



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: 11/21/2006
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 60 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

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, All Districts

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):

- A) Receive the report on potential issues and projects to be included as part of the 2007 legislative priorities.
- B) Determine which issues and projects to include for 2007 and rank accordingly.
- C) Direct staff to communicate these priorities to the County's state and federal representatives and work with the representatives and lobbyists to secure funding and/or legislative support for these identified priorities.
- D) Authorize the CEO to assess the feasibility and cost of retaining a federal lobbyist and return to the Board on December 5, 2006 with a recommendation.

Summary:

Each year the Board of Supervisors establishes a list of issues and/or projects that are part of its legislative priorities for the upcoming calendar year. This list is generated by surveying department directors, members of the Board of Supervisors and the County Executive Officer. For 2007, the list of potential legislative priorities has been aligned with the critical issues identified by the County during the strategic scan (see attached matrix). These issues center on how the County funds and provides services to its residents, including many mandated services. These issues are also grouped by the type of action requested for each priority such as introducing legislation, requesting funding, or seeking continued support. Upon receiving direction from the Board of Supervisors regarding which issues and projects to include as part of the legislative priorities, County staff will prepare a book that summarizes the top legislative priorities of the County, develop strategies for each of these issues/projects and work with elected representatives to secure funding and/or to develop legislation.

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As part of the legislative platform for 2007, it is recommended that the County utilize a federal advocacy/lobbyist firm to represent the County in Washington, DC and assist the County in its efforts to obtain federal funding of projects. Given the timeframe for developing priorities and submitting federal funding requests, the County Executive Office will return to the Board in December with a recommended lobbyist.

Background:

This item is on the agenda to receive the Board of Supervisors' approval of the County's legislative priorities for the upcoming year. The list of potential priorities has been identified below and is aligned with the critical issues identified during the strategic scan that occurred in August and October of this year on the attached matrix. The critical issues are financial stability, sustainable agriculture/open space, efficient transportation, housing for all segments of the population, service delivery/social services and accommodate demographic changes. The priorities can also be categorized by the type of action the County is requesting from its elected representatives.

Introducing Legislation/ New Bill Request (State)

- Housing Element requirement
- Reinstatement of SB 1187 to allow increased revenue to counties for oil, gas and hydrocarbon production
- Require the State to reimburse counties for medical claims within 30 days of receipt of claim
- Require payment in lieu taxes for State institutions to offset loss of property tax to counties
- Amend the 1937 Act to allow counties to pursue hybrid forms of pension plans
- Restructuring of Probation Departments' reporting relationships and oversight

State Budget/ Federal Appropriations Request

- Funding of \$662,388 for a regional Fire/EMS dispatch center to be part of the new EOC (federal/state)
- Funding of between \$200,000-400,000 for the veterans' building in Lompoc (federal)
- \$2 million toward the cost of replacing facilities at Lake Cachuma due to the surcharge (federal)
- Funding to repair the Santa Maria Levee would cost \$20 Million, more realistic funding requests for specific studies or portions of the levee project are being formulated by County staff (federal/state)
- Funding for Mission Creek would cost \$30 Million, more realistic funding requests for specific studies or portions of the Creek project are being formulated by County staff (federal/state)

Continued Support

- Support for budget allocation to fund the remaining trial court operating costs for all counties (State currently pays the operating costs of State trial courts in 38 counties)
- Support for budget allocations for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to provide counties with grants for disaster and bioterrorism preparedness (federal)
- Support for examining the rate structure and budgetary allocation to increase the reimbursement rate for Medicare and Medi-Cal for Federally Qualified Health Center (federal)
- Support for budget allocation to reauthorize and increase reimbursement to counties for cost of jail care to undocumented aliens through the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP)
- Support for budget allocations for the Fire SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) program
- Support for H.R. 4794 to repeal Section 7309 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Section 7309 prevents federal performance incentive funds from being used as a State match to draw down additional federal dollars resulting in a loss of \$900,000 or 10% of the County's Department Child Support Services' budget.

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The State Legislature convenes on December 4, 2006, the Governor delivers the State of the State address in early January and the deadline for the introduction of bills is February. Consequently, the Board’s approval of the priorities in late November will allow time for staff to prepare legislative materials and meet with elected representatives and work with the County’s lobbyist(s) in time to meet deadlines for legislation and funding requests.

The County currently utilizes an advocate/lobbyist at the State level to represent the County’s interest in Sacramento. The County previously had used an advocate/lobbyist at the federal level, but the contract was terminated two years ago. It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors reinstitute the use of a federal lobbyist in order to increase the County’s likelihood of receiving federal funding of such projects as the surcharge at Lake Cachuma, Mission Creek and the Santa Maria Levee. Should the Board authorize staff to research the feasibility of using a federal lobbyist, staff will return to the Board in early December with a recommended lobbyist firm.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes No

Fiscal Analysis:

Narrative:

While the costs of the legislative program (\$134,000, including the contract with the State lobbyist for \$62,000), has already been budgeted for the current year, the cost of a contract with a federal lobbyist has not been budgeted. The exact amount of a contract with a federal lobbyist will be brought back to the Board in December, but preliminary estimates anticipate the cost to be approximately \$70,000, which is consistent with the amount of the State lobbyist contract.

Staffing Impact(s):

Legal Positions:

0

FTEs:

0

Special Instructions:

Attachments:

Matrix: Potential 2007 Legislative Priorities by Critical Issue

Authored by:

Sharon Friedrichsen, Project Manager, CEO, 568.3107.

cc: