

ATTACHMENT A

REPORT

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TO: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

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FROM: Thomas P. Walters

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

There were a multitude of internal and external forces that impacted the work of the first session of the 114th Congress. Internally, the continued infighting of the Majority Republican Party provided ongoing drama, culminating this fall in the resignation of former Speaker Boehner (R-OH) and the reluctant ascendancy of Congressman Ryan (R-WI) to the Speakership. Externally, the ever-earlier incipient Presidential campaigns were a constant distraction, with a multitude of declared candidates clamoring for attention on a multitude of issues. In addition, the recent terrorist events, both abroad and at home, may have re-ordered legislative priorities for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, and perhaps in testimony to the strength of the institution, Congress was indeed able to bridge the ongoing partisan gap to forge numerous bipartisan agreements, ranging from a budgetary structure for the next couple of years, to reauthorization of transportation infrastructure programs, to a solution to the long-vexing problem of Medicare physician payment rates. At year's end, Congress successfully negotiated the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act, incorporating all twelve of the must-pass annual appropriations measures.

We worked throughout the year to aggressively advocate your Board's priorities on a wide range of policies and issues impacting the County's fiscal stability and delivery of services, as addressed in this report. We lobbied these issues with Congressional members, staff and Administration representatives. We also worked closely with other relevant stakeholders on these issues, and during their respective trips to Washington, D.C., we arranged meetings for Board members and various County officials to advocate on critical issues with members of the local delegation, Congressional offices and committees, and Administration officials.

Within this context, several legislative actions of significance to your Board and the County's mandated responsibilities were completed in 2015. These include:

- Passage of the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST ACT)*, which reauthorizes Federal highway, transit and highway safety programs for five years, through 2020;

- Approval of the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015*, which lifted the sequester-level budget caps put in place by the Budget Control Act of 2011 and provided additional discretionary funding for programs critical to the County;
- Reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) through September, 2017;
- Extension of the current authorization for Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) for an additional two years;
- Approval of omnibus legislation to address human trafficking, including resources for local law enforcement and prosecutors; and,
- A two-year postponement in implementation of the so-called "Cadillac Tax" on certain employer-sponsored health plans, until 2020.

Funding for specific projects in general and Santa Barbara County proposals and projects in particular was limited by the continuation of the moratorium on earmarks. Nevertheless, the County was awarded several Federal grants and reimbursements, including:

- \$1.6 million under the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program;
- \$1.6 million through HUD's Community Development Block Grant program and \$701,737 under the HOME program;
- \$1.45 million to stakeholders under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara/Santa Maria Continuum of Care for homeless prevention programs;
- \$337,748 for activities under Part C of the Ryan White HIV AIDS program;
- \$329,100 from HHS to increase access to comprehensive primary health care services;
- \$246,000 under HUD's Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency Services Coordinators (ROSS-SC) Program;
- \$212,920 reimbursement for the incarceration of criminal undocumented aliens under the State Criminal Aliens Assistance Program (SCAAP);
- \$108,924 under the FY 2015 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program for the Santa Barbara Regional Crime Abatement Team.

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Agriculture

With last year's successful completion of the Agricultural Act of 2014 – otherwise known as the “Farm Bill” - we focused our efforts this year on advocating for discretionary funding for Department of Agriculture programs of significance to the County, including in the areas of pest detection and food safety. Throughout the annual appropriations process, we urged the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to fund these programs at the highest possible levels. The final version of the *FY 2016 Agriculture Appropriations* bill included in the year-end Consolidated Appropriations Act provided level funding of \$27.5 million for Pest Detection & Prevention Programs, a \$1.5 million increase in funding for Specialty Crop Pests to \$158 million, and level funding of \$1.01 billion for food safety and inspection.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

We contacted the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to reiterate the County's emergency response and disaster preparedness priorities in the *FY 2016 Homeland Security Appropriations* bill, including funding to address the needs of public safety, public health, emergency management personnel, and communications infrastructure. We also asked them to fund the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program at the highest possible level, and emphasized the critical importance of Emergency Management Performance Grants to the County's emergency preparedness responsibilities. In addition, we urged them to provide adequate funding for State and local bioterrorism preparedness in the *FY 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies* bill.

When conferees negotiated the DHS provisions to be included in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act this fall, they once again rejected the Administration's proposal to condense all State and Local Programs into a single National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP). The measure provides a total of \$1.5 billion for State and Local Programs – the same as in FY 2015 – including \$467 million for State and Local Homeland Security Grants. It also increases funding for Firefighter Assistance Grants by \$10 million to \$690 million, once again funds Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) at \$350 million, and increases funding for the National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund from \$25 million to \$75 million. Additionally, \$600 million is allocated for Public Health Preparedness Block grants under the Department of Health and Human Services provisions of the legislation.

Environment and Land Use

Land Into Trust – Camp 4

Early in March, Congressman LaMalfa (R-CA) re-introduced his legislation to take the Camp 4 property into trust for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians as H.R. 1157. After providing the text to the County and discussing its re-introduction with Congresswoman Capps' staff, we contacted new House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop (R-UT), Indian Affairs Subcommittee Chairman Young (R-AK), subcommittee members and the bill's cosponsors to advocate the County's opposition to the bill. We also met with Chris Fluhr, Majority Staff Director for the Subcommittee, to register the County's position and discuss potential action on the bill. While companion legislation was not introduced in the Senate, we met with Michael Andrews, Staff Director for new Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Chairman Barrasso (R-WY), to brief him on the Camp 4 situation,

and also met with Indian Affairs staff for Senators Boxer and Feinstein to keep them apprised.

We kept in close contact with Subcommittee staff, urging them to include the County if hearings were to be held on H.R. 1157. Early in June, we learned that a hearing on the measure was scheduled for June 17 and that the County would be invited to testify. We provided guidance regarding the drafting of testimony, and accompanied CEO Miyasato during her appearance before the Subcommittee. We also assisted in providing follow-up to the Subcommittee and our local Congressional delegation subsequent to the hearing.

After the Board took action on August 25 to officially authorize discussions with the Santa Ynez Chumash regarding Camp 4 and other issues, we provided the minutes of the Board's action and CEO Miyasato's letter to Tribal Chairman Armenta to House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop (R-UT), Ranking Minority Member Grijalva (D-AZ), and all members of the Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs. We also provided the information to Congresswoman Capps, Senator Boxer, Senator Feinstein, and their respective Indian Affairs staff. Throughout the remainder of the year we kept them apprised of the meetings between the County and the Tribe, emphasizing the County's commitment to the process. No further action was scheduled on H.R. 1157 in 2015, and we have been informed that Chairman Bishop currently has no plans for full committee consideration of the measure.

Land Into Trust Process Reform

In March, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held a Roundtable on the *Carcieri* Supreme Court decision and the Bureau of Indian Affairs' land-into-trust process in general. While the Roundtable was a unique forum without formal testimony, we provided them with a written statement on behalf of the County, including the Board-adopted resolution urging Congress to enact comprehensive fee-to-trust reform as part of any *Carcieri* "fix." We also attended the Roundtable, and shared the County's position with both NACo and CSAC participants. The Roundtable was by design a facilitated forum intended to stimulate initial conversation regarding the issue from all sides. Later in the year, Chairman Barrasso (R-WY) introduced legislation to update and modernize the Department of the Interior's trust land acquisition process for Indian tribes as S. 1879, the *Interior Improvement Act*. The bill is intended to encourage local cooperation and better transparency from the Bureau of Indian Affairs regarding fee-to-trust applications by tribes, and includes provisions incentivizing the use of cooperative agreements with local governments. While CSAC was involved in the development of S. 1879, it has expressed concerns over the legislation as introduced. Chairman Barrasso did not schedule a markup of the *Interior Improvement Act* this year, and companion legislation was not introduced in the House.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)

Beginning early in the year, we urged the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to take action on legislation to secure full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program. In the Senate, we contacted the Energy and Natural Resources Committee in support of Senator Wyden's S. 517, the *Secure Rural Schools and PILT Repair Act*, and asked Senators Boxer and Feinstein to support it

and similar measures to provide full PILT funding. We also urged House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop (R-UT) and Ranking Minority Member Grijalva (D-AZ) to support similar efforts in the House. It was announced late in June that that the County is receiving \$1.6 million under PILT for FY 2015.

We also worked with NACo throughout the year to advocate for PILT funding through the annual appropriations process, urging the local Congressional delegation to support efforts to fully fund the program. Congresswoman Capps, Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein agreed to sign letters to the appropriators for FY 2016 PILT full funding, while also supporting a longer range solution to ensure ongoing statutory funding for the program. The final version of the *FY 2016 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill included in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act provides \$452 million for PILT, fully funding the program.

Pipeline Safety

We provided staff support for County Planning and Development Assistant Director Dianne Black during her July 14 trip to Washington, DC to testify before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power. Congresswoman Capps serves on the Subcommittee, and Ms. Black was invited to testify at an oversight hearing on pipeline safety to discuss the County's experiences in responding to the recent Plains All American pipeline failure that led to the Refugio oil spill.

Drought Relief

We closely monitored Congressional efforts to address the ongoing drought in California. In the House, Congressman Valadao (R-CA) introduced H.R. 2898, the *Western Water and American Food Security Act of 2015*, to allow the use of more water from the federally-operated Central Valley Project and the state-operated State Water Project in times of drought, with some habitat-related restrictions. The bill also includes provisions to speed up construction of new water storage projects. In the Senate, Senator Feinstein worked throughout the year to develop legislation that could eventually be merged with H.R. 2898, which she introduced as S. 1894, the *California Emergency Drought Relief Act of 2015*. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on the proposal on October 8, but although discussions between House Majority Leader McCarthy, Senator Feinstein and others continued throughout the fall, significant policy differences between House Republicans and House and Senate Democrats prevented a consensus on compromise legislation this year.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The existing authorization for the Land and Water Conservation fund (LWCF) expired on September 30, which means that the \$900 million annually that previously went to LWCF from oil & gas royalties now goes into the General Fund instead. While the Fund maintains strong bipartisan support and several measures have been introduced – particularly in the Senate – there is some opposition from House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop (R-UT) and other western State members regarding use of LWCF to purchase more Federal lands. In the fall Chairman Bishop proposed draft legislation entitled the *Protecting America's Recreation and Conservation Act*, which would make substantive changes to LWCF, including changing ratios for state and federal programs, emphasizing urban

recreational access, and limiting funds for federal land acquisition. His committee held a hearing on the draft in November, but further action remains pending.

Clean Water Regulations

We closely monitored Congressional action in response to EPA's proposed rule, published last year, to amend the definition of "waters of the U.S." under the Clean Water Act and expand the range of waters that fall under federal jurisdiction, with a broad range of potential impacts on local agencies such as the County. NACo has been very engaged on this issue, calling for the rule to be withdrawn until further analysis and more in-depth consultation with state and local officials has taken place. In May, the House approved H.R. 1732, the *Regulatory Integrity Protection Act*, which would prevent EPA from completing the regulatory process for the proposed rule. The bill would require the agency to withdraw the proposal and restart the rule-making process. H.R. 1732 was approved by a vote of 261-155, largely along party lines

The scenario became more complicated late in May, when EPA announced its release of the final rule. EPA Administrator McCarthy indicated that impacts on local governmental agencies had been obviated, and we provided an advance copy to the County for analysis. However, on August 27, a federal judge granted a preliminary injunction that temporarily stopped enforcement of the rule. Legislatively, the House Appropriations Committee included language in both the *FY 2016 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill and the *FY 2016 Energy and Water Appropriations* bill to prohibit implementation of the final rule, and the Senate Appropriations Committee included similar language in its versions of the bills. These policy riders were deleted from both funding measures when House and Senate conferees negotiated the year-end FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

Homelessness, Housing and Community Development

Homelessness

We provided the County with the U.S. Housing and Urban Affairs' (HUD) Notice of Funding Availability for the FY 2014 Continuum of Care Program Competition. We also worked with Senator Feinstein's office to make HUD aware of issues that had impacted the previous round of COC awards. Last winter, HUD Secretary Castro announced \$1.8 billion in grants to support nearly 8,400 local homeless housing and service programs across the country. We were informed that the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County CoC was awarded \$1.45 million in CoC funding, which can be used for street outreach, client assessment, and direct housing assistance. The County was not eligible this year for Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding, which is used for homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, and related services.

We lobbied members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Congresswoman Capps, and Senators Boxer and Feinstein in support of adequate funding for homeless programs in the *FY 2016 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill. The final version of the Transportation/HUD spending measure included in the FY 2016 Consolidated

Appropriations Act provided an increase of \$115 million for Homeless Assistance grants to \$2.25 billion.

Housing and Community Development Resources

Last spring, the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced that it was awarding nearly \$36 million in grants to public housing authorities and non-profit organizations across the nation to hire or retain service coordinators to help residents achieve economic and housing independence, under the Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency Services Coordinators (ROSS-SC) Program. We were informed that an award of \$246,000 was made for service coordinators in Santa Barbara County. HUD Secretary Castro also announced formula allocations for community planning and development programs, based on enactment of the FY 2015 budget levels. We were informed that the County was allocated \$1,584,252 in CDBG funding, and \$701,737 under the HOME program.

As work began on FY 2016 appropriations, we contacted the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, our local Congressional delegation, and Senators Boxer and Feinstein to advocate for funding for housing and community development programs of significance to the County in the *FY 2016 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill. We also asked our delegation to sign on to “Dear Colleague” letters in support of funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs. We reiterated the County’s priorities in anticipation of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees’ markups of their versions of the spending bill this spring. When we were alerted that the Senate Appropriations Committee draft of the bill would include a 93 percent cut in funding level for the HOME Program to \$66 million, we immediately contacted Senators Boxer and Feinstein to request their support for restoring the funding. Both Senators cosigned a letter to the Committee to protest any cut in HOME funding, and Senator Feinstein supported a proposed amendment to restore the funding during the committee markup of the bill. The amendment was rejected on a party-line vote.

This fall, we contacted House and Senate conferees on the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act to advocate that they restore funding for HOME, as well as reiterating the County’s numerous other priorities in the HUD-related provisions of the bill. The enactment of the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2016* in November lifted the discretionary budget caps for both FY 2016 and FY 2017, and as a result, conferees provided \$950 million for HOME, \$50 million more than FY 2015. The measure also provides the following: level funding of \$3 billion for CDBG; an increase of \$115 million for Homeless Assistance grants to \$2.25 billion; a slight increase in funding for Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) to \$335 million; a decrease of \$15 million to \$60 million for HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH); and a \$12.7 million increase in funding for elderly housing to \$432.7 million. Section 8 funding is increased by \$300 million to \$19.6 billion.

Immigration Reform

During his January advocacy trip to Washington, DC, we arranged and participated in meetings for Supervisor Carbajal to advocate your Board’s support for comprehensive immigration reform, citing the impacts on local communities and their economies. We also contacted the House and Senate Leadership and the respective

committees of jurisdiction to reiterate your Board's position. However, the lingering toxic effects of last year's political battles over the issue did not abate and there were no productive discussions on immigration reform this year.

Public Health

Funding for County Health Care Programs

In September, Health and Human Services Secretary Burwell announced \$350 million in FY 2015 funding under the Affordable Care Act for grants to enable health centers across the country to increase access to comprehensive primary health care services. We were informed that the County of Santa Barbara was awarded a grant of \$329,100 under the program. Funding provided by these grants may be used to hire new staff including new health care providers, to keep clinics open for longer hours, and to expand the care provided to include new services such as oral health, behavioral health, pharmacy, and vision services.

We urged the House and Senate Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittees to support public health programs in the *FY 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies* bill. We also urged them to provide adequate funding for State and local bioterrorism preparedness and bioterrorism hospital grants. The Labor/HHS funding provisions included in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act provides essentially level funding of \$1.49 billion for community health centers, slightly increases substance abuse block grants by \$4 million to \$1.78 billion, and decreases funding for immunizations by \$114 million to \$459 million. The measure increases funding for mental health block grants 10% to \$511.5 million, and provides level funding for preventative health services block grants at \$160 million. It also includes \$900 million for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), the same as in FY 2015, a slight increase of \$1.2 million to \$638.2 million for the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, and \$600 million for Public Health Preparedness Block grants.

340B Drug Pricing Program

We contacted the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee to express the County's support for the 340B Drug Pricing Program, and we also apprised members of the local House delegation of the importance of the program. Under 340B, pharmaceutical manufacturers extend discounts to eligible providers – including community health centers such as the County's – as a condition of participating in the Medicaid and Medicare Part B markets.

The subcommittee held a hearing examining the 340B program on March 24. While large pharmaceutical companies do not favor the program, both Subcommittee Chairman Pitts (R-PA) and full Committee Chairman Upton (R-MI) expressed their support for 340B during the hearing. However, in May we were alerted by America's Essential Hospitals of a proposed amendment to H.R. 6, the *21st Century Cures Act*, to make changes to 340B. The draft amendment was released just a few days before the scheduled markup of H.R. 6 by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and included areas of concern that could not be adequately addressed in the short time frames. We urged the committee to reject the amendment during the markup, and alerted the members of the local House delegation about it, reiterating the importance of the program to the County. The 340B-related provisions were not

included when the committee marked up and approved H.R. 6. In August, We provided County staff with the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) proposed Omnibus Guidance for the 340B Drug Pricing Program, as published in the Federal Register. Comments were due to HRSA in October.

Mental Health

We closely monitored activity on Congressman Murphy's (R-PA) H.R. 2646, the *Helping Families in Mental Crisis Act*, which is intended to overhaul the mental health system to make needed psychiatric, psychological, and supportive services available for individuals and families in mental health crisis. While the measure has broad bipartisan support, concerns exist regarding privacy protections and court-ordered treatment. When the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health marked up the bill on November 4, it was approved by a vote of 18-12, and forwarded to the full Committee. However, Committee Chairman Upton (R-MI) has not yet scheduled further action on the measure.

Childhood and Women's Health

After Senator Brown (D-OH) introduced legislation to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) as S. 522, we contacted the Senate and House committees of jurisdiction to advocate in support of its extension, emphasizing that it provides over 11,000 children in the County with comprehensive Medi-Cal coverage for a modest monthly payment and co-pays. CHIP reauthorization was incorporated into the negotiations regarding the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR), and when H.R. 2, the *Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015*, was drafted late in March, it included provisions to reauthorize CHIP through September, 2017. H.R. 2 was subsequently approved by the House and Senate, and President Obama signed the measure into law on April 16.

As the appropriations process began, we lobbied the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for WIC funding in the *FY 2016 Agriculture Appropriations* bill. We also asked our delegation to support a "Dear Colleague" letter in support of the highest level of funding for WIC. When the House committee drafted its FY 2016 Agriculture spending bill, it proposed \$6.5 billion for WIC, a \$139 million decrease from FY 2015, stating that the reduction reflects USDA's estimates of declining enrollments in the program, and will not prevent any eligible participant from receiving benefits. House and Senate conferees on the Department of Agriculture funding provisions in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act decreased WIC funding by \$273 million to \$6.35 billion.

We also urged the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to support funding for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant in the *FY 2016 Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill. Conferees on the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act included \$638.2 billion for the Title V program, an increase of \$1.2 billion over the previous year.

Ryan White Care Act Funding

During the fall, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that it was awarding \$2.2 billion in FY 2015 Ryan White HIV/AIDS funding for HIV/AIDS care and medications. We were notified that Santa Barbara County will receive \$337,748 under Part C of the program for early intervention services.

We contacted the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to reiterate the County's support for the Ryan White CARE Act, and to urge them to take action on legislation to reauthorize its programs. Neither the House Energy and Commerce nor the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committees scheduled hearings on the CARE Act this year.

Excise Tax on Employer-Sponsored Health Plans

Throughout the year we monitored potential Congressional action to address the excise tax on employer-sponsored health plans implemented under the Affordable Care Act. Known as the "Cadillac" tax, it is intended to rein in healthcare spending and cut costs through discouraging high-priced health plans by placing a 40% excise tax on that portion of a plan's costs that exceed a certain threshold. Recognizing the potential impact on counties, NACo included repeal of the Cadillac tax in its Legislative Platform, and it is estimated that 30% of employers will be affected. While no action was taken to repeal the provision this year, the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act passed in December delays its implementation by two years, until 2020.

Public Safety

Immigration Impacts on Public Safety

We provided the County with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) requirements for seeking reimbursements for costs associated with the incarceration of illegal alien criminals under the FY 2015 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Applications were due in May, and in September we were informed by BJA that the County of Santa Barbara would receive \$212,920 in FY 2015 funding under the program, a slight increase over the County's FY 2014 reimbursement.

As in previous years, we worked with CSAC on a letter from the California Congressional delegation in support of FY 2016 funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), urging the local Congressional delegation members to co-sign the letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science in anticipation of work later in the spring on drafting next year's spending bill. The President's FY 2016 Budget Request once again proposed elimination of SCAAP, leaving it to Congress to reinstate funding to State and local governments to defray some of the costs of incarcerating illegal aliens. When the House approved the *FY 2016 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations* bill early in May, it provided an 18.9% increase in funding for the program, to \$220 million. While SCAAP would still be woefully underfunded at this level, any increase is definitely a victory in the current political and economic environment. Unfortunately, the version of the FY 2016 CJS bill drafted by the Senate Appropriations Committee only includes \$75 million for SCAAP. As year-end negotiation began on Department of Justice funding, we reiterated the importance of SCAAP to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, and urged our local Congressional delegation to sign onto a bipartisan Dear Colleague letter sent to conferees. The final version of the measure increases FY 2006 funding for SCAAP by 13.5% over the last couple of years, to \$210 million.

Public Safety Funding

In May, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) released its solicitation for applications under the FY 2015 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, which we provided to the County for action. Under BJA's allocation for JAG the County of Santa Barbara, in conjunction with the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria, was awarded \$108,924 for continuing operations of the Santa Barbara Regional Crime Abatement Team.

We contacted the House and Senate Appropriations Committees regarding the County's public safety funding priorities, and urged them to provide the highest level of funding possible for local law enforcement activities, including youth delinquency prevention, local law enforcement technology needs, domestic abuse programs, drug treatment and forensic and cold case activities. The final version of the CJS spending measure negotiated as part of the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act provides: a \$100 million increase to \$476 million for the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG); a \$50 million increase in funding to \$480 million for Violence Against Women Act programs; \$270.16 million for State and local juvenile justice programs; level funding of \$125 million for DNA and forensic-related programs; \$68 million for re-entry programs authorized under the Second Chance Act, the same as in FY 2015; \$41 million for drug courts and \$6 million for veterans treatment courts; a slight increase to \$10 million for mentally ill offender programs; and \$2 million to continue the John R. Justice Grant Program. The measure also increases funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) by 13.5% over the last couple of years, to \$210 million.

Juvenile Justice

After Senate Judiciary Chairman Grassley introduced S. 1169, the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2015*, we contacted committee members to reiterate the need for adequate Federal resources to assist local government agencies such as the County in addressing juvenile justice and delinquency prevention needs in the community. We also asked Senators Boxer and Feinstein to urge their colleagues on the committee to address the need for an array of services to meet the needs of children and youth in the juvenile justice system. In July, the Committee marked up and approved S. 1169 with bipartisan support. The bill would authorize \$160 million per year for five years for juvenile justice programs, with a 2% increase each year. It also updates the standards for how juveniles should be detained for the first time since 2002, and adds additional support for youth with mental illnesses. It has been placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar for full Senate consideration. In the House, Congressman Scott (D-VA) re-introduced his *Youth PROMISE Act* as H.R. 2197. The proposal would provide for evidence-based practices related to juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention. The House Judiciary Committee did not schedule hearings on juvenile justice this year.

Mentally Ill Offenders

We contacted Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Grassley (R-IA) and Ranking Minority Member Leahy (D-VT) to urge them to expedite full Senate consideration of Senator Franken's (D-MN) S. 993, the *Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act*, which would facilitate collaboration amongst the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse

systems. The measure, which has strong bipartisan support, was approved by the Judiciary Committee and is currently pending on the Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. In the House, we contacted Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime Chairman Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Ranking Minority Member Jackson Lee (D-TX) to advocate in support of companion legislation introduced as H.R. 1854 by Congressman Collins (R-GA), as well as Congressman Nugent's (R-TX), H.R. 731, the *Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act*, which would reauthorize and improve the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA), including grants for improved mental health treatment services for mentally ill offenders.

Second Chance Act Reauthorization

We reiterated support for legislation to reauthorize the Second Chance Act to the Senate and House Judiciary Committees of jurisdiction. The previous authorization expired on September 30, 2010, and while Congress has continued to fund the Act's programs through the annual appropriations process, we argued the importance of reauthorizing and improving Second Chance to ensure the availability of much needed re-entry resources to local governments. While Senator Portman (R-OH) introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Act as S. 1513, the *Second Chance Act Reauthorization Act*, a companion bill has not been introduced in the House, and hearings were not scheduled this year on S. 1513. Second Chance Act programs were once again funded at the \$68 million level for FY 2016 through the annual appropriations process.

Human Trafficking

Congress resumed efforts begun last year to address human trafficking and its impacts. Early in the year, the House passed a package of measures on the issue. These included: H.R. 181, the *Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act*, which would increase resources for local law enforcement to investigate and prosecute human trafficking, and enable state and local prosecutors to obtain wiretap warrants for human trafficking; and H.R. 469, the *Strengthening Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act*, which would require States to have a program to identify and assess reports involving child sex trafficking victims, to train child protective services workers about identifying, assessing; and to assist in making services referrals for child victims. Both bills have been referred to the Senate, which has not yet scheduled action on the proposals.

Social Services

Older Americans

We arranged and participated in meetings for Supervisor Carbajal with the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to discuss reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) during his January advocacy trip. We also met with staff from the Senate HELP Subcommittee on Aging and the House Education & Workforce Committee to discuss the prognosis for action this year on legislation to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA). We provided them with relevant background information regarding local impacts of OAA programs. After Chairman Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Minority Member Murray (D-WA) of the full Senate HELP Committee introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Act as S. 192, the *Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act*, we contacted members of the committee

to reiterate the County's support for OAA and urged expedited consideration of the measure. We also contacted the House Education and the Workforce Committee to advocate the County's support for OAA reauthorization. Throughout the spring and summer, we continued to coordinate with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) and other stakeholders on OAA advocacy efforts, including the Older Americans Act Week of Action. July 14th marked the 50th Anniversary of the signing into law of the original Older Americans Act, and two days later the full Senate approved S. 192 by voice vote without opposition. Despite heavy lobbying efforts, the House has not yet moved forward on OAA reauthorization.

We contacted the four House committees of jurisdiction to advocate in support of reauthorization of the Elder Justice Act. Congressman King (R-NY) has introduced H.R. 988, the *Elder Justice Reauthorization Act*, which would provide a simple reauthorization of the Act through 2019. Citing the increase in both the elderly population and elder abuse related incidences in the County, we urged the committees to include more substantive provisions in the legislation, such as improving the capacity of local adult protective services (APS) programs to respond effectively to abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. We also asked the local Congressional delegation to support the County's advocacy for reauthorization of the Act. Hearings on the Elder Justice Act were not held this year.

TANF Reauthorization

Led by Human Resources Subcommittee Chairman Boustany (R-LA), members of the House Ways and Means Committee introduced a package of legislative proposals to amend and reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. We provided the eight measures to County staff for analysis, as well as Chairman Boustany's overarching draft bill, the *Improving Opportunity in America Welfare Reauthorization Act of 2015*, which would reauthorize TANF through 2020. The proposals are intended to strengthen TANF and better help its beneficiaries move from welfare to work, and range from ending the separate and higher work requirement for two-parent families, to increasing the share of adults expected to work or prepare for work by preventing states from receiving certain "credits," to provide up to \$300 million annually to states to test ways to better serve welfare beneficiaries by improved case management, better coordinated benefits, and a choice of service providers. The subcommittee held its initial hearings on these proposals in July, and when we subsequently discussed TANF reauthorization with Subcommittee staff, they indicated that Chairman Boustany is dedicated to moving forward with the legislation. It would be the first significant updating of TANF since 2005. With former Ways and Means Committee Chairman Ryan (R-WI) having been elected as the House Speaker, Congressman Boustany is in line to become full committee chairman, strengthening the prognosis that TANF reauthorization will move forward in 2016.

Social Services Funding

We contacted the House and Senate Appropriations Committee, Congresswoman Capps, and Senators Boxer and Feinstein to advocate in support of Title XX Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding, emphasizing its importance to a variety of programs in the County, including IHSS and Child Welfare Services. We also encouraged them to adequately fund the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), citing the provision of services funded through the County's Community Action

Partnership, including case management, employment services, child care, emergency shelter and food distribution, financial education, protection from violence, and youth services. The final *FY 2016 Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill negotiated as part of the omnibus FY 2016 funding package provides \$1.7 billion for Title XX Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) – the same as in FY 2015 – while funding for the Community Services Block Grant is increased by \$41 million to \$715 million.

Child Welfare Services

We contacted the Senate Finance Committee to advocate in support of action on Committee Ranking Member Wyden's (D-OR) S. 1964, the *Family Stability & Kinship Care Act*. The measure would expand Federal funding available under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act to include prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home with their parents or other family members. It also gives States and Indian Tribes the flexibility to adapt evidence-based family services to the specific needs of each family. We also asked Senators Boxer and Feinstein to support the proposal. In the House, Congressman Doggett (D-TX) introduced companion legislation as H.R. 3781, and we asked our local Congressional delegation to cosponsor the measure. Hearings were not held this year on either bill.

We also provided County staff with Senator Grassley's (R-IA) S. 1439, the *Foster Youth Independence Act*, which would allow States that provide foster care for children up to age 21 to serve former foster youths through age 23. The provisions of S.1439 would complement California's Transitional Housing Program-Plus efforts. In the House, Congresswoman Bass (D-CA) introduced companion legislation as H.R. 3160, but no hearings were scheduled on the proposal.

Transportation and Public Works

Federal Transportation Funding

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) was an anomaly in that it was only a two-year reauthorization of Federal transportation programs, and expired in 2014. As Congress reconvened in January we met with the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to advocate the County's reauthorization priorities, and we arranged and participated in meetings for Supervisor Carbajal and Public Works Director McGolpin to lobby for reauthorization during their January advocacy trip. We briefed Congresswoman Capps and the personal staff for Senators Feinstein and Boxer regarding the ongoing need for a fully funded, multi-year bill and Federal resources for the County's high-priority transportation projects. We also requested their support and that of the committees of jurisdiction for robust funding for bridge projects. While MAP-21 consolidated the number of highway programs by two-thirds, the final bill set aside a pot of funding for off-system bridges that essentially preserves the program at the FY 2009 level. We also advocated for an aggressive Federal pavement preservation program.

The Senate passed its version of reauthorization on July 30 as H.R. 22, the *Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act (DRIVE Act)*. The Senate bill proposed modest increases in funding – slightly above baseline levels - for highway and transit programs over six years. Although the *DRIVE Act* provided six

years of program authorizations, the bill only identified funding for the first three years.

After repeated delays driven by the lack of an identifiable funding mechanism, the House began debate in November on its bill, H.R. 3767, the *Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 (STRRA)*. The *STRRA* proposed baseline funding levels for transportation programs, ensuring that they were funded at current levels with an adjustment for inflation. Like the *DRIVE Act*, it proposed six years of program authorizations, while again only identifying enough funding for the first three years. During floor debate, Congressman Neugebauer (R-TX) offered an amendment to abolish the Federal Reserve surplus fund and transfer the money into the General Fund, thus providing a funding mechanism for a six-year bill. The amendment was approved, and the House passed *STRRA* on November 5.

As House and Senate conferees then began negotiating what would become H.R. 22, the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST ACT)*, we worked in coordination with CSAC to continue to advocate for bridge funding in the final package. The *FAST Act* includes \$305 billion over five years for transportation programs. By opting for five years instead of six, conferees were able to provide additional funding increases for some programs. The legislation maintains the current off-system bridge set-aside from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and makes on-system bridges eligible for funding under the National Highway Performance Program. The Transportation Alternatives Program is re-designated as the "Surface Transportation Block Grant Program set-aside," and funding is increased to \$835 million per year in 2016 and 2017 and then \$850 million per year in 2018 through 2020. The project acceleration and environmental streamlining provisions from MAP-21 are preserved and expanded in the *FAST Act*. The *FAST Act* was passed by the House and the Senate on December 3 and signed into law by the President the next day.

Lower Mission Creek

We continued to work with the Army Corps of Engineers and County staff on efforts to obtain further funding opportunities for the Lower Mission Creek Project. In January, we arranged and participated in meetings for Supervisor Carbajal, Public Works Director McGolpin and Deputy Director Fayram with Corps Headquarters staff to advocate in support of moving the project further into the construction phase. We emphasized the significant investment in the project by both the Corps and the County, and the importance of these improvements to protecting lives and property in Santa Barbara. We also discussed the potential for refocusing the project on the most cost-effective improvements. As part of our efforts, we briefed House and Senate Appropriations Committee staff on the project and worked with Senator Feinstein in her role as Chair of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

On October 7, the Army Corps of Engineers released its "Interim Deauthorization List of USACE Projects," as required by the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014. Even though the Corps had assured Supervisor Carbajal that Lower Mission Creek would not be on the list during his Washington, DC, advocacy meetings last winter, it was indeed one of 146 projects proposed for deauthorization. Inclusion of the project on the list would make Lower Mission Creek ineligible for

Federal funding through the Corps' process. We immediately brought this to the attention of Congresswoman Capps, as well as Senator Boxer because of her position as Ranking Minority Member on the Committee of jurisdiction over the Corps. Both offices made direct inquiries on the County's behalf. The Corps clarified that the project authorization included on the list was an inactive version from 1988, and that the current version of the project authorized in 2000 was not impacted.

Lake Cachuma

In January, we arranged for Supervisor Carbajal and County staff to meet with the Bureau of Reclamation and House and Senate Appropriations Committees to discuss a variety of issues related to Lake Cachuma, including upgrades to the Federal facilities that serve the recreational users. We also assisted the County throughout the year in advocating these issues with the local Delegation. Resources to address additional facility upgrades continue to be scarce in the environment created by Federal deficit reduction efforts and the earmark moratorium.

Other Advocacy and Support

Municipal Bonds

In response to an Action Alert from NACo, we contacted Congresswoman Capps and other members of the California House delegation to make them aware of a "Dear Colleague" letter being circulated in support of maintaining the tax exempt status of municipal bonds. The President's FY 2016 Budget Request proposed capping the exemption at 28%, and other proposals were being circulated that would eliminate it altogether. We also contacted the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to express support for tax-exempt municipal bonds. However, Congress did not tackle tax reform this year.

Federal Tax Intercept

We contacted the respective House and Senate committees of jurisdiction to advocate in support of legislation that would allow the interception of Federal tax refunds as a means to recover fees and judgments owed to the County. We cited the successful program implemented in California enabling the interception of State income tax refunds, which has resulted in the collection of millions of dollars in delinquent criminal restitution, fines, penalty assessments and fees. Even though Chairman Wyden (D-OR) of the Senate Finance Committee supports the proposal and had sponsored tax intercept measures in previous years, legislation was not introduced this year.