



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 2, 2021
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s) Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Contact Info: Nancy Anderson, Assistant County Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Rural County Representatives of California Membership Recommendation

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: No

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file information regarding the Rural County Representatives of California; and
- b) Adopt a resolution authorizing Santa Barbara County's membership in the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC); and
- c) Appoint Chair Nelson from the Board of Supervisors to serve as the Santa Barbara County Delegate Supervisor to the RCRC Board of Directors as well as appoint Supervisor Lavagnino to serve as an alternate Delegate;
- d) Authorize the payment of \$7,500 for prorated RCRC 2021-2022 membership dues;
- e) Determine pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) that the above actions are not a project because they consist of organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary:

During the September 13, 2021 Legislative Program Committee (LPC), staff brought forth information and a presentation on the Rural County Representatives of California and recommended endorsement from the Legislative Committee to recommend County membership in RCRC to the full Board of Supervisors. The LPC was in full support of this membership opportunity and approved the recommendation to move to the full Board for consideration. RCRC is a thirty-seven-member county organization that advocates on behalf of rural issues at both

state and federal levels. Santa Barbara has been identified as an eligible county to hold membership in RCRC as the County falls under the eligibility threshold of a population of no more than 600,000 residents. Membership in RCRC will benefit Santa Barbara County as RCRC works to improve the ability of rural California County governments to provide services by reducing the burden of State and Federal mandates and promoting a greater understanding among policy makers about unique challenges that face rural counties in California.

Background:

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is a thirty-seven member county strong service organization that champions policies on behalf of California's rural counties. Rural is defined by population size, demographics, or economic data. RCRC works with its membership to advocate on behalf of rural issues at the state and federal levels. RCRC provides the rural county perspective on a myriad of issues during the legislative and regulatory process, including land use, water and natural resources, housing, transportation, wildfire protection policies, and health and human services. Santa Barbara County is not currently a member of RCRC, but is identified as an eligible county based on population size to be a part of RCRC, if they chose.

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services for its members to enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. RCRC was founded in 1972 to represent California's small, rural counties on issues that are unique to them. With more than 4.3 million residents and comprising approximately 56 percent of the state's land mass, the geography of their thirty-seven-member rural counties ranges from forested and mountainous landscapes to coastal areas, desert regions, farm lands and vineyards.

Discussion:

Santa Barbara County is one of the six non-member counties with a population of no more than 600,000, currently not a member of RCRC. With a population of approximately 441,000, Santa Barbara County meets the eligibility requirements to be a member in RCRC. When a new county joins RCRC, they also gain a seat for one of their supervisors to sit on the RCRC Board. A single delegate appointed by the Board of Supervisors of each member county will serve on the Board of Directors, with a term of one year. Chair Nelson has expressed interest in serving as the delegate advisory board member for Santa Barbara County and Supervisor Lavagnino has expressed interest in serving as the alternate member. Both terms will be one- year in length.

On September 13, 2021, the Legislative Program Committee authorized endorsement to recommend membership in RCRC to the full Board of Supervisors. To approve such membership, a resolution for Membership in the Corporation, including a statement of support for recent policy principles adopted by the Board of Directors will need to be approved by the Board of Supervisors by a 4/5 vote. Recent Policy Principles of the RCRC can be found in Attachment C. Current initiatives underway by the RCRC include broadband, housing, and natural resources, among others.

Membership in RCRC provides Santa Barbara County a part of a collective voice, strengthening the message, credibility, and reach of the unique issues faced by rural counties. Rural counties face unique challenges when putting federal and state policies into effect. The greater distances, lower population densities, and geographic diversity of RCRC's thirty-seven member counties create obstacles not faced by their more urban or suburban counterparts. For those reasons, "one-size-fits-all" policies don't work, especially when the "size" typically is a more metropolitan model and RCRC membership will help Santa Barbara County with issues specific to rural population.

Fiscal Impact:

Dues for a county with a population of 400,000- 499,999 are \$15,000 annually. Member dues are billed annually to each member county for the period July 1st to June 30th based on member county population. According to the Department of Finance's January 2021 estimated population of Santa Barbara County, the 2021/22 RCRC member dues will be \$15,000, pro-rated based upon date of membership activation. If your Board approves RCRC

membership, the RCRC would consider Santa Barbara County's request for membership during the December 8, 2021 RCRC Board meeting. If the RCRC Board approves this request, the pro-rated amount for the time period of January 2022 through June 2022 would be \$7,500 for Santa Barbara County Membership. The funding would come from existing appropriations in the General County Programs budget.

Attachment A – Resolution of the Board of Supervisors – RCRC Membership

Attachment B – RCRC Membership Information

Attachment C – RCRC Policy Principles

Authored by:

Jasmine McGinty, Principal Analyst, County Executive Office