



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

**Clerk of the Board of Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**

**Submitted on:**  
**(COB Stamp)**

**Department Name:** County Executive Office  
**Department No.:** 012  
**Agenda Date:** November 4, 2025  
**Placement:** Administrative Agenda  
**Estimated Time:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director(s): Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer  
Contact: Brittany Odermann, Deputy County Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Federal Advocate Contract One-Year Extension (Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc.)

---

**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Risk Management

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the attached amendment to the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc. for Federal advocacy services to extend the contract term to December 31, 2026 and increase the contract amount by \$100,000, for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$400,000; and
- b) Determine that the above action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4) because it consists of the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item will extend the current contract for federal advocacy services with Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc. for one year from January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026. The extension is the first of two, one-year extension options permitted in the current contract. If approved, Thomas Walters will continue federal advocacy services through the 2026 legislative session at an annual cost not to exceed \$100,000. There is no increase in the annual contractual cost. The total contract amount is not to exceed \$400,000.

**Discussion:**

Each year the Board of Supervisors identifies specific issues, projects and/or programs (priorities) that warrant targeted legislative advocacy and includes these priorities as part of its legislative platform for the upcoming calendar year. Once the platform is adopted by the Board, staff determines various legislative strategies centered on the identified priorities such as enacting or amending legislation, creating partnerships with federal agencies and exploring funding opportunities. One component of the County's legislative strategy has been to utilize the advocacy services of Thomas Walters and Associates to assist the County in implementing the legislative platform at the federal level.

In December 2022 the Board entered into a three-year contract with Thomas Walters and Associates for federal advocacy services. The initial three-year term expires December 31, 2025. The contract includes an option to extend for two, one-year periods until December 31, 2027. On October 6, 2025 the Legislative Program Committee approved the option to extend the contract for one year and recommended consideration of the contract approval by the Board of Supervisors.

**Background:**

Thomas Walters & Associates, Inc. was originally awarded a contract for federal advocacy services in December 2006 upon the completion of a competitive selection process. Since that time the contract has been renewed several times, including most recently in December 2022 upon completion of a competitive selection process. During this time, Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc. has served as the County's liaison to Congress and federal agencies, advocating on behalf of the County on a variety of funding legislative and policy issues. The firm has facilitated meeting with federal representatives and agencies, participating in monthly Legislative Program Committee meetings, monitored legislative bills and the federal budget and researched various issues that have emerged that fall under the guidelines of the County's legislative platform.

**Contract Risk, Renewals and Performance Measure:**

Thomas Walters & Associates has served the county as a federal advocate since 2006. Over the last nearly twenty years, the firm has continued to successfully advocate on behalf of Santa Barbara County on a wide range of funding and policy issues that have contributed additional funding or savings for County programs and projects. The performance of Thomas Walters & Associates as the County's Washington, DC representative will continue to be assessed based on feedback obtained from members of the County Board of Supervisors, County department directors and the County's elected representatives, as well as success in advocating for projects and programs and facilitating coordination and regulatory issues between federal agencies and the County.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

The total contract cost for Thomas Walters and Associates for the additional one-year term will be a maximum of \$100,000, inclusive of all costs, including travel to Santa Barbara County, communications, and other overhead, both in Washington DC and California. There is no proposed increase in the annual cost of the contract over prior years. In December 2026, there will be an opportunity to extend the contract for a final one-year option.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>FY 2025-2026</b>	<b>Total</b>
General Fund	\$100,000	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$100,00</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>

**Special Instructions:**

Please return one copy of the executed contract amendment to Brittany Odermann, bodermann@countyofsborg.

**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** – First Amendment to Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc.

**Attachment B** – Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with Thomas Walters and Associates, Inc December 2022

**Contact Information:**

Brittany Odermann  
Deputy CEO  
bodermann@countyofsb.org