



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

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
Agenda Date: January 7, 2025
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s): Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Contact Info: Brittany Odermann, Deputy CEO
SUBJECT: 2024 Annual Report and Accomplishments from Federal and State Legislative Advocates and 2025 Legislative Platform Adoption

DocuSigned by:
Mona Miyasato
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County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file annual report and accomplishments for 2024 from the County's State legislative advocates, Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa, LLC., and Federal legislative advocate, Thomas Walters and Associates;
- b) Adopt:
 - i. The County of Santa Barbara 2025 Legislative Platform as approved by the Legislative Program Committee at its December 2, 2024 meeting and revised based on subsequent public and Office of Emergency Management comments (Attachment C); or
 - ii. The County of Santa Barbara 2025 Legislative Platform as approved by the Legislative Program Committee at its December 2, 2024 meeting (Attachment D); 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.

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Summary Text:

During the January 7, 2025 Board hearing, representatives from the County's federal advocacy firm, Thomas Walters & Associates, and state advocacy firm, Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa, LLC (HBE), will provide an overview of the past year's accomplishments and preview of the likely legislative issues for 2025. These annual reports recap the 2024 accomplishments and provide additional information on the activity through December 31, 2024. Staff recommends the Board receive and file the 2024 Annual Reports from State and Federal advocates as well as review and adopt the 2025 Legislative Platform.

In [December 2019](#), the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution establishing the Legislative Program Committee (Committee) as a standing committee of the Board. The Committee approved the Draft 2025 Legislative Platform at their [December 2, 2024](#) meeting. Once adopted by the full Board of Supervisors, the 2025 Legislative Platform will be used to communicate key legislative needs and overall priorities to federal and state government.

Background:

Legislative Annual Reports

During the [December 13, 2022](#) Board meeting, the Board approved three-year contracts with both federal and state legislative advocates with terms from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2025, with the option to extend for two one-year terms. The agreements include a provision for the advocates to present an update on legislative activity for the year. 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 reports provide the accomplishments through December 2024 (Attachments A and B).

2025 Legislative Platform

For the 2025 Platform, the County Executive Office proposed a goal to redesign and reorganize to create a more streamlined document that aligns with the Board's priorities. Staff worked with the County's State and Federal lobbyists to develop a new format for the 2025 Legislative Platform (Attachment D). The process began by reviewing and making any necessary revisions to the 2024 Legislative Principles for accuracy and relevance. While there were no additions to the legislative principles, the *Community Sustainability and Environmental Protection* principle was renamed to *Climate Sustainability, Resilience, and Adaptation* and departments provided updated language. The Legislative Principles for 2025 are as follows:

- ❖ Job Growth and Economic Vitality
- ❖ Efficient Service Delivery and Operations
- ❖ Fiscal Stability
- ❖ Inter-Agency Collaboration
- ❖ Local Control
- ❖ Health and Human Services
- ❖ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- ❖ Climate Sustainability, Resilience, and Adaptation

Staff then worked with departments to articulate a *Requested Action* for several issues of interest to the County. The proposed Platform includes forty-one (41) individual issues, previously referred to

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as planks, that align with the legislative principles listed above. These issues are sorted by principle and state the legislative request associated with that issue. The Legislative Program Committee approved the newly formatted 2025 Legislative Platform on December 2, 2024. 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 a press release and posted the draft to the public website. The review period for public feedback was open through December 13. Staff received two items of public comment for the Board to consider and shown in a proposed redlined version (Attachment C, page 4).

- Define “workforce housing” more broadly and inclusive of low-income households that are also working family households.
- Include statement of opposition to reductions in inclusionary affordable housing currently required in market-rate development projects.

Also included for Board approval, in Attachment C, are two new issues and some minor revisions to the *Community-Based Adaptation Planning* passage provided by the Office of Emergency Management that were overlooked in previous versions. These new issues highlight the importance of disaster recovery and having timely and flexible financial assistance to recover and rebuild after a disaster.

Staff works closely with the County’s state and federal advocates, County departments, and legislative partners to develop effective strategies to address the countywide needs as well as effective strategies to address these issues. The strategies to promote the legislative principles involve funding requests, creating new or amending existing legislation, and advocacy.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Santa Barbara 2024 Annual Report (Federal) – Thomas Walters & Associates

Attachment B – Santa Barbara 2024 Annual Report (State) – Hurst, Brooks, Espinosa

Attachment C – Proposed 2025 Legislative Issues by Principle (redlined to reflect public comment)

Attachment D – 2025 Legislative Platform Book (Approved by LPC on 12/2/2025)

Authored by:

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