



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:** 1<sup>st</sup> District Supervisor  
**Department No.:** 011  
**For Agenda Of:** 03/4/14  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Tme:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Board Member Salud Carbajal, Supervisor, 1<sup>st</sup> District 568-2186  
Contact Info: Jeremy Tittle, Executive Staff Assistant 568-2182  
**SUBJECT:** Report on Washington DC Legislative Visits

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

Receive report on Washington DC legislative visits to advocate for Santa Barbara County's 2014 Federal Legislative Platform Priorities

**Summary Text:**

Supervisor Salud Carbajal, his Chief of Staff Jeremy Tittle, Public Works Director Scott McGolpin, and Deputy Public Works Director Tom Fayram traveled to Washington, D.C. for meetings scheduled on January 29-31 to advocate in support of the County's 2014 Federal Legislative Platform and to participate in informational meetings regarding items of interest to the County. Thomas Walters & Associates, Inc., the County's Washington, D.C. representatives, arranged and participated in the meetings with Supervisor Carbajal, Mr. Tittle, Mr. McGolpin, and Mr. Fayram. Meetings included:

- **Senator Barbara Boxer**
- **Joaquin Esquivel**, Legislative Assistant, Senator Barbara Boxer
- **Ben Kramer**, Professional Staff, Senator Dianne Feinstein
- **Felix Yeung**, Professional Staff, Senator Dianne Feinstein
- **Congresswoman Lois Capps**
- **Aaron Shapiro**, Legislative Assistant, Congresswoman Lois Capps
- **Roger Cockrell**, Professional Staff, Senate Energy and Water Development Subcommittee on Appropriations
- **David Napoliello**, Director, Infrastructure and Economic Development, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
- **Tyler Rushforth**, Majority Counsel, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

- **Angie Giancarlo**, Professional Staff to Chairman Mike Simpson (R-ID), House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee
- **Taunja Berquam**, Professional Staff to Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee
- **Murphie Barrett**, Staff Director to Chairman Tom Petri (R-WI), Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
- **Shant Boyajian**, Counsel to Chairman Tom Petri (R-WI), Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
- **Lindsay Fryer**, Professional Staff to Chairman John Kline (R-MN), House Committee on Education and the Workforce
- **George Fishman**, Chief Counsel to Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC), House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security
- **David Shahoulian**, Chief Counsel to Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security
- **Tom Jawetz**, Staff to Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security
- **Brad Schwichtenberg**, Army Corps of Engineers, South Pacific Division Regional Integration Team
- **Lowell Pimley**, Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of Interior
- **Bob Wolf**, Program and Budget Office, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of Interior
- **Shane Hunt**, Regional Office Liaison, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of Interior
- **Todd Campbell**, Alternative Energy Advisor, Rural Development, Office of the Undersecretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- **Frederick Petok**, Loan and Grant Specialist, Energy Division, Business Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- **Chris Cassidy**, Loan and Grant Specialist, Energy Division, Business Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Meetings with our local Congressional delegation focused on sharing key priorities and other highlights of the County's adopted Legislative Platform. This included exploring opportunities for federal funding for County projects. The County's funding requests which were discussed with each of the offices included the requests for the Lower Mission Creek Flood Control Project, Lake Cachuma facilities, regional, multimodal and rural transportation projects (including Highway 101 widening and Hollister Avenue Corridor Improvements), preservation of the historic County Courthouse, renovation of our Veterans Memorial Buildings, park and open space preservation, and technology, books and materials for libraries. Additionally our delegation was made aware of the County's advocacy for pavement preservation programs and funding for maintenance of On-System bridges to be addressed in the reauthorization of the MAP-21 transportation bill. The County's position on the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Land-Into-Trust Proposals, the County's support for comprehensive immigration reform and the ongoing drought situation were also discussed.

Meetings with committee staff and agency staff focused on similar policy areas and projects, but were limited in scope to the items within their respective purviews. Additionally Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Older Americans Act reauthorization were discussed with staff to the House Committee on

Education and the Workforce. The meeting with the Department of Agriculture focused on exploring possible federal funding support for the County's Resource Recovery project.

The following are some highlights and key insights that were taken away from the meetings –

- The atmosphere and opinions regarding the appropriations process and project specific “earmarks” were similar to the feedback received in the previous three years’ visits. Earmarks have not been considered in recent appropriations cycles and there is consensus among all parties that earmarking will not resume in upcoming appropriations cycles. Despite this reality, our delegation and committee staff still expressed an interest in being kept apprised of the status of critical projects for our County. They emphasized the importance of ongoing communication with the relevant federal agencies given the increased authority the agencies now have on directing funding to specific projects. They also reiterated that while Congressional members cannot currently earmark projects, they are still able to advocate their support for local proposals through the competitive grant process. One difference from the prior couple of years is that Congress adopted an Omnibus Appropriations bill earlier this year to fund the government for the current fiscal year instead of relying on continuing resolutions. Congress is currently near the beginning of the budgeting and appropriations process for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Our delegation, committee and Army Corps staff continue to be very familiar with the Lower Mission Creek Flood Control project. However in the current climate, it remains challenging to secure a new construction start for the project. There was language included in the Omnibus Appropriations bill allowing for four new starts, however it appears the Mission Creek project would only be eligible for two of those slots and there appears to be significant competition for the new starts. Additionally there is the ongoing challenge that the benefit/cost ratio for the project is significantly lower than the level at which the administration is currently allocating federal funding for Corps projects. We discussed the critical importance of this project to the Santa Barbara community and shared the fact that we have local benefit assessment money to provide the local share of funding. We also shared an update regarding the portions of the project that have already been constructed with other sources of funding. In our conversations there was consensus that it was important for County staff to continue to work with the Corps staff to restructure and redefine the federal portion of the project in order to achieve a better benefit/cost ratio. There are also ongoing discussions related to reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and we emphasized to our delegation and Senate Environment and Public Works Committee staff the importance of ensuring that the Mission Creek Project is not deauthorized as the result of potential language in the final bill. There were conflicting views on whether a WRDA bill will be enacted this year.
- Both our delegation and relevant committee and agency staff were very aware of the current drought conditions being experienced by our County and the majority of the West Coast of the country. Staff for our Senators mentioned that they are actively looking at possible legislative proposals that would help address the issue and would hopefully be able to provide resources and relief. More developments have happened on the legislative front since our return and Walters and Associates will continue to monitor them for the County. The Bureau of Reclamation is also actively tracking the drought issue and emphasized that the Regional office is the key point of contact as the situation continues to develop.

- In the meetings with our delegation and committee staff the various components of the Lake Cachuma facilities improvements were discussed including prioritization of the improvements and follow up on the past ARRA money and appropriations that the County received for Cachuma. We were informed that there are some bright spots regarding the higher levels of funding that the Bureau of Reclamation has received this fiscal year. We were encouraged to stay in touch with the Bureau of Reclamation area office in Fresno regarding the projects and to make sure that we keep our cost estimates for the projects updated.
- The transportation bill (MAP-21) is up for reauthorization this year and there seems to be consensus on the goal of having it completed during this session of Congress. Committee staff from both houses stated a goal to have a bill completed by the August recess. During our meetings on this issue with our delegation and committee staff we focused mainly on some policy issues that the County is interested in having addressed in the next bill. These include support for pavement preservation programs and the need for a specific set aside funding stream for On-System Bridges. Both Senate and House committee staff were understanding of our interest in these policy areas and the impacts that such programs have on counties such as ours. They encouraged us to continue to advocate and to communicate the importance of addressing these areas in an upcoming bill. In addressing the On-System Bridge issue, it appeared that there would be more support for creating a set aside rather than adding back a program that had been eliminated in the previous bill. House Committee staff encouraged us to send them draft language that would address the On-System Bridge issue. They also emphasized the importance of working with organizations such as NACE and NACo to provide additional advocacy in these areas and were happy to hear that we have been coordinating with both of those organizations.
- House Committee staff stated that there are active efforts underway to reauthorize both the Older Americans Act and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). A key issue that is anticipated to play out in the next year is how the differences between the Senate bills and the anticipated House bills will be sorted through in the Conference Committee. In regards to the Older Americans Act, we shared the feedback that the County and our local stakeholders prepared at the request of Committee staff last year. On the subject of WIA reauthorization, Committee staff mentioned that some of the issues they are attempting to address in the reauthorization are – making it easier to get money to areas that local communities are interested in, a focus on in-demand industries, consolidation of 35 of 47 of the existing programs and allowing for flexibility.
- In meetings with our local Congressional delegation, we shared the County’s opposition to both the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash’s Camp 4 Property administrative Fee-to-Trust application and the similar Fee-to-Trust legislation introduced by Congressman LaMalfa (R-CA). Congresswoman Capps expressed her understanding of the County’s position and specific concerns and reiterated her opposition to the LaMalfa legislation. Representatives of our Senators offices were also very aware of the issue and the County’s position on it. They emphasized that no Fee-to-Trust legislation regarding Camp 4 has been introduced in the Senate. However staff from both Senators’ offices expressed their support for dialogue and negotiations between the Tribe and the County, and mentioned that similar processes have occurred between local governments and tribes elsewhere in the State. We mentioned that our Board of Supervisors voted in August of 2013 to not enter into a dialogue with the tribe, and instead directed them to go through our existing land use process permitting process.

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture staff was interested to hear about our Resource Recovery Project, especially the potential use of anaerobic digestion technology as part of our approach to long term management of our solid waste as well as a clean energy source. They informed us of similar projects of various scales in other parts of the country and mentioned that there are a number of grant programs within their Department that the project could be eligible for. Some of these programs depend on whether the location of the facility meets the criteria to be in a designated rural area, from our initial analysis it appears that the Tajuigas Landfill site would meet the criteria. The Resource Recovery Division and Walters and Associates will continue to work with the Department to explore possibilities.
- While there is a general agreement on the need for some type of immigration reform, there appears to be a large disconnect between the two houses of Congress as well as the House Committee staff of the two parties regarding what type of approach to take on the issue. The Senate has passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill that is relatively consistent with our County's adopted Immigration Principles as well as those of NACo. In conversations with House Minority Committee staff, they also are supportive of a comprehensive approach that is consistent with our principles. However, House Majority Committee staff stated that they favor an approach that would focus on passing a series of bills on certain subjects associated with the general topic of immigration reform. Just prior to that meeting, Speaker Boehner (R-OH) released a set of Standards for Immigration Reform to serve as guidance for any further activity in the House, and there are several areas that our consistent with items included in our County principles. While some degree of optimism was expressed by House Committee staff of both parties, it appears increasingly unlikely that significant immigration reform legislation will be adopted during this session of Congress.

**Authored by:** Jeremy Tittle 568-2182