

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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KATHLEEN KRAUSE
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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May 24, 2023

The Honorable Shannon Grove
Senate District 12
1021 O Street, Room 7150
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
Senate District 16
1021 O Street, Room 7310
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Vince Fong
Assembly District 32
1021 O Street, Suite 4630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Tom Lackey
Assembly District 34
1021 O Street, Suite 5340
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jasmeet Bains
Assembly District 35
1021 O Street, Suite 5730
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Concerns with State Budget

Honorable members of the Kern County Legislative Delegation,

On behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our serious concern and disappointment with the Governor's decision to renege on funds promised to counties impacted by the State's climate policies.

In 2022, the Governor and the Legislature agreed to allocate \$300 million to the Local Government Sustainability Fund (LGSF), a new program to provide grants to communities throughout California – including Kern County – in which local economies are suffering the most. During two separate visits to Kern County, the Governor singled out Kern as the direct beneficiary of state funds meant to backfill property tax losses caused by the transition away from oil and gas and the solar tax exclusion^{1,2}. These statements were, and still are, not factual. However, although the LGSF would not provide direct backfill to Kern County, it did have the potential to assist the County in diversifying and growing its local economy which would then produce additional tax revenues.

Inexplicably, the Governor's 2023-24 May Revision proposes to gut the funding intended for counties like Kern in the LGSF by awarding \$250 million of the original \$300 million directly to the City of Fresno for its downtown revitalization projects.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwxY91aEXKM> – minute mark 35:10 – 37:55

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NTzHDvrIWI> minute mark 6:33 – 7:36

Kern has played an essential role in the successful implementation of California's aggressive renewable energy goals and climate change policy. Our focused permitting of large-scale wind, solar, and energy storage have made us the leading California county for renewable energy. We're asking members of our delegation to intercede on our behalf and secure dedicated state resources for the Kern County General Fund so we can adequately address public safety and other quality of life services that impact close to 1 million of your collective constituents.

Like the City of Fresno, Kern County has shovel-ready projects and other immediate needs that the state can assist with by making Kern a priority in the state budgeting process. I urge you and your staff to collaborate with us to find solutions and a viable and equitable path forward. Please reach out to our Chief Administrative Officer, Ryan Alsop, at: alsopr@kerncounty.com or (661)868-3169 at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Flores", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeff Flores, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
Carter Wetch & Associates