

Attachment C

2025
STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE
ISSUES BY PRINCIPLE
(redlined to reflect public comment)

❖ **JOB GROWTH AND ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Advancement of Women and Girls

Support funding and legislation for programs and services that improve the lives of women and children including economic empowerment opportunities, better access to health care, affordable and accessible high-quality child care, advocating for additional family leave, and permanently extending the child tax credit.

Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Advocate for Congress and the President to enact comprehensive immigration reform that improves and simplifies the current legal immigration system and includes a national strategy for coordination among federal, state, local and tribal authorities.

Economic Enhancement/Revenue Diversification

Advocate for enhanced funding and streamlined processes that will encourage the diversification, development, incubation, and growth of business determined to be of priority to California counties, the Central Coast Region and Santa Barbara County specifically. Support for funding and process improvements should include, but not be limited to, County's access to establishing or expanding revolving economic development loan funds, small business grants and loans, community development loans and investments, and equity capital and tax relief for startup businesses.

Lower Mission Creek and Water Resources Development Act

Support legislative language in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to keep Lower Mission Creek a viable project. Support funding for the Corps of Engineers to complete the design and construction of the Lower Mission Creek Project and leverage the significant amount of resources spent on project development to date.

Marketplace Equity and Consumer Protection

Support legislation that preserves and enhances funding resources for weights and measures programs, and clear labeling and accuracy of net quantity. Support funding for quantity control and package inspections at the local level for consumer protection.

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Funding

Advocate at the Federal level for passage of a reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which oversees America's workforce development system, with increased funding for all three funding streams of WIOA, in the U.S. Department of Labor's budget: adult programs, youth programs, and programs that support local businesses. WIOA reauthorization must preserve local autonomy and flexibility, which are critical for an adaptive and effective local workforce development system.

Cannabis State and Federal Coordination

Support State legislation that will maintain a well-regulated cannabis industry, eliminate illegal cannabis operations, and protect the health, life, safety, and general welfare of residents in coordination with the State. Support any effort at the federal level to declassify cannabis as a Schedule I drug and remove all conflicts under federal law. Advocate for additional banking services for the cannabis industry to reduce public safety issues posed by a cash-based industry.

Broadband Funding and Infrastructure

Support funding to improve availability, accessibility, competition, resiliency and reliability of high-speed broadband internet services and the development and implementation of those expansion efforts. Advocate for services provided to unserved or underserved households and businesses at speeds sufficient to enable users to meet their daily needs, and to address increasing household and business demands for bandwidth. Advocate for and support inclusion of State Route 154 in broadband infrastructure deployment at the State and/ or Federal level as a crucial route for commerce and communication in rural communities and a primary corridor in northern and southern regions of the County.

Community Disaster Recovery Reform

Disasters significantly impact Santa Barbara County's economy, through tourism disruption, business closures, infrastructure damage, reduced property values, and job losses. Per FEMA's National Risk Index, Santa Barbara County has the highest expected Annual Agriculture Loss Due to Natural Hazards in the country. Prioritize state and federal legislation for community recovery post-disaster by: streamlining recovery processes, making recovery processes accessible and understandable by the whole community, accounting for community vulnerability, and ensuring local governments have the authority and resources to effectively implement recovery plans.

Community Development Programs

Federal and state funding fluctuations and reductions negatively affect the County's ability to plan long term infrastructure improvements, and to address critical public services, and provide affordable housing for low-income families. Construction costs have escalated and, in recent years, has surpassed \$700,000 per unit. Additionally, the ability to site interim housing to address the housing needs of unhoused persons is often impacted by infrastructure limitations. Reliable and predictable funding is critical in addressing immediate housing and service needs of the most vulnerable community members, and improving the community's overall quality of life. The County supports creative strategies to preserve, build, and make housing available and affordable for individual and family households countywide. Support the following policy and funding commitments to community development programs at the state, and national level:

- Provide resources to address the housing needs of households across all levels of income and employment sectors.
- Advocate that the State allocate funds to jurisdictions by formula rather than on a competitive basis. Allow jurisdictions to directly administer their allocations of State funds for eligible uses via grants or loans, and allow the use of loan repayments to support additional eligible uses. Example funding sources include Housing Trust Fund, the complete pool of No Place Like Home, and others.
- Support the creation of public-private partnerships to develop housing and services.

Arts and Culture

Advocate for increased funding of art and culture initiatives from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the California Arts Council (CAC), as well as federal rural community development funding. Support grant opportunities that link the public and private sectors, and programs that link arts to addressing social services. Encourage charitable gifts and provisions to support community access to the arts. Support funding to make creative and cultural engagement opportunities in local planning more equitable and accessible. Support legislative efforts to increase funding for school-based arts education and prepare the next-generation workforce.

Housing Legislation

- Support state and federal legislation to directly fund/create new housing and/or create new funding streams and opportunities for developers of housing, to serve very low and low-income households.
- Support programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME, and HOME ARP that provide additional public services, capital improvements, and new affordable housing. Expansion of the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program provides incentives for private investment in the development of new affordable and supportive housing units. Continue support of programs like the Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) Program which created a dedicated flexible funding stream to support homeownership, new housing construction, Tenant Based Rental Assistance, and supportive services to keep people stably housed.
- Support legislation that creates incentives for employers to either build, or subsidize the building of, workforce housing for their employees, including housing for moderate and upper moderate incomes.
- Oppose legislation that aims to reduce inclusionary affordable housing requirements for market-rate development projects.
- Restore the Mortgage Credit Certificate program and don't allow the California Housing Finance Agency (CalFHA) to make unilateral decisions on how the bond cap intended for single-family will be used, e.g. diverting SF bond cap to commercial uses and discontinuing homebuyer programs.
- Amend the Coastal Act by reprioritizing the hierarchy of resource protection values, such that affordable housing for very low and low-income households has equal or greater value than agricultural resources under certain circumstances (e.g., on agricultural lands that have non-prime soils and/or impervious surfaces, are not in agricultural production, are located near urban areas and urban services, and/or are not located near environmentally sensitive habitat areas).
- Support the ability for local jurisdictions to update their regulations to comply with state law, which is time consuming and requires significant resources, by slowing the pace of legislative updates or instituting a minimum 18-month adoption period between when new laws are adopted and when they go into effect.
- Amend the Government Code to allow State Housing and Community Development (HCD) to grant extensions to local jurisdictions to complete housing element updates, provided State HCD finds that the jurisdiction is making meaningful progress.
- Support legislation that improves State departments' ability to provide needed services to local jurisdictions (e.g., State HCD's certification of housing element updates and Coastal Commission certification of local program amendments).
- Require State HCD and council of governments (COGs) to determine the regional housing needs for each region at least three years before the region's housing element adoption deadline.
- Establish grant and funding programs that help jurisdictions with approved housing elements implement their programs and actions and update regulations to comply with and implement state law.

❖ EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY AND OPERATIONS

County Library Services

Support legislation and funding for local libraries as essential community resources.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Advocate for increased state and federal funding to pursue opportunities to preserve critical open space and enhance public access. Support legislation that increases funding to local entities that are park-deficient.

Improving Local Governance: Unincorporated Powers

Support legislation which provides general law counties all governance powers afforded general law cities in order to adequately address full spectrum of services and infrastructure needs in unincorporated areas. Work with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) to fully assess spectrum of differences in powers of general law cities versus general law counties.

Brown Act and Public Access Flexibility

Support state and federal legislation that provides access to public meetings via alternative methods using technology such as video conferencing. Advocate for providing greater public access through technology and support efforts to streamline regulatory processes and promote operational enhancements relating to public meetings. Advocate for funding that would provide training on Brown Act requirements.

Support and advocate for legislation that eliminates original paper copy requirements for Brown Act body meetings. Support legislation that works towards improving overall efficiency and encourages modern technology in order to reduce the County's carbon footprint.

Increased Options for Mental Health Care Reimbursements

Support efforts to promote enhanced treatment options locally for individuals and their families and that create fiscal stability for expanded inpatient facilities including Institutions for Mental Disease (IMDs) and community-based facilities.

Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice System Integration Implementation Efforts

Advocate and support funding to implement mandates, legislative and otherwise that expand outreach, treatment and follow-up care for persons with the most debilitating behavioral health conditions including primary substance use disorder, primary mental health conditions, severe and persistent mental illness, and co-occurring disorders. Support increased substance use disorder treatment options grounded in research and evidence-based practices.

Emergency Preparedness, Response, Recovery and Resiliency

Prioritize legislative initiatives that provide adequate local government funding, empower local leadership, invest in resilience, facilitate efficient recovery, and promote community-based preparedness to enhance local governments' capacity to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from, and build resilience against all emergencies. Advocate for legislative initiatives that provide substantial funding to local governments for all phases of emergency management, including personnel, equipment, outreach, infrastructure, planning, training, and exercises. Support the development of climate-resilient, all-hazard, and whole-community emergency response protocols that leverage the unique resources and expertise of local communities. Implement

comprehensive recovery programs that more effectively address the immediate and long-term needs of affected communities and governments guided by local priorities, community vulnerabilities, and long-term resilience.

❖ FISCAL STABILITY

Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform

Support stabilized funding and advocate for legislation that aligns with the goals of the Santa Barbara County Public Safety Realignment Act Plan, focusing on reducing recidivism, utilizing alternatives to detention, and providing services for successful community re-entry. Additionally, advocate for State investment in local facilities and programs to address the "revolving door" problem, funding for improved inmate healthcare, and support for initiatives like the national Stepping Up Initiative. Emphasize the need for targeted funding for juvenile placement options, transitional housing for justice-involved youth, and co-response teams. Seek legislative changes for MediCal reimbursement for inmate mental health treatment. Support and maintain programs that enhance safety and security of county residents and businesses.

Disaster Recovery

Natural disasters are more frequent, more intense, and more destructive placing a critical financial burden on local governments. Support changes to the Stafford Act Public Assistance program that ensure local government fiscal solvency through: provision of timely and flexible financial assistance, streamlined reimbursement processes, consideration of community vulnerability, and support for innovative funding mechanisms.

Invasive Species Program Funding

Support continued funding of pest prevention programs and eradication activities. Provide local flexibility to allow Agricultural Commissioners to address pest emergencies and high priority local pest exclusion pathways. Maintain funding for agricultural boarder stations. Support research on invasive species pathways and funding mechanisms to close potential pathways.

Road Usage Charge Transition

State Highway User Tax Account and Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account funding are in decline. As California transitions to clean transportation, the need for road maintenance does not diminish, but the funding through gas tax and other fees will be reduced. The State is exploring Road Usage Charges or other methods to ensure that adequate funding continues for the State's aging infrastructure. Support all efforts to accelerate a transition to new funding mechanisms. If not, the gains from the transformative efforts of Senate Bill 1 will soon be lost as reductions in funding continue.

❖ INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

U.S. Highway 101- Regional

Support SBCAG's efforts to acquire State and Federal funding to fully fund and construct the U.S. 101 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes project.

❖ LOCAL CONTROL

Telecommunications Legislation

Support state and federal legislation that repeals limitations on state and local authority imposed by federal and state law that limit the authority of local governments to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of telecommunications towers and other personal wireless service facilities on the basis of environmental effects (e.g., visual impacts) of these facilities.

Advocate that the FCC revise the processing deadlines for new telecommunication facilities to ensure that local agencies have adequate time to fully evaluate proposed projects under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or, if exempt from CEQA environmental review, other planning laws (e.g., zoning codes) to address siting and design options to minimize visual and site disturbance impacts and protect a high-quality visual environment.

Tribal Relations and Collaboration

Support regional collaboration and partnerships with local tribes on initiatives such as economic vitality efforts, including broadband infrastructure and technology. Advocate for fair and equitable relationships between tribal and local governments while protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all community members.

❖ HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Access to Quality Health Services

Support measures that establish, enhance, or fund policies, programs, research, standards, educational material, and public awareness campaigns that prevent disease, promote wellness, and ensure access to needed health care. The measures include assisting with healthcare coverage and organizational infrastructure for public healthcare organizations.

Homelessness

Support existing and new legislation to address the issue of homelessness. Support expansion of programs that support housing for families with the lowest incomes, such as:

- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance
- Project-Based Rental Assistance
- Public Housing Operating Funds
- Public Housing Capital Grants

Advocate for policies that promote supportive housing and services, including those for Veterans, and streamline approvals for housing construction.

Advocate for State support of multi-year funding streams that allow communities to address the shelter and housing crisis, such as the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP), Homekey, Behavioral Health Bridge Housing, and expansion of the California Encampment Resolution Funding (CERF) Program. Legislation supporting streamlined approvals and construction of housing units is essential to homelessness efforts. Support funding of supportive housing, services and treatment programs to end chronic homelessness. Seek legislative changes to allow more flexible use of state and federal funds for addressing homelessness.

Safety Net Preservation

Support the maintenance of existing safety net program funding levels at both the Federal and State levels in order to preserve the safety net for the County's most vulnerable citizens and mitigate the eroding effects of inflation by funding the cost of doing business. Support and advocate for more outreach to people who qualify for the earned income tax credit and other anti-poverty programs.

Senior Services Funding

Support re-authorization of the Older Americans Act. Support for California's Master Plan for Aging, including the development of local implementation strategies. Support increased Federal and State funding for services that promote the safety, health, and well-being of older adults and adults with disabilities, including support for family/friend and professional caregivers.

Social Services TANF Reauthorization

Advocate at the Federal level to enact a long-term reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program with substantive changes to restore and enhance state and county flexibility to tailor work and support services that move families into self-sufficiency based on their unique needs. TANF Reauthorization must reverse the damaging effects of the 2005 TANF Reauthorization changes to the Work Participation Rates (WPR) formula and definition of "work." The County is interested in a balanced approach between federal oversight and state flexibility with better and more outcome-based measures of success.

Streamlining Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs

Advocate for streamlined procedures to simplify and expedite human services programs, specifically across the state's three major assistance programs: CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs.

Specifically, it is requested that the state seek federal waivers in six key areas:

- Align income verification requirements across CalFresh, CalWORKs and Medi-Cal.
- Reduce the complexities and barriers to determine student eligibility for CalFresh.
- Create new simplified application and recertification forms for CalFresh.
- Make the COVID-19 CalFresh application and recertification interview waiver permanent policy.
- Eliminate the semi-annual reporting requirement in CalFresh.
- Provide permanent Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limit waiver for CalFresh.

Children and Families- Early Care and Education

Support quality early care and education that readies children, families, and communities for academic success. Advocate for increased funding streams to expand childcare services and subsidized spaces especially for infants and toddlers. Maintain, promote, and expand tax credits for families, and job protections for workers that include paid family leave.

Ocean Water Testing

Support for the development and implementation of rapid ocean water testing through funding support from the State Water Resources Control Board to reimburse local costs. Rapid testing methods would allow ocean water quality testing results to be more quickly disseminated to the

public and support timely postings of beach warnings and closures to keep our visitors and residents safe and healthy.

❖ CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND ADAPTATION

Enhanced Infrastructure Resilience

Support local government and community infrastructure improvements and climate adaptation measures to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters and extreme weather events, including flooding, wildfires, earthquakes and sea-level rise thereby enhancing long-term resilience. Support the development of building codes and standards that promote climate-resilient construction practices. Support the development of green infrastructure solutions.

Community-Based Adaptation Planning

Advocate for resources to assist local governments and communities in developing and implementing comprehensive climate adaptation plans and projects ~~in the form of~~ such as technical and feasibility studies, community-led disaster preparedness programs, development and implementation of resilience centers, and various pilot projects. Facilitate partnerships between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private sector stakeholders to address climate-related challenges.

Climate Action – Electric Vehicles & Grid Reliability

Support efforts that encourage Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption and oppose legislation that would hinder EV production and ownership. Advocate for streamlined processes to locate, permit, and tie battery storage into the existing grid. Encourage flexibility in State Resource Adequacy policies to allow continued grid interconnection.

Oil & Gas Infrastructure Safety and Compliance

- Support legislation that incentivizes and/or requires private oil & gas operating companies to repair/replace aging infrastructure including pipelines and tanks. Also include requirements for the use of best available safety-related technologies, with the intent of reducing the frequency and volume of upset events that result in environmental damage.
- Support legislation that provides local jurisdictions with increased regulatory authority and enforcement capability to oversee inspection and maintenance activities of existing/future oil & gas infrastructure.
- Support legislation allowing for stronger enforcement actions, including increased penalties, to be imposed by the land use authority for oil & gas operators that are clearly in violation of permits and related entitlements.
- Support funding for cleanup/removal of historic, abandoned oil and gas wells and equipment where there is no existing responsible party with an urgent priority targeting wells that pollute the marine environment, as well as for equipment that creates public safety/nuisance concerns.
- Support legislation to strengthen the rules set forth by, and enforcement capabilities of, the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) and State Lands Commission (SLC) to require timely and proper abandonment of oil & gas facilities which have an existing responsible party.
- Support legislation that would require oil and gas operating companies to provide comprehensive financial assurance for the purpose of disaster response in the instance the company is not able to pay for cleanup.

Regional Coastal Management Projects-Federal Authority for California

Continue funding Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON) and/or other regional sediment management programs to develop and implement local jurisdictions' sea level rise policies and programs that are consistent with Coastal Act requirements and support beach nourishment projects utilizing materials from within flood control infrastructure or other similar operations. Support new legislation rather than guidelines which are open to interpretation, to resolve policy disagreements between local jurisdictions and the Coastal Commission regarding sea level rise.

Support for Waste Recovery and Reduction Programs & Facilities

Communities are facing new state and federal mandates on solid waste management, requiring increased material recovery, hazardous waste management, and compliance with stricter regulations. To implement new programs and build facilities, local governments need funding, resources, and permitting assistance. The requested actions include supporting legislation that provides flexibility in meeting mandates, promotes facilities that divert waste from landfills, and incentivizes renewable energy production and recycling. Support funding for composting and hazardous waste facilities, circular economy initiatives, and extended producer responsibility programs. These efforts aim to benefit the public by conserving resources, reducing environmental impact, and creating jobs while lowering government costs.

Wastewater Treatment Systems

Wastewater treatment systems have largely untapped potential to increase sustainable water sources for communities across the state. While the complexity and cost of water reuse systems currently often render them infeasible for many local agencies, these could provide critical long-term, reliable water sources that would add to the portfolio of available water for communities. Funding for feasibility studies, capital costs, and legislative/regulatory streamlining for project approvals would increase water resiliency. As State mandates and demands for increased housing in the region bring additional residential units to our area, options to provide sustainable water sources will continue to be a challenge without innovation in water reuse.

Flood Control Infrastructure

Weather is taking on the nature of extremes. Severe drought, wildfires, intense, and prolonged rainfall severely impacts communities; often times with devastating and tragic results. Reform regulatory requirements, including the State and Federal Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act implementation, and California Fish and Game Code 1600, that pose duplicative and unreasonable requirements that delay projects and maintenance, increase costs, threaten life and property, and restrict the effectiveness of infrastructure performance.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Although Proposition 68 and subsequent Budget Acts provided significant funding for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) efforts, they did not establish sustainable, long-term funding that Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) are able to rely on for ongoing operations. Support additional funding mechanisms for ongoing GSA operations and SGMA implementation as compliance will require the expenditure of significant resources over a period of decades.