



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: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: November 28, 2023
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 45 Min
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Legislative Program Committee
Director(s)
Contact Info: Jasmine McGinty, Legislative Coordinator
Brittany Odermann, Deputy CEO

SUBJECT: 2023 Annual Report and Accomplishments from County's Federal and State
Legislative Advocates and Adoption of the 2024 Legislative Platform

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: NA

Other Concurrence:

As to form: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file annual report and accomplishments for 2023 from the County's State legislative advocates, Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa, LLC., and Federal legislative advocate, Thomas Walters and Associates;
- b) Adopt the County of Santa Barbara 2024 Legislative Platform; and
- c) Determine that the above actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because pursuant to sections 15378(b)(4) and 15378(b)(5) the recommended actions consist of organizational, administrative or fiscal activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary:

The purpose of today's Board item is to present annual reports from representatives from the County's federal lobbying firm, Thomas Walters & Associates, and one of the County's State lobbying firms, Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa. The reports are an overview of the past year's accomplishments and preview of the likely legislative issues for 2024. Staff recommends the Board receive and file the 2023 Annual Reports

from state and federal advocates as well as review and adopt the 2024 Legislative Platform. The Legislative Platform establishes legislative principles and includes fifty-four individual planks that align with these principles. The platform is used to communicate key legislative needs and overall priorities of the County to federal and state government, effective January 1, 2024 and was previously reviewed by the County's Legislative Committee on November 2, 2023.

Discussion:

Legislative Annual Reports

Each year, our legislative advocates provide an annual report to your Board that summarizes key legislative activity and accomplishments over the past year. The attached written reports provide the accomplishments that have transpired through December 31, 2023.

Thomas Walters and Associates (federal) and Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa (state), each have three-year agreements with the County, approved by the Board on December 13, 2022. These agreements began January 1, 2023 and end December 31, 2025, with the option to extend for two one-year terms. The County also has a contract with Governmental Advocates to assist the County with legislative relations and coalition building through December 31, 2023.

The 2024 Legislative Platform

The Legislative Committee, comprised of Chair Williams and Supervisor Hartmann, reviewed and approved the Draft 2024 Legislative Platform at the [November 2, 2023](#) Legislative Program Committee meeting. Once adopted by the full Board of Supervisors, the 2024 Legislative Platform will be used to communicate key legislative needs and overall priorities to the federal and state governments, effective January 1, 2024. The development of the platform included review by County departments of the previous year's platform, updates for the most current available information, and development of new proposed planks for consideration.

In addition, public input was solicited for a period of two weeks on the draft platform to encourage public input on the proposed planks and principles. Staff sent out an eblast, press release, and posted the draft to the public website. The review period for public feedback was open through October 19. Staff received three items of public comment which were reviewed and taken into consideration for the final draft presented to the Committee. Feedback was received from a coalition of local Chambers of Commerce, a coalition of Los Padres Forest Watch and environmental groups, and from the Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization. Based on the feedback the following changes were made and approved by the Committee:

- Modifications and additions to the Economic Enhancement and Revenue Diversification Plank to include Vandenberg Space Force Base as a priority industry, as well as adding the hospitality industry, commercial space launch activity, and additional manufacturing as emerging priority industries
- Expansion of the Economic Enhancement and Revenue Diversification Plank to include career education and workforce development; and support of military and government partner employment

Additionally, for the 2024 Platform, four new planks were added, one from the Behavioral Wellness Department and the County Executive Office, one from the Department of Social Services, and two from the Public Works Department. The four new planks are as follows:

- Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Integration
- Streamlining Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs
- Resilient Infrastructure
- Sustainable Infrastructure Funding

While there were no additions to the legislative principles, minor clarifying language changes were made, as shown in Attachment D. The Legislative Principles for 2024 remain as follows:

- Job Growth and Economic Vitality
- Efficient Service Delivery and Operations
- Fiscal Stability
- Inter-Agency Collaboration
- Local Control
- Health and Human Services
- Community Sustainability and Environmental Protection
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The platform includes fifty-four individual planks that align with the legislative principles listed above. The planks are sorted by principle and categorized as a funding request, legislative proposal, and/or advocacy. County staff works closely with the County's state and federal advocates, County departments, and legislative partners to develop effective strategies to address countywide needs and support the Legislative Platform.

Fiscal Impacts:

The 2024 Legislative Platform includes requests for project and program funding as well as legislation and advocacy for public service improvements that may increase revenue or improve service levels. There are no fiscal impacts for adopting the Legislative Platform.

Attachments:

Attachment A - Santa Barbara 2022 Annual Report (Federal) – Thomas Walters & Associates

Attachment B - Santa Barbara 2022 Annual Report (State) – Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa

Attachment C - Proposed 2024 Legislative Platform Book

Attachment D - Proposed Platform Planks – with edits

Authored by:

Jasmine McGinty, Principal Analyst, County Executive Office

cc: Don Gilchrest, Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc.
Jean Hurst, Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa, LLC.