties to collect and report on data and information regarding individuals who are “potentially eligible CARE Act participants,” or “potentially eligible for the CARE process,” although these terms are also not defined. This could be broadly interpreted to impact a significant number of individuals who may have received county

outreach or are receiving county behavioral health services. County behavioral health agency efforts required could be far-reaching and resource-intensive beyond what is currently required.

- **New requirements to track outreach and engagement / services for those voluntarily engaged.** The amendments require counties to track the type, format, and frequency of outreach and engagement activities to referrals and petitioners, and track – without time limitation – the services provided to those who are voluntarily engaged following a referral to county behavioral health. While counties agree these data elements may assist with highlighting the intense efforts needed to engage individuals and the positive results outside of direct CARE Act participation, we note that collecting and reporting on the volume of these encounters – which are not Medi-Cal reimbursable activities – and services to those voluntarily engaged would add significant reporting and fiscal impacts on those counties that are not already collecting this information.

Counties recommend SB 1400 be amended to require the Department of Health Care Services to convene a working group to develop recommendations for additional CARE Act data collection and reporting elements to be added to the CARE Court annual report, with final recommendations submitted to the Legislature by January 10, 2025. Our proposed amendments would foster collaboration, adequate stakeholder engagement, transparency, and recommendations that can be introduced as a bill next year.

For the reasons outlined above, CSAC, UCC, RCRC, and CBHDA are opposed to this measure unless amended as noted above. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez
Chief Policy Officer
CSAC
jwh@counties.org



Michele Doty-Cabrera
Executive Director
CBHDA
mcabrera@cbhda.org



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Advocate
UCC
kbl@hbeadvocacy.com



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
RCRC
sdukett@rcrcnet.org

cc:

Members, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Alison Merrilees, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee

The Honorable Ash Kalra
Senate Bill 1400 (Stern)
August 26, 2024
Page 4

Members, Assembly Health Committee
Riana King, Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Shaun Naidu, Office of Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
Rosielyn Pulmano, Office of Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
Eric Dang, Office of Senate Pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Marjorie Swartz, Office of Senate Pro Tempore Mike McGuire
The Honorable Henry Stern, Senator



August 27, 2024

ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT

Senate Bill 1400 (Stern): Criminal procedure: competence to stand trial. AS AMENDED August 27, 2024 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED

On behalf of the state's 58 counties, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA) regretfully express that we remain opposed to Senate Bill (SB) 1400 as recently amended on August 27.

We appreciate the most recent amendments to the bill which reflect some modest improvements, but as noted in our initial letter dated August 26, due to the substantive changes made to the bill on August 26, with only days remaining in the 2023-24 legislative session there is no time to adequately respond to such significant policy changes that have a direct impact on California counties that should be fully vetted through the legislative process; thus we continue to urge that the amendments making considerable changes to the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act be removed for deliberation at a later date. Alternatively, we request these changes be thoroughly considered through a working group process, with recommendations to be submitted to the Legislature by January 10, 2025.

Counties have significant concerns with the expanded and new data collection and reporting requirements proposed in SB 1400. To be clear, counties do not object to data collection and reporting; counties are invested in the success of the CARE Act and strongly believe that appropriate reporting will highlight the positive impact that the Act is having on Californians. However, our associations have identified the following remaining concerns:

- **Expanded tracking and reporting of all active and former CARE participants.** The amendments require county behavioral health agencies to report on data elements for an expanded group of active and former participants in the CARE process. We appreciate the most recent amendments that specify a maximum tracking period of 36 months following engagement in CARE Act elective services, agreement or plan (versus an unspecified period of time reflected in the prior version of the bill), however we continue to have concerns that these data elements will be required even if the data is not administratively available to counties.

Currently, CARE participant data is limited to tracking individuals with a CARE plan for at least one year following termination of their plan. The amendments modify and expand these existing requirements by not only including all active and former participants, but also by extending the time period to track these elements and extending the tracking of former CARE participants beyond those with a CARE plan to also include those with CARE agreements or those engaged in CARE Act elective services.

Tracking former participants' activities will not only require additional county administrative resources, but it also raises considerable policy questions around imposing potentially invasive tracking requirements for an extended period of time on individuals who are no longer under a CARE plan.

- **“Likely eligible” and “Potentially eligible” terms undefined.** The August 26 version of the bill required counties to collect and report on data and information regarding individuals who are “potentially eligible CARE Act participants,” or “potentially eligible for the CARE process,” although these terms were not defined. This could be broadly interpreted to impact a significant number of individuals who may have received county outreach or are receiving county behavioral health services. County behavioral health agency efforts required could be far-reaching and resource-intensive beyond what is currently required. We appreciate the recent amendments which replace the undefined term “potentially eligible” with “likely eligible” – that does in fact narrow the population, however, the updated term is still undefined and will require further clarification. We note there is still one remaining reference to “potentially eligible” that remains in the bill that should also be corrected.
- **New requirements to track outreach and engagement / services for those voluntarily engaged.** The amendments require counties to track the type, format, and frequency of outreach and engagement activities to referrals and petitioners, and track – without time limitation – the services provided to those who are voluntarily engaged following a referral to county behavioral health. While counties agree these data elements may assist with highlighting the intense efforts needed to engage individuals and the positive results outside of direct CARE Act participation, we note that collecting and reporting on the volume of these encounters – which are not Medi-Cal reimbursable activities – and services to those voluntarily engaged would add significant reporting and fiscal impacts on those counties that are not already collecting this information.

Counties recommend SB 1400 be introduced next year after the Department of Health Care Services vets the proposal with the CARE Court Implementation Working Group and counties. This would ensure collaboration, adequate stakeholder engagement, new data collection and reporting elements are effective and the process is transparent.

For the reasons outlined above, CSAC, UCC, RCRC, and CBHDA continue to remain opposed to this measure. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations.

Counties urge a ‘NO’ vote on SB 1400.



July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 884 (Low) - Elections: language accessibility.
As Amended June 25, 2024 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED
To be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday, August 5, 2024.**

Dear Senator Caballero,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the Urban Counties of California (UCC), we write to share our respectful opposition to Assembly Bill (AB) 884 by Assembly Member Low unless amended to include an annual appropriation in the state budget act for county implementation and ongoing compliance to address the significant added costs imposed upon counties.

Counties believe in efficient and accessible voting for all. Our strength as a state and a country is derived from the diversity of our communities. The voices of all Californians are needed to express the people's will in its truest form. While we acknowledge the value of expanding ballot language accessibility, our concerns are primarily due to the considerable costs that would be imposed on elections officials and the lack of a funding plan to pay for those costs. Election officials perform the difficult work of conducting free and fair elections despite stretched budgets, limited staffing, and frequent changes to election laws. While it is difficult to estimate the full extent of costs imposed on counties given lack of readily available data, AB 884 would more than double the language services costs and demand on labor, materials, and contracted services in at least some counties.

This bill creates a new state-mandated local program. While counties are required to comply with all state mandates, counties only receive funding to carry out a select group of state-mandated programs in the form of after-the-fact reimbursement payments from the state. Counties comply with all other state mandates using local revenues. After a bill is signed into law, reimbursement for counties to comply with state-mandated programs is not automatic. Rather, counties initiate the process to receive reimbursement via the Commission on State Mandates, which may take a year or more to determine whether the new law meets the criteria for reimbursement—and even longer to establish a process and rate for reimbursement. Therefore, counties comply with new laws pending reimbursement status, often funding these programs alone for years, facing the uncertainty of reimbursement. In fact, according to the State Controller's Office, the state has accumulated a backlog of \$72.5 million in unpaid reimbursement claims owned to counties for costs incurred to comply with state-mandated programs and requirements to conduct elections.

Compounding these fiscal constraints for counties, the state has suspended some mandated programs to address state budget deficits. While a mandate is suspended, the requirement remains in statute, but local governments are not required to comply with the law in that fiscal year and the state has no reimbursement obligation.

However, to meet the expectations of the public and continue an existing level of service for the community, counties often continue to perform and pay for suspended state-mandated programs. This cost-shifting pattern wherein the state acknowledges fiscal responsibility for a program, the public subsequently expects and relies on that program, and then the state suspends funding has added pressure and needless complications to the management of elections by counties for years. Included below are three examples of existing suspended mandates that many counties continue to perform in the interest of the public good and promoting access to the democratic process although they no longer receive reimbursement from the state:

- [Absentee Ballots](#). *Mandate:* Absentee ballots shall be available to any registered voter. *Status:* Suspended.
- [Permanent Absent Voters II](#). *Mandate:* County elections officials shall make an application for permanent absent voter status available to any voter. *Status:* Suspended.
- [Voter Identification Procedures](#) *Mandate:* Elections officials shall compare the signature on each provisional ballot envelope with the signature on the voter's affidavit of registration. *Status:* Suspended.

To quote the Legislative Analyst's Office, which [opined](#) on this exact topic a few years ago, "...the process the state uses to achieve its local elections priorities—the mandates process—simply has not worked."

After years of layered responsibilities for county elections officials and insufficient financial support from the state, CSAC urges the Legislature to pair all new requirements with an appropriation in the state budget act for county implementation.

It is for these reasons that CSAC, RCRC, and UCC must respectfully oppose AB 884 unless amended, and respectfully request your "NO" vote. Should you have any questions about our position, please contact us at the email addresses below.

Sincerely,



Eric Lawyer
Legislative Advocate
elawyer@counties.org
CSAC



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
jkh@hbeadvocacy.com
UCC



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
sdukett@rcrcnet.org
RCRC

cc: The Honorable Evan Low, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus



August 1, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1975 (Bonta): Medically Tailored Meals
As Amended June 5, 2024 — SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC) and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we write in support of AB 1975, which would make medically supportive food and nutrition interventions a covered benefit under the Medi-Cal program no sooner than July 1, 2026.

Specifically, AB 1975 would require medically supportive food and nutrition interventions to be covered by Medi-Cal if determined to be medically necessary by a health care provider or health care plan. The bill would require the provision of interventions for 12 weeks, or longer if deemed medically necessary. The bill would also require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to establish a medically supportive food and nutrition benefit stakeholder group to advise the department and would require the workgroup to issue final guidance on or before July 1, 2026.

Too many Californians, particularly Californians of color, are living with largely preventable chronic conditions. Adequate food and nutrition are a fundamental part of preventing and treating chronic conditions and can significantly improve a patient's quality of life and health status while also reducing healthcare costs. Medically tailored meals are effective in improving health. Studies on medically tailored meals have found:

- A 17% reduction in patients with poorly controlled diabetes when patients were providing diabetes appropriate MTMs.
- A study among older adults found that 79% of individuals who fell in the past did not fall again during the study period compared to 46% in the control group, showing a 33% increase in fall prevention.
- A 2014 study on MTMs recipients with diabetes, HIV, and comorbid conditions found a 50% increase in medication adherence among recipients.
- Double-digit percentage point decreases in emergency department visits, inpatient admissions, and 30-day hospital readmissions among MTM recipients.

Counties provide direct health care services through our county owned and operated clinics, hospitals and public health departments and are therefore vitally concerned about health outcomes. Malnutrition and poor nutrition can lead to devastating health outcomes, higher utilization, and increased costs, particularly among individuals with chronic conditions. Meals help individuals achieve their nutrition goals at critical times to help them regain and maintain their health.

AB 1975 builds on the opportunity started in CalAIM and would permanently address social drivers of health through food-based interventions. This measure will improve health outcomes, advance health equity across California, reduce avoidable healthcare costs and support the prevention, not just the treatment, of chronic conditions.

For these reasons, UCC and RCRC support AB 1975. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Representative
UCC
kbl@hbeadvocacy.com
916-753-0844



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
RCRC
sdukett@rcrcnet.org
916-447-4806

cc: The Honorable Mia Bonta, Member, California State Assembly
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Agnes Lee, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Anthony Archie, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities



BAYAREA
COUNCIL



July 29, 2024

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2199 (Berman) - CEQA Exemption: Residential or Mixed-Use Housing Projects
As amended on June 6, 2024 – Support
Set for hearing in Senate Appropriations – August 5, 2024**

Dear Chair Caballero:

On behalf of the American Planning Association California Chapter, the Associated General Contractors of California, the Bay Area Council, the California Apartment Association, the California State Association of Counties, the Council of Infill Builders, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, and the Urban Counties of California, we write in support of Assembly Bill 2199 by Assemblymember Berman. AB 2199 extends until 2032 the sunset date of a narrow exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for infill residential and mixed-use projects in the urbanized parts of California’s unincorporated counties.

The only direct cost to the state from AB 2199 is the requirement for the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to accept Notices of Exemption that counties must file. Given that a recent law, SB 69 (Stats. 2023, Ch. 860), requires, beginning January 1, 2024, that local agencies electronically file *all* Notices of Determination with OPR and *all* agencies filing NOEs with the local county clerk must also file with OPR, AB 2199 will not impose any significant new costs on the state.

Infill housing projects in cities have enjoyed a categorical exemption from CEQA for decades, but there was no similar exemption for projects in urbanized unincorporated areas until the passage of Assemblymember Berman’s AB 1804 in 2018. Since that time, this narrow exemption has been used to accelerate the environmental review and approval of nine multifamily residential and mixed-use projects consisting of 378 housing units. While the exemption has primarily been used in large urban counties, including Alameda, Orange, Sacramento, and San Diego counties, it has also benefitted two affordable multi-family infill housing projects within existing urbanized communities in unincorporated Santa Cruz and Lake counties.

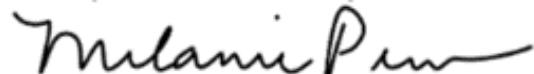
To ensure that the exemption applies only to the most environmentally beneficial housing projects, AB 2199 includes all the same protections as the categorical infill exemption for cities. It also goes beyond those requirements by including protections for tribal cultural resources, a clear definition for the requirement that developments be substantially surrounded by existing urban uses, and minimum residential density requirements.

While most Californians live within cities, counties have the same responsibilities as cities to plan to accommodate housing needs at all income levels. AB 2199 creates an incentive for additional growth in unincorporated county infill areas, thereby supporting state and local climate, conservation, and housing production goals without creating any significant state costs. For these reasons, we support AB 2199 and respectfully request your "aye" vote.

Sincerely,



Erik de Kok, AICP
APA California



Melanie Perron
Associated General Contractors of California



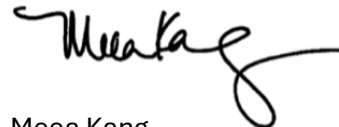
Louis Mirante
Bay Area Council



Debra Carlton
California Apartment Association



Mark Neuburger
California State Association of Counties



Meea Kang
Council of Infill Builders



Christopher Lee
Urban Counties of California



James Corless
Sacramento Area Council of Governments

cc: The Honorable Marc Berman, California State Assembly
Honorable Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kerry Yoshida, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus



SENATE FLOOR ALERT

AB 2561 (McKinnor) – Local Public Employees: Vacant Positions

As Amended August 15, 2024 – OPPOSE

On behalf of a broad coalition of local government associations, we regretfully urge you to **vote no** on Assembly Bill 2561, which will impose expensive and unnecessary burdens on local agencies that will detract from efforts to recruit and retain the public workforce.

The recent amendments do not address our primary concerns, in some cases worsening the impacts of the bill. For these reasons, we remain opposed to AB 2561, which:

- **Undermines collective bargaining efforts** by requiring agencies to meet and confer with bargaining units as soon as a vacancy rate exceeds an arbitrary 20% threshold - removing the prior requirement that vacancy rates persist for at least 180 days.
- Imposes an **expensive reimbursable state mandate** on thousands of public agencies, requiring every local agency to hold annual public hearings regardless of their vacancy rates.
- **Detracts from resources** needed to address vacancies and **distracts local governing boards** from addressing the needs of their communities.
- **Ignores the diversity of public agencies** in our state, as some agencies will trigger the bill's onerous requirements if even just **one position** becomes vacant.
- **Lacks any resources** to address root causes of vacancies and ignores recent cuts to funds and programs designed to address the vacancy problem among local agencies.

Vote NO on AB 2561



August 23, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **AB 2715 (Boerner): Ralph M. Brown Act: closed sessions
As amended 4/24/24 – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), we write to respectfully request your signature on Assembly Bill 2715, Assembly Member Tasha Boerner's measure that would authorize local agency governing bodies to convene a closed session to consider or evaluate matters related to cybersecurity.

Local agencies are subject to a wide range of cybersecurity risks, from elections and patient data to critical infrastructure and emergency communications. The extensive range of risks and the increasing sophistication of cyber-criminals makes us exceptionally vulnerable to a security breach. Existing law is unclear about whether current exemptions can be used to hold a closed session discussion about a local agency's cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities when a cyber-attack is not imminent or underway. Therefore, local agencies do not currently have a method of privately discussing their cybersecurity, which increases local agencies' vulnerability to such attacks.

Our obligations to sustain reliable and effective services that protect the health and safety of the public are paramount. Allowing discussion of cybersecurity in closed session helps facilitate discussion of effective and safe mechanisms to ensure the safety of public information and infrastructure. As exists for current closed session items, any decision that results from such a closed session must be disclosed in an open session, ensuring the public is aware of the decision that has been made.

AB 2715 represents an important modernization of the Brown Act and, as such, we urge your signature. Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can offer additional assistance.

Sincerely,



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate
Urban Counties of California
jkh@hbeadvocacy.com



Sarah Dukett
Policy Advocate
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cc: The Honorable Tasha Boerner, California State Assembly



August 1, 2024

SENATE FLOOR ALERT
AB 3025 (Valencia): County employees' retirement: disallowed compensation:
benefit adjustments.
As Amended June 27, 2024 – OPPOSE

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and League of California Cities (Cal Cities), we regretfully urge you to vote no on Assembly Bill (AB) 3025, which would place a significant financial burden on member agencies of county retirement systems by requiring member agencies, including counties, cities, and special districts, to pay substantial penalties for decisions they did not make and over which they had no authority.

Following the passage of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA), county retirement systems took varying approaches to comply with the provisions of PEPRA regarding the types of compensation that may be included in retirement benefit calculations. On July 30, 2020, the California Supreme Court issued a decision in the case *Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Assn. v Alameda County Employees' Retirement Assn.*, otherwise known as the "Alameda decision," in which the Court upheld provisions of PEPRA related to disallowed forms of compensation for retirement calculations. Over the last four years, the impacted '37 Act systems have been working to comply with *Alameda* and recalculate retirement benefits for members who retired after January 1, 2013.

AB 3025 unfairly places the financial consequences of the Court's decision on counties and other agencies by requiring '37 Act system employers to pay a "penalty" equal to 20 percent of the current actuarial value of retiree benefits deemed unlawful. The penalty, which will result in affected agencies owing millions of unbudgeted dollars to retirees for what the Court found to be an illegal benefit, implies those agencies decided to misapply the law. In reality, they simply complied with the pension agreements established between employees, employers, and retirement systems.

For the reasons stated above, we urge you to vote no on AB 3025. The fiscal impact on affected agencies will place a significant strain on general fund dollars, resulting in reductions to critical programs including public safety, transportation, and behavioral health. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to reach out to Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Representative at elawyer@counties.org; Jean Kinney Hurst, UCC Legislative Advocate at jkh@hbeadvocacy.com; Aaron Avery, CSDA Director of State Legislative Affairs at aarona@csla.net; Sarah Dukett, RCRC Policy Advocate at sdukett@rcrcnet.org; and Johnnie Pina, Cal Cities Legislative Affairs Lobbyist at jpina@calcities.org.

cc: The Honorable Avelino Valencia, California State Assembly
Spencer Winkle, Floor Manager, Senate Republican Caucus
Jesse Herzer, Floor Manager, Senate Republican Caucus



August 2, 2024

Dr. Mark Ghaly, MD
Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
1215 O Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 43 (Chapter 637, Statutes of 2023) Implementation

Dear Secretary Ghaly:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC), a coalition of 14 of the most populous counties, and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), which represents 40 rural counties, we write in response to Governor Newsom's outreach on implementation of Senator Eggman's SB 43 (Chapter 637, Statutes of 2023). UCC and RCRC members have been actively implementing SB 43, including working with the Administration and the Legislature on several issues necessary to do so successfully.

Locally, successful implementation requires many steps, including evaluating the current capacity for LPS-designated locked substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, extensive training, support for the County Office of the Public Conservator, additional development of connections to voluntary harm reduction and SUD treatment services, and data preparation. For example, counties are conducting a comprehensive mapping and capacity analysis of the SUD system and contracts with hospitals and crisis stabilization units (CSUs) are being evaluated and negotiated to address this new need. In addition, urban and rural counties are moving forward with training various law enforcement agencies, psychiatric emergency response teams, LPS-designated facilities, as well as other agencies and community partners on SB 43. Thousands of individuals across the state will need to be trained in order to implement SB 43.

Despite this work, the following implementation issues remain:

- **Lack of Locked SUD Inpatient Treatment Beds.** Adequate capacity for treating conserved SUD-only individuals, does not yet exist, with limited exceptions. This is an issue that counties raised many times as SB 43 moved through the legislative process. Senator Eggman has introduced SB 1238 to permit certain existing facilities, mental health rehabilitation centers and psychiatric health facilities to treat these individuals. However, the Administration issued guidance requiring hospitals to have a distinct part

unit with a chemical dependency service for this treatment, which will require most hospitals to go through an additional licensing step. Pending legislation – AB 2376 (Bains) – would allow a general acute care hospital to provide chemical dependency recovery services within the same building. However, until these bills are signed into law there are very limited options for placement today. To fully implement SB 43, counties need legal placement options with state-approved reimbursement mechanisms.

- **Lack of Medi-Cal reimbursement.** The Administration has not established Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for locked primary or stand-alone SUD treatment. SB 43 directs DHCS to do so and counties have asked the Administration to establish reimbursement rates as quickly as possible, but this remains an outstanding issue.
- **Lack of Crisis Residential Treatment Options.** For the same reasons (lack of licensing and Medi-Cal reimbursement), crisis residential units also cannot provide diversion or step-down care for conservatees without cooccurring mental health condition. Urban and rural counties have asked the Administration to share its thinking about new crisis residential treatment for primary and stand-alone SUD in the context of BH-CONNECT and Proposition 1.

Urban and rural counties are not only working locally to implement SB 43, we are also engaging with the Administration on the issues above to implement the new policy. Many of the issues outlined above need further clarification in state law and guidance. Without these changes, counties are unable to meaningfully implement the provisions of SB 43. We urge your partnership in good faith in the coming weeks and months as we all work to implement this significant behavioral health system transformation and positively impact the lives of as many Californians as possible.

Sincerely,



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Representative
UCC
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916-753-0844



Sarah Dukett
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RCRC
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916-447-4806

cc: Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Kim McCoy Wade, Senior Advisor, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Stephanie Welch, Deputy Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
Michelle Baass, Director, Department of Health Care Services



August 1, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1396 (Alvarado-Gil): CalWORKs Home Visiting Program
As Amended APRIL 8, 2024 — SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC) and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we write in support of SB 1396, related to Home Visiting Programs (HVPs). This bill would extend the timeframe in which children may be enrolled and the period in which CalWORKs families are eligible to participate in HVPs.

Home Visiting Programs match trained professionals with expecting and new parents to help them with critical early development for their children. This includes offering resources, mentoring, cultural community building, and other supports that utilize parent's strengths and build skills. Research shows that participation in an HVP has immense benefits to children under 2 years old and their families, such as better maternal and infant health, reduced emergency room visits, and increased safety practices. Long term, for children who participate to age 5, research shows improved language and cognitive development, improved math and reading scores, reduced absenteeism, and decreased school suspensions. For every dollar invested in HVPs, communities receive a benefit of up to five dollars in savings in child welfare, K-12 education, and community safety.

There are two Home Visiting Programs funded by the state: the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) managed by the Department of Public Health and the CalWORKs Home Visiting program (HVP) managed by the Department of Social Services. The CHVP under CDPH follows models that allow families to remain in the program until the child turns five years old. Under existing law, however, the CalWORKs HVP can only be offered to pregnant individuals and families with a child under 24 months of age. Those families may receive CalWORKs HVP services for 24 months or until the first enrolled child's second birthday, whichever is later. There are presently 41 counties administering CalWORKs HVP in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24.

Children and families participating in CalWORKs HVP miss out on the critical developmental benefits that result from continued participation. Families that would otherwise like to remain involved in the CalWORKs HVP are forced out of the program due to the statutory time limit.

Although it is possible they may transition to another HVP funded by CDPH or another community-based organization, that is only possible if there is funding and space available in those programs. Furthermore, research shows interruption to participation in a home visiting program leads to families dropping out.

SB 1396 will extend the enrollment timeframe from a child under 24 months of age to a child under 36 months of age. This bill also removes the 24-month statutory limit on participation in HVPs for children in CalWORKs families and instead allows those children to continue to participate through the duration of the applicable HVP model. Finally, SB 1396 allows children whose participation would otherwise be terminated because the family no longer meets CalWORKs income, eligibility, or need criteria to continue through the duration of the program or for up to an additional 12 months, whichever is longer.

This bill will help to maximize the health and developmental benefits of this highly effective program for families in need across the state. For these reasons, UCC and RCRC support SB 1296. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
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cc: The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil, Member, California State Senate
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee



July 30, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1397 (Eggman): Behavioral health services coverage.
As amended on April 15, 2024 – SUPPORT
Assembly Appropriations Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

On behalf of the state's 58 counties, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), and Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) are pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 1397 by Senator Susan Eggman. This measure establishes a mechanism for county behavioral health agencies to recoup reimbursement from commercial plans for privately insured clients referred to services through Full Service Partnerships (FSPs).

FSPs provide comprehensive, intensive, community-based services and case management to those facing severe mental health conditions and play a critical role in preventing long-term institutionalization. All counties offer FSP services, which are unique for their low staff to client ratio, 24/7 availability, and "whatever it takes" approach tailored to the individual needs of a client. FSPs have been proven to help prevent costly hospitalizations, criminal justice involvement, and homelessness among clients.

Although the primary focus of county behavioral health agencies is to serve Medi-Cal beneficiaries, they often serve the commercially insured who are unable to access certain specialty behavioral services through their commercial insurance, including crisis intervention services, first episode psychosis, FSPs, or other critical behavioral health services. Although counties fund services to individuals with commercial plans to the extent resources are available, they must prioritize their Medi-Cal plan responsibilities.

SB 1397 will create a reimbursement mechanism for county behavioral health agencies to recover the costs of providing lifesaving behavioral health services to commercially insured clients through FSPs. It is for these reasons that CSAC, UCC, and RCRC support this measure. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations.

Sincerely,



Jolie Onodera
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Sarah Dukett
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cc: The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman, Senator
Honorable Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
Anna Billy, Office of Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman

▶▶ Special End-of-Session Wrap-up ◀◀

Legislature Gavels Down the 2023-24 Regular Session; Governor Calls Special Session

The Legislature wrapped up this year's very last floor session just as the clock struck midnight. Although final adjournment – known as adjournment “sine die” – of the 2023-24 session does not take place until midnight on November 30, the Legislature's regular activities have officially concluded. Today's Saturday session marked the end of a busy six-day work week for members that featured tension – as is common in the closing days of session –between the houses.

While there undoubtedly were several contributing factors, two primary reasons for the interhouse tension can be attributed to (1) a difference of opinion on the Governor's end-of-session effort to address spikes in gasoline prices and increasingly high electricity bills and (2) the Senate's early dismissal on Friday, narrowing the time available today to manage the remaining Assembly bills in the upper house.

On the first matter – earlier this week, six bills were “gutted-and-amended” as part of a Governor-backed effort to tackle increasing energy costs. The package included [SB 950](#) (Skinner), perhaps the most controversial bill in the lot, which proposes to require oil refiners to maintain reserve stockpiles of gasoline to prevent shortages in case of unplanned maintenance. (See this [report](#) for more details on other bills in the package.) Reception to the effort to push these consequential bills through in the last week of session – with limited time available to undertake thoughtful policy deliberation -- was mixed. While Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire made clear that his house was poised to act on the bills, the Assembly balked. In the meantime, the Governor turned up the heat by suggesting that absent quick action on the bill package he would be calling a special session on energy this fall ... an idea the Assembly Speaker embraced, and Senate Leader McGuire rejected given that his members were poised to take immediate action on the legislation before them. In the end, the bills did not move. True to his word, the Governor issued a [proclamation](#) calling the Legislature back for a special session this fall to consider legislation focused on addressing gasoline prices. The Assembly officially opened the special session tonight – a step that triggered considerable debate over parliamentary procedure. For the Senate's part, Senator McGuire reiterated that the Senate does not plan to convene the special session. So ... it's wholly unclear whether anything of substance will come of the Governor's request.



Below we provide outcomes on a select number of measures taken up in these closing days of session. To be clear, any measure that did not move to the Governor by midnight tonight is dead since the regular session is wrapped up. (There's always next year!) From here, the Governor has 30 days (until September 30) to determine which bills sent to him over the last long week he will sign and which he will veto. Although we do not plan to publish weekly updates during the fall recess, we will issue an update in early October to report on the Governor's final actions. In the meantime, do not hesitate to reach out with any questions!

To the Governor

- **[AB 98 \(Carrillo and Reyes\)](#)** – Would prescribe statewide development standards for new or expanded logistics use facilities to minimize impacts on sensitive receptors; prohibit cities and counties from approving new or expanded logistics use developments unless they meet specified criteria; require cities and counties to update their circulation elements by January 1, 2028 to include specified truck route (by January 1, 2026 in Riverside and San Bernardino counties); and provide for enforcement of circulation element update requirements by the Attorney General, who would be empowered to impose fines of up to \$50,000 every six months.
- **[AB 180 / AB 218 \(Committee on Budget\)](#)** – Companion measures that would extend deadlines associated with the implementation of [SB 1137](#) (Gonzalez – Chapter 365, Statutes of 2022), which established “health protection zones” (HPZs) and prohibited the issuance of well permits and the construction and operation of new oil and gas production facilities in an HPZ within 3,200 feet from a sensitive receptor, as defined (i.e., schools, homes, public buildings, hospitals, dorms, and other facilities). A referendum was filed on SB 1137 in 2022, blocking its implementation; that referendum – scheduled to be considered in November– was withdrawn from the ballot in June. Given the associated delays in SB 1137 implementation, AB 218 would adjust several key implementation deadlines contained in SB 1137, while AB 180 would appropriate funds to support related state implementation activities.
- **[AB 366 \(Petrie-Norris\)](#)** – Would require the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) to allow local agencies subject to CalHR regulation of their civil service hiring rules, as specified, to use alternative processes to directly screen and establish eligibility lists under CalHR supervision and to implement alternative examination requirements without advance approval by CalHR. This bill is sponsored by the County Welfare Directors Association.
- **[AB 869 \(Wood\)](#)** – Would expand the Small and Rural Hospital Relief Program for seismic and establish a relief program for health care district hospitals; and provide for extensions of seismic safety requirement deadlines.
- **[AB 1975 \(Bonta\)](#)** – Would establish medically supportive food and nutrition interventions as a Medi-Cal covered benefit when medically necessary in treating a patient's medical condition.
- **[AB 2104 \(Soria\)](#)** – Would require the California Community College Chancellor's Office to establish a Community College Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that would authorize 10 community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in nursing degree.
- **[AB 2115 \(Haney\)](#)** – Would update requirements for participation in narcotic treatment programs (NTPs) and authorizes specified practitioners at a nonprofit or free clinic to dispense a narcotic drug

from clinic supply to relieve acute withdrawal symptoms when necessary while arranging referral to an NTP.

- **[AB 2199 \(Berman\)](#)** – This UCC-sponsored measure would extend a CEQA exemption for infill housing projects located in unincorporated areas until 2035. To qualify, the projects must be in urbanized areas, meet minimum density requirements, and be mostly surrounded by existing urban uses. Projects cannot negatively impact tribal cultural resources, among other protections.
- **[AB 2376 \(Bains\)](#)** – Would revise existing licensing requirements for chemical dependency recovery hospitals.
- **[AB 2423 \(Mathis\)](#)** – Would require the Department of Developmental Services, every other year, to review and update developmental services rate models and provide that adjustments to provider rates shall be contingent upon an appropriation.
- **[AB 2496 \(Pellerin\)](#)** – Would enact short-term provisions to address the impact of foster family agency (FFAs) losing insurance, which is anticipated to occur for some FFAs this fall. While this bill does not address the underlying issue of insurance affordability and availability for FFA providers, the bill would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to engage with other relevant state departments, agencies and stakeholders, to examine other options for insurance and report to the Legislature during the 2025-26 budget process. Specifically, the bill would authorize CDSS to temporarily waive provisions in order to expedite the transfer of an approval of a resource family from an FFA to a county. Unfortunately, AB 2496 would still prohibit the use of certain types of indemnification agreements in contracts between counties and FFAs, although the measure now includes language to make this provision inoperative in two years.
- **[AB 2561 \(McKinnor\)](#)** – Would require a public agency to present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts during a public hearing before the governing board at least once per fiscal year and entitles the union for a bargaining unit to make a presentation at the public hearing.
- **[AB 2963 \(Wicks\)](#)** – Would permit an otherwise time-barred action alleging childhood sexual assault occurring at a county juvenile detention facility to proceed if commenced by December 31, 2025.
- **[AB 2871 \(Maienschein\)](#)** – Would authorize counties to establish an interagency overdose fatality review team to assist local agencies in identifying and reviewing overdose fatalities, facilitate communication, and integrate local prevention efforts.
- **[AB 2975 \(Gipson\)](#)** – Would require the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (Standards Board), by March 1, 2025, to amend the existing workplace violence prevention in health care standards to require certain licensed hospitals to maintain metal detectors at specified entrances, and adopt related policies, staffing and signage, as specified. The August 22 amendments addressed concerns of the California Hospital Association and the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems; both organizations have gone neutral on the bill.
- **[AB 3059 \(Weber\)](#)** – Would require health plans and insurers to cover medically necessary pasteurized donor human milk.
- **[AB 3093 \(Ward\)](#)** – Would create two new income categories, Acutely Low Income (ALI) and Extremely Low Income (ELI), in the Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND), Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), and Housing Element Law and require the Department of

Housing and Community Development to develop guidance for regions and local governments on distributing and planning for the new income tiers.

- **[AB 3129 \(Wood\)](#)** – Would require a private equity group or hedge fund to provide written notice to, and obtain the written consent of, the Attorney General (AG) before a transaction between the private equity group or hedge fund and certain health care entities. The bill will be amended to remove hospitals and dermatology medical practices; delete the requirement that an entity controlled indirectly, in whole or in part, by a private equity group or hedge fund, cannot enter into an agreement or arrangement with specified entities if the agreement or arrangement would enable the person or entity to interfere with professional judgment, as specified, or exercise control over or be delegated powers, as specified; and authorize the AG to contract with entities, as specified.
- **[AB 3233 \(Addis\)](#)** – Would clarify that local agencies have the authority to, by ordinance, limit or prohibit oil and gas operations or development in its jurisdiction, as provided.
- **[AB 3264 \(Petrie-Norris\)](#)** – Would require the CPUC to develop a framework to address energy costs from electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and propane; and require the CPUC to submit a study to the Legislature on options to reduce costs on ratepayers of expanding the electrical transmission system.
- **[AB 3291 \(Committee on Human Services\)](#)** – Would, among other provisions, add “risk of homelessness” to the list of conditions under which the executive director of a regional center may make housing assistance payments for consumers receiving supported living services.
- **[SB 37 \(Caballero\)](#)** – Would require, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to establish and administer the Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities Housing Stability (OAHDS) Pilot Program (program) to provide housing subsidies to older adults and adults with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- **[SB 366 \(Caballero\)](#)** – Would revise the California Water Plan, currently updated every five years by the Department of Water Resources (DWR); would further require DWR to develop a long-term water supply planning target for 2050; and would establish an interim target, among other provisions.
- **[SB 399 \(Wahab\)](#)** – Would enact the California Worker Freedom from Employer Intimidation Act, which would prohibit an employer from taking an adverse employment action against an employee because the employee declines to attend an employer-sponsored meeting or affirmatively declines to participate in, receive, or listen to communications regarding the employer’s opinion about religious or political matters.
- **[SB 768 \(Caballero\)](#)** – Would require the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to study how vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is used as a metric for measuring transportation impacts of housing projects pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- **[SB 895 \(Roth\)](#)** – Would require the California Community College Chancellor to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program at up to 15 districts statewide; the bill contains a January 1, 2034 sunset date.
- **[SB 937 \(Wiener\)](#)** – Would delay the collection of certain residential development impact fees for affordable housing projects and residential developments of ten units or fewer until the certificate

of occupancy. Exceptions are included for fees for infrastructure that is already under development or to reimburse a local agency for expenditures already made.

- **[SB 960 \(Wiener\)](#)** – Would require Caltrans to include complete streets assets in relevant state highway plans and reports, develop and adopt transit priority policy and guidelines, and commit to specific 4-year targets to incorporate complete streets facilities in the State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP). Assembly Amendments removed requirements for any project in the SHOPP to include bicycle, pedestrian, and transit priority projects unless a specified exception applied.
- **[SB 1050 \(Bradford\)](#)** – Would require the Office of Legal Affairs within the California American Freedmen Affairs Agency to, upon appropriation by the Legislature, review and act on applications from members of the public seeking compensation for land taken by racially motivated eminent domain. (Note that SB 1050 is one of a package of bills that encompass recommendations from the California Reparations Task Force; in a surprising turn of events, the Assembly decided to move the two remaining measures – [SB 1331](#) and [SB 1403](#) – to the Inactive File prior to adjournment. The California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) said in a statement that the caucus had only recently become aware of some concerns with the bill and wanted to ensure that they addressed those issues before sending it to the Governor. The author, Senator Steven Bradford, suggested however that the Governor’s proposed amendments to the bills would have “gutted” them. The chair of the CLBC, Assembly Member Lori Wilson, committed to reintroducing the bills next year.)
- **[SB 1142 \(Menjivar\)](#)** – Would require the Public Utilities Commission, by July 1, 2025, to determine whether to direct electrical and gas corporations to consider a customer’s ability to pay before terminating or reconnecting services.
- **[SB 1181 \(Glazer\)](#)** – Would make various changes to the “Levine Act” that restricts campaign contributions to agency officials from entities with business before the agency involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use, including exempting certain types of proceedings from the provisions of the Levine Act.
- **[SB 1193 \(Menjivar\)](#)** – Would impose a ban on the sale or distribution of leaded aviation gas – used primarily in smaller, piston-engine aircraft – beginning January 1, 2031.
- **[SB 1220 \(Limón\)](#)** – Would temporarily require local agencies to provide certain call-center services with workers employed in California and expands this requirement for certain call centers operated by state agencies; also would prohibit certain state and local call centers from using artificial intelligence (AI) or automated decision systems (ADS), if the use of AI or ADS would eliminate or automate the core job function of a worker, with some exceptions.
- **[SB 1238 \(Eggman\)](#)** – Would expand the definition of a psychiatric health facility to include a facility that provides inpatient care for people with severe substance use disorders (SUD) or co-occurring mental health and SUDs; also would require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to develop regulations to include, in addition to the existing two levels of disorder, a third level for involuntary ambulatory patients receiving treatment for a severe SUD.
- **[SB 1243 \(Dodd\)](#)** – Would make various changes to the Levine Act that restricts campaign contributions to agency elected officials from entities with business before the agency involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use, including raising the threshold for campaign contributions regulated by the Act from \$250 to \$500.

- **[SB 1289 \(Roth\)](#)** – Would require DHCS to establish minimum statewide standards for the assistance a county call center provides to applicants for Medi-Cal coverage.
- **[SB 1317 \(Wahab\)](#)** – Would extend five years – to January 1, 2030 – the sunset date associated with the authority in Penal Code section 2603 that permits a court to order the involuntary administration of psychotropic medication in county jail settings; would also extend – with modest amendments – existing reporting requirements. Amendments taken in the Assembly require additional due diligence on the part of counties exercising their authority under this section.
- **[SB 1400 \(Stern\)](#)** – Would, among other provisions, expand tracking and reporting requirements for the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act; see further discussion in the section discussing behavioral health end-of-session issues below.
- **[SB 1420 \(Caballero\)](#)** – Would add hydrogen production facilities and onsite storage and processing facilities to the types of facilities that existing law makes eligible for centralized permitting and expedited review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- **[SB 1432 \(Caballero\)](#)** – Would authorize the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) to extend, from January 1, 2030, until January 1, 2033, the date by which a hospital must be in substantial compliance with seismic safety standards, if the hospital owner submits its seismic compliance plan and Nonstructural Performance Category (NPC)-5 Evaluation Report to HCAI. The bill also would authorize HCAI to grant an additional extension for up to five years, if the hospital owner meets specified requirements.

Failed Passage (Dead)

- **[AB 3121 \(Petrie-Norris\)](#)** – Would have required the California Public Utilities Commission to provide a credit back to residential customers of electrical corporations from unencumbered funds from the Multifamily Affordable Housing Solar Roofs Program, Self-Generation Incentive Program, and the School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program.
- **[SB 950 \(Skinner\)](#)** – Would have, among other things, authorized the California Energy Commission, by regulation, to develop and impose requirements for refiners operating in the state to maintain minimum levels of inventories of refined transportation fuels meeting California specifications, including any feedstocks and blending components.
- **[SB 1003 \(Dodd\)](#)** – Would have modified timelines relevant to the submission and approval of wildfire mitigation plans (WMPs) by electrical corporations to the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety and the CPUC. The bill would also have required electrical corporations to consider, in their WMP, both the time required to implement an action, and the amount of risk reduced for the cost and risk remaining.

End of Session Behavioral Health Items

As noted above, [SB 1400](#), by Senator Henry Stern, was substantially amended on August 26 to expand tracking and reporting requirements for the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act. (Existing provisions in the bill relate to misdemeanor incompetent to stand trial procedures.) The CARE Act reporting amendments were introduced without conversation or consultation with county associations; in response to the amendments, the county associations collectively requested that the

Administration and Legislature amend the bill to instead establish a working group to examine CARE Act data and reporting needs, giving more time for discussion and thoughtful crafting of new collection and reporting requirements. When that request was not accepted, the associations took an oppose unless amended position on the bill.

Despite additional amendments to SB 1400 being taken on August 28, counties still identified several concerns with the language, including: 1) expanded tracking and reporting of all active and former CARE participants; 2) the inclusion of undefined and potentially confusing terms such as “likely eligible” and “potentially eligible”; and 3) new requirements to track outreach and engagement and services for those voluntarily engaged. Counties have made the Administration and Legislature aware that current data on CARE Act participants is tracked in Excel spreadsheets; while we can all acknowledge that Excel is a powerful analytical and data visualization tool, it is less effective as a platform for organizing and reporting statewide data. Additionally, counties have pointed out that the new reporting requirements represent a costly reimbursable state mandate.

In related news – and perhaps not coincidentally – the Governor’s Office unveiled a new state mental health [website](#) touting new “accountability tools” to track implementation progress of Proposition 1 and other behavioral health initiatives for which counties are responsible. The website includes several features, including:

- Statewide maps highlighting which counties have implemented CARE Act and SB 43 (Statutes of 2023, Chapter 637).
- A document entitled "[Questions to ask county leaders about Prop 1](#)," which includes questions the Administration suggests be directed to county supervisors, county administrative officers, and county behavioral health directors with specific resource materials geared to support such questions.

2024-25 State Budget Update

The Legislature approved and sent to the Governor a slate of budget bills this final week of the legislative session. While much of this batch of budget bills include technical clean-up language, two measures (AB 180 and AB 218, described above) include language requested by the Administration related to implementation of [SB 1137](#) (2022), regarding oil and gas production facilities and wells, that was subject to a referendum and withdrawn earlier this year. More details on these measures can be read [here](#).

Final Package of 2024-25 Budget and Trailer Bills

Bill No.	Subject
AB 157	Budget Act of 2024 (Budget Bill, Jr. #2 of 2024)
AB 158	Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023 (Budget Bill, Jr. #8 of 2022, Budget Bill, Jr. #6 of 2023)
AB 176	Education finance: education omnibus trailer bill
AB 177	Health

Bill No.	Subject
AB 178	Public resources trailer bill
AB 179	Budget Act of 2023: state government
AB 180	Budget Act of 2024 (Budget Bill, Jr. #3 of 2024)
AB 181	State employment: State Bargaining Units: agreements: compensation and benefits
AB 218	Oil and gas: trailer bill