



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO  
Department No.: 012  
For Agenda Of: 12/5/2006  
Placement: Set Hearing  
Estimate Time: 15 minutes on 12/19/06  
Continued Item: YES  
If Yes, date from: 11/21/06  
Vote Required: Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director(s) Michael F. Brown, CEO, 568.3400  
Contact Info: Terri Maus Nisich, Assistant CEO, 568.3400  
**SUBJECT: 2007 Legislative Priorities: Federal Lobbyist Contract, All Districts**

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**County Counsel Concurrence:**

As to form:  Yes  No  N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence:**

As to form:  Yes  No  N/A

**Other Concurrence:** N/A

As to form:  Yes  No  N/A

**Recommended Action(s):**

Set a hearing for December 19, 2006 (estimated 15 minutes) to:

(A) Approve the use of a federal lobbyist(s) for the period of December 23, 2006 to December 31, 2008 to assist the County with its Federal legislative priorities.

**Summary:**

On November 21, 2006, the Board of Supervisors (1) endorsed the issues and projects that would constitute the 2007 legislative platform and (2) authorized the CEO to assess the feasibility and cost of retaining a federal lobbyist. For the legislative platform, the Board added the issue of continuing to work with the CA Department of Fish and Game on the clearing of willows from the Santa Ynez River and deferred the inclusion of the revenue sharing with the State on State tideland leases (previously referenced as reinstating Senate Bill 1187 in the 11/21/06 Board letter) as State priorities. The Board also added beach erosion, transportation and tribal land use issues to the federal priorities, as recommended by the Legislative Program Committee on November 20, 2006. Regarding the use of a federal lobbyist, the Board authorized the CEO to conduct a "request for information/request for qualifications" (RFI/RFQ) and report back to the Board with a recommended firm and contract amount.

**Background:**

This item is on the Board's agenda in order to solidify the County's legislative platform for the upcoming year, including reinstating the use of a federal lobbyist. The County previously used a federal advocate/lobbyist until it terminated the contract in fiscal year 2005-2006 and reallocated the funding to other projects. As directed by the Legislative Program Committee at its November 20, 2006 meeting and the Board of Supervisors at its November 21, 2006 hearing, staff issued a RFQ and evaluated the proposals received. The recommended firm(s) will be presented to the Legislative Program Committee

2007 **Legislative Priorities: Federal Lobbyist Contract, All Districts**

12/5/2006

Page 2 of 2

at its meeting on December 18, 2006 and to the Board at its December 19, 2006 meeting. The selected firm(s) will be asked to enter into a contract commencing on December 23, 2006.

The current legislative priorities as adopted by the Board at the 11/21/06 meeting include:

- Seeking new funding at the federal and/or state level for Lake Cachuma, Santa Maria Levee, Mission Creek (Santa Barbara), Veterans Building (Lompoc), equipment for the Santa Ynez Emergency Operations Center, beach erosion and transportation funding (TEA grants in particular).
- Seeking continued funding of programs, including an increase in reimbursement rates for Medicare and Medi-Cal for Federally Qualified Health Centers, increased funding for bioterrorism grants, increased reimbursement rates for housing undocumented aliens at the jail (SCAAP), funding to attain 24 hour staffing of fire departments (SAFER) and reinstating the funding of all counties for the costs of operating trial courts at the State level.
- Seeking new legislation at the State level to address the State’s prescribed housing plan for the County; require the timely payment by the State of medical claims submitted by Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services; require payment in lieu of property tax for State institutions located on County property, amend the 1937 Employee Retirement Act to reform retirement plans for some county governments and requiring CEQA exemptions for certain public projects, in particular the clearing of willows on the Santa Ynez River. The County is also seeking support at the federal level for HR 4794, the Child Support Protection Act of 2006.
- While there is no specific action assigned to the issue at this time other than monitoring existing legislation and any proposed changes, tribal land issues are also part of the legislative platform for 2007.

**Performance Measures:**

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted:  Yes  No

**Fiscal Analysis:**

While the contract amount for the federal lobbyist is unknown at this time, it is likely to cost between \$70,000-100,000. The County allocated \$100,000 in the past toward a federal lobbyist and currently spends about \$63,000 for its State lobbyist. A survey in 2005 revealed that Monterey County spent \$103,000, Marin County spent \$72,000 and Ventura County spent \$145,000 for their respective federal lobbyist contracts.

**Staffing Impact(s):**

**Legal Positions:**

0

**FTEs:**

0

**Special Instructions:**

**Attachments:**

Matrix: Updated 2007 Legislative Priorities by Critical Issue

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**cc:** Cliff Berg, Governmental Advocates, Inc.