AGENDA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STANDING COMMITTEE – LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER – 4th FLOOR HEARING ROOM
1115 TRUXTUN AVE.
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301

All agenda item supporting documentation is available for public review in the County Administrative Office, 1115 Truxtun Ave., 5th Floor, Bakersfield, 93301 during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, following the posting of the agenda. Any supporting documentation that relates to an agenda item for an open session of any regular meeting that is distributed after the agenda is posted and prior to the meeting will also be available for review at the same location.

April 14, 2025 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:
Please click the URL to join: Microsoft Teams
Meeting ID: 219 841 917 332
Passcode: 5TC9bw6b

Or join by Phone:
+1 831-296-3421
Phone conference ID: 407 001 615#

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ROLL CALL**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
   This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address Committee Members on any matter not on this agenda, but under the jurisdiction of the Committee. Committee Members may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed. They may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff for factual information or request staff to report back to the Committee at a later meeting. Also, the Committee may take action to direct staff to place a matter of business on a future agenda. SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO TWO MINUTES. PLEASE STATE AND SPELL YOUR NAME BEFORE MAKING YOUR PRESENTATION

4. **Update on Federal issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary** – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION

5. **Update on State issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary –** RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION

6. **Response to January 28, 2025 referral regarding election integrity matters –** DISCUSS; PROVIDE DIRECTION

7. **Direction for new committee business at future meetings –** DISCUSS; PROVIDE DIRECTION

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Americans with Disabilities Act
(Government Code Section 54954.2)

Disabled individuals who need special assistance to attend or participate in a meeting of the Board of Supervisors Standing Committee – Election Improvements may request assistance at the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, Fifth Floor, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California or by calling (661) 868-3585. Every effort will be made to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities by making meeting material available in alternative formats. Requests for assistance should be made five (5) working days in advance of a meeting whenever possible.

DISCLOSURE OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Pursuant to Government Code section 84308, members of the Board of Supervisors are disqualified and not able to participate in any agenda item involving contracts (other than competitively bid, labor, or personal employment contracts), franchises, discretionary land use permits and other entitlements if the Board member received more than $250 in campaign contributions from the applicant or contractor, an agent of the applicant or contractor, or any financially interested participant who actively supports or opposes the County's decision on the agenda item since January 1, 2023. Members of the Board of Supervisors who have received, and applicants, contractors or their agents who have made, campaign contributions totaling more than $250 to a Board member since January 1, 2023, are required to disclose that fact for the official record of the subject proceeding. Disclosures must include the amount of the campaign contribution and identify the recipient Board member and may be made either in writing to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors prior to the subject hearing or by verbal disclosure at the time of the hearing.

TOWNSEND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EST TPA 1998

MEMORANDUM

To:	Kern County Board of Supervisors Legislative Program Committee Supervisor Phillip Peters, District 1 Supervisor Jeff Flores, District 3
From:	Ben Goldeen, Federal Advocacy Director, Townsend Public Affairs Spencer Street, Senior Associate, Townsend Public Affairs Cori Takkinen, Vice President, Townsend Public Affairs Christopher Townsend, President, Townsend Public Affairs
Date:	April 14, 2025
Subject:	Legislative Program Committee Federal Affairs Report

Discussion of Introduced Federal Legislation

H.R. 477 (Fong) Making Advancements in Commercial Hypersonics Act (MACH Act)
H.R. 477 would permit the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to establish a research program to facilitate the testing of high-speed aircraft and related technologies, to be known as the Making Advancements in Commercial Hypersonics Program.

H.R. 390 (Fong) Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations Act (ACERO Act)
This bill provides statutory authority for the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations (ACERO) project. The ACERO project conducts research and development activities regarding aerial response to wildfires using uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) and other advanced aviation technologies.

H.R. 2586 (Tonko) Reentry Act
The bill would restart benefits for Medicaid-eligible incarcerated individuals 30 days pre-release, with the goal of making it easier for states to provide addiction treatment and services.

H.R. 2399 (Houchin) Rural Broadband Protection Act of 2025
This bill would direct the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a process to vet applicants for certain funding programs that support broadband deployment through the Universal Service Fund's High-Cost Program. After the rulemaking is finalized, funds may only be awarded to applicants that satisfy the standards established therein. Finally, the FCC must set financial penalties for applicants that default in some manner during the evaluation process before they are authorized to begin receiving support.

S. 1272 (Cantwell/Grassley) Trade Review Act
S. 1272 would require the President to notify Congress within 48 hours after enacting a new tariff, providing an explanation and analysis of the potential impact on American businesses and consumers. Under the bill Congress would then have 60 days to pass a joint resolution of approval, or the new tariffs would expire. Additionally, Congress could end tariffs at any time by

passing a resolution of disapproval, with anti-dumping and countervailing duties excluded from this process.

H.R. 22 (Roy) Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act

H.R. 22 would require states to obtain proof of citizenship in person before registering an individual to vote in a federal election and require states to remove non-citizens from existing voter rolls.

Discussion of Federal Legislation in Development

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is crucial for counties as it provides the largest federal funding source for workforce development, helping job seekers and employers overcome challenges. It establishes one-stop centers for job search assistance, training, and career services, with counties involved in 90% of the local workforce development boards. Proposals under discussion from last year would provide funds for upskilling workers, provide $5,000 individual training accounts for displaced workers, and ensure training programs meet employer demands while offering flexibility to address local needs.

Budget Reconciliation Act

Congress is developing a budget reconciliation bill aimed at extending and potentially amending the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 and providing funding for defense and border security. Proposals to offset the costs of the legislation range from making changes to Medicaid reimbursement and eligibility, possibly altering the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, and changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, among other proposals.

Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations

On March 15, 2025 President Trump signed into law a bill appropriating funds for federal agencies for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025. Congress has begun the process of receiving input from members for the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations process. Current government funding expires on October 1, 2025.

Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Congress will aim to reauthorize federal surface transportation programs in 2026. A hearing was held in the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on April 2, 2025 with Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy to begin the process of reauthorizing federal highway and road programs.

National Defense Authorization Act

The NDAA has been enacted each year for six decades. The bill is developed in the spring, committee markup is in the late spring or early summer, consideration by the full House and Senate takes place over the summer, and conference negotiations and final passage take place in the fall.

Farm Bill

Legislation authorizing and funding federal agriculture, food, nutrition, and rural development programs will need to be approved before September 30, 2025.

Older Americans Act

The OAA provides funding for county programs supporting older adults including the Family Caregiver Support Program and In-Home Supportive Services, among other aging and adult services. A reauthorization of the Act is under discussion.

County Legislative Positions

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 471	Fix Our Forests Act	Rep. Bruce Westerman	Support	This bill establishes requirements for managing forests on federal land, including requirements concerning reducing wildfire threats, expediting the review of certain forest management projects, and implementing forest management projects and other activities.	Hearing Held, Senate Agriculture Committee 3/6/2025 Received in the Senate 1/28/2025 House, passed 279-141 1/23/2025

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KATHLEEN KRAUSE
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

March 20, 2025

The Honorable Vice Fong
U.S. House of Representatives
243 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20003

The Honorable Jay Obernolte
U.S. House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request for the Kern County Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit

Dear Congressman Fong and Congressman Obernolte,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for funding to purchase an additional Airbus H125 helicopter. The Kern County Sheriff's Air Support Unit is the only law enforcement air unit in the county, providing critical patrol and search-and-rescue services.

The Sheriff's Office previously relied on aging Bell OH-58 and MD500 helicopters with all but one having now been retired or repurposed. One MD500 helicopter remains in the fleet and is used for training and as a backup for aerial patrols. In 2023, two Airbus H125 helicopters were acquired for patrol and rescue operations. However, operating multiple airframes creates inefficiencies in pilot training, maintenance, and equipment compatibility. Adding a third Airbus H125 and selling the last MD500 would streamline operations, reduce costs, and ensure continuous air support.

In addition to patrol duties, each Airbus H125 is equipped with a hoist and thermal camera to aid in search and rescue operations across Kern County's vast 8,200-square-mile terrain (about the size of the State of New Jersey). A third unit would guarantee mission readiness for law enforcement and lifesaving operations.

For these reasons, I urge you to support this critical funding request and to consider the enhanced public safety and operational efficiencies it will provide for all your constituents. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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March 19, 2025

The Honorable David Valadao
United States House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: FY 2026 Community Project Funding Request for the Kern Regional Public Safety Communications Network

Dear Congressman Valadao,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge your support for the Kern Regional Public Safety Communications Network through the FY 2026 federal appropriations process.

Several years ago, the County performed a robust analysis of our communications system and determined that it is now at the point where replacement parts are difficult if not impossible to obtain and most of the equipment has reached the "end of support" dates. Delays in replacing critical parts are eroding the overall effectiveness and public safety responsiveness of our personnel, particularly in our most rural and isolated communities. As an example, some jurisdictions are currently procuring replacement parts from third party internet auction sites to maintain their existing systems. All existing microwave network equipment that links radio sites to each other, to dispatch, and to remote Kern County Fire and Sheriff substations have reached or will soon reach their end of life and need to be replaced.

As a result, the County has initiated a capital improvement project that will replace our old analog radio dispatch system with a state-of-the-art digital system. The new network will allow integrated communications between law enforcement, fire suppression, and emergency response agencies across ***all*** sectors of government (city, county, state, and federal agencies).

The total cost of the project is estimated at $177 million. The County has already secured $130 million in financing and other dedicated funding sources. Kern is seeking ***$1.5 million*** in Community Project Funding to assist with the acquisition of radio equipment that will address the immediate needs of our first responders during Phase I of the project. We believe this investment from the federal government will significantly improve radio system coverage, enhance interoperability, and improve reliability for both subscriber and infrastructure devices for our public safety personnel.

We greatly appreciate your attention and urge your strong consideration for our funding request in FY 2026.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Vince Fong
U.S. House of Representatives
243 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Representative Fong,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express my strong support for Kern County Hospital Authority (Kern Medical) in their congressional spending proposal to fund the demolition of F-Ward and improvement of existing parking areas to create an ADA-compliant parking lot. As an advocate for public health and equitable access to care, Kern County firmly believes that this investment will provide significant benefits to our community and enhance the quality of services provided at Kern Medical.

F Ward, constructed prior to the 1952 Bakersfield Earthquake, is a deteriorated, unoccupied structure made of unreinforced masonry. Due to the absence of original building plans, structural deficiencies, and the presence of asbestos and lead-based paint, it is not retrofit-capable and poses ongoing safety and liability concerns. Vacant for over a decade, the facility continues to require maintenance and security. This demolition would allow for the reimagining of the space, supporting future expansions and upgrades that are essential for accommodating growing healthcare needs in our community.

Additionally, the proposed ADA-compliant parking lot is crucial in ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and others with mobility challenges. By paving a parking lot that meets ADA standards, we will remove significant barriers to accessing the hospital, allowing all patients to receive the care they need without undue hardship. Access to healthcare should never be hindered by physical obstacles, and this upgrade will directly contribute to a more inclusive and patient-friendly environment at Kern Medical.

Kern Medical has long been a cornerstone of healthcare in our community, and these improvements will help ensure that it continues to meet the evolving needs of residents. The demolition of F-Ward and the creation of an ADA-compliant parking lot are essential steps in improving both patient experience and facility functionality. These upgrades align with our shared goals of accessibility and the long-term sustainability of quality healthcare services in Kern County.

The County of Kern strongly urges you to support this proposal and advocate for the funding required to make these important changes. These enhancements will undoubtedly benefit our community for years to come, ensuring that every patient can access care safely, comfortably, and without barriers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical funding request. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you require further information or would like to discuss this proposal in more detail.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Adam Schiff
U.S. Senate
Hart Senate Office Building #112
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schiff,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for Kern County Hospital Authority (Kern Medical) in their congressional spending proposal to fund renovations of existing facilities to include clinical suite upgrades, administrative space conversion, exterior improvements, equipment acquisition, and a lobby remodel, ensuring a welcoming and accessible environment for patients and families. We understand the critical importance of ensuring that our healthcare facilities are both accessible and welcoming to the communities they serve, especially those that are most vulnerable.

The proposed improvements are a vital step in enhancing the quality of care and accessibility for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and other vulnerable populations. Currently, the exterior and parking lot at Columbus Clinics fail to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), presenting barriers to patients seeking essential healthcare services. The proposed repaving, updating of parking spaces, and the beautification of the facility's exterior would not only improve accessibility but also foster a more inviting and comfortable environment for all patients.

Additionally, the proposed remodeling of the remaining interior spaces at Columbus Clinics would help ensure that the clinic operates at full capacity and offers a safe, efficient, and modern environment for patients and staff alike. These renovations are essential for maintaining the highest standards of patient care and operational efficiency. The Kern Medical lobby has not been refreshed since its original construction. The lobby serves as the primary gateway for patients, visitors, and families. It significantly impacts the perception of care, efficiency of patient intake, and ADA accessibility.

Investing in Kern Medical is an investment in the health and well-being of our entire community. By addressing these physical barriers and upgrading the facility's infrastructure, we are demonstrating our commitment to health equity, mobility, and the long-term success of our healthcare system. These improvements will directly benefit residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, helping to provide equitable access to the care they need.

The County of Kern strongly urges you to support Kern Medical's proposal and advocate for the funding necessary to make these critical improvements a reality. I believe that with your leadership, we can ensure that Kern Medical continues to serve as a vital community asset for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. Should you need further information or wish to discuss this proposal in more detail, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Alex Padilla
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Padilla,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for Kern County Hospital Authority (Kern Medical) in their congressional spending proposal to support the growth and expansion of its Surgical Residency Program. We recognize the critical importance of training and retaining highly skilled physicians and surgeons to meet the healthcare needs of our community, particularly in the face of the ongoing physician shortage that severely impacts our ability to deliver timely, quality care.

Our community, like many in rural and medically underserved areas, faces significant challenges in accessing specialized care. Kern County, in particular, is experiencing a persistent shortage of trained surgeons and specialized medical professionals. The expansion of Kern Medical's Surgical Residency Program presents an important opportunity to address this issue by training the next generation of surgeons who will serve our community's needs for decades to come.

By investing in this program, we can help ensure that local medical professionals are well-equipped to provide expert care in various surgical specialties. Additionally, the residency program offers an invaluable opportunity for new doctors to develop the specialized skills necessary to address the most complex medical conditions. More importantly, this initiative will help us retain highly qualified physicians who are committed to serving in our community, reducing the need to rely on out-of-area specialists.

Kern Medical's Surgical Residency Program plays a pivotal role in developing our local healthcare workforce. It not only provides a hands-on learning environment for resident physicians but also ensures that our community has access to specialized care that is often in short supply in underserved areas. These residents, many of whom are likely to stay and practice in the region upon completion of their training, will significantly contribute to the long-term health and well-being of our population.

Furthermore, expanding this program will improve health outcomes, support the economic vitality of our region, and help alleviate the strain placed on local hospitals and healthcare systems by

physician shortages. In particular, the continued growth and success of the residency program is essential in ensuring the availability of skilled surgeons and other medical professionals who can meet the complex healthcare needs of our community.

The County of Kern strongly urges you to support Kern Medical's funding request and help ensure the growth and sustainability of this essential program. The impact of this investment will be felt for generations as it directly contributes to the training, recruitment, and retention of highly qualified healthcare providers in our community.

Thank you for your attention to this critical request. If you need additional information or would like to discuss the importance of this program further, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

Shaw
Yoder
Antwih
Schmelzer
& Lange

1415 L Street
Suite 1000
Sacramento
CA, 95814
916-446-4656

MEMORANDUM

To: Kern County Board of Supervisors Legislative Program Committee
Supervisor Philip Peters, District 1
Supervisor Jeff Flores, District 3
From: Paul Yoder, Partner, SYASL
Dylan Elliott, Advocate, SYASL
Date: April 9, 2025
Subject:Legislative Program Committee State Affairs Report

Discussion of Proposed State Legislation

Updates to various issues mentioned in our previous report to the LPC are as follows:

Meadow's Field Airport
Senator Hurtado's SB 661 was recently amended to no longer be specific to Meadows Field. The bill now proposes to move California into compliance with federal law that requires all taxes levied on aviation fuel sales by state and local governments to be used for an aviation purpose, known as the Revenue Use Rule. California was cited in a December 2023 federal Department of Transportation Inspector General report as a taxing jurisdiction that remains out of compliance with this specific federal requirement. SB 661 will create allocations for support of airports, including Meadows Field, and achieve adherence for California regarding the revenue use rule.

SB 222 (Wiener): Affordable Insurance and Climate Recovery Act
This bill has been significantly amended since our last report to you, but still proposes to establish a cause of action against "responsible parties" for harms suffered as the result of "climate disasters." This bill specifies that insurers, including the California FAIR Plan Association, have a right of subrogation against these responsible parties.

AB 303 (Addis): Battery Energy Safety & Accountability Act
This bill would rescind the California Energy Commission's ability to approve battery energy storage system projects through the opt-in certification process created by AB 205 (Assembly Budget Committee, 2022) and would require the Commission to deny any applications for battery energy storage projects still pending at the time of this bill's enactment. Additionally, AB 303 would establish siting restrictions on these kinds of projects. AB 303 has been "triple referred," which is to say that it must pass out of three different policy committees in the Assembly. Generally, this is a very tough challenge for any bill. SYASL arranged for county staff to discuss the bill with the assemblywoman's staff and believe that the bill will be improved from the County's perspective if it manages to survive its various tests in the Assembly. Please note that Senator Laird is carrying SB 283 regarding energy storage systems. Senator Laird represents the Moss Landing area as does Assemblywoman Addis.

AB 283 (Haney): In-Home Supportive Services Employer-Employee Relations Act
This bill would expand the definition of "public employer," to include an employer who is subject to the In-Home Supportive Services Employer-Employee Relations Act, which the bill would create. Additionally, it would

establish a method for resolving disputes regarding wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment between the state and recognized employee organizations representing individual providers. AB 283 passed out of the Assembly policy committee unanimously and will next be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority Bill Proposal
AB 1413 (Papan) and AB 1466 (Hart) are the bills to watch on this issue. Both were heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 8 and both passed out of committee.

A broad coalition of interests, including Western Growers and the California Chamber of Commerce, took an oppose unless amended position on AB 1413. Western Growers and the Chamber have also expressed concerns about AB 1466. SYASL has forwarded both letters to County staff.

Valerie Kincaid, who represents GSAs throughout the state, spoke in opposition to the bill sharing concerns that the bill undermines legal process, shifts SGMA's foundational balance, and exposes local agencies to unintended consequences.

You may view the video replay from the hearing here by advancing to 2:47:00 for AB 1466 and to 3:03:00 for AB 1413. You may also view the bill analyses below.

AB 1413 (Papan) Bill analysis
AB 1466 (Hart) Bill analysis

Wildfire Insurance
If anything, this issue unfortunately continues to deteriorate. Major insurers have proposed rate increases as high as 30+% to Insurance Commissioner Lara. There are numerous pieces of legislation to address California's home insurance crisis, but as of yet SYASL does not see significant relief forthcoming as a result. The FAIR plan has already needed an infusion of $1 billion, and it may need another of similar size by the end of 2025.

Budget Related Matters

Proposition 36 Implementation Funding
The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) remains hopeful that at least modes funding for county implementation of this recently passed voter initiative will be forthcoming in the May Revise. The State continues to track its own costs as a result of the initiative and maintains that they will rise in the short term rather than decline. In a difficult state budget cycle, this may complicate funding for counties 2025-26.

VOCA Support for Ongoing State Funding
As stated immediately above, the State's worsening fiscal picture could impact its ability to provide the significant backfill provided for the 2024-25 year.

Housing Element Update
SYASL has worked extensively with county staff in an effort to have the State sign off on the County's most recent proposed Housing Element. We are hopeful that a resolution will occur soon.

County Legislative Positions

Establishing a Board Appointed Registrar of Voters: SB 858

SYASL is happy to report that the County's sponsored proposal on this issue can be found in SB 858, which will be heard in late April. Other

Kern County Bills with Positions
Wednesday, April 09, 2025

Bill ID/Topic	Location	Summary	Position
AB 283 **Haney D** In-Home Supportive Services Employer-Employee Relations Act.	ASSEMBLY APPR. 3/19/2025 - Coauthors revised. From committee: Do pass and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 7. Noes 0.) (March 19). Re-referred to Com. on APPR.	Existing law establishes the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, which is administered by the State Department of Social Services, counties, and other entities, under which qualified aged, blind, or disabled persons are provided with supportive services in order to permit them to remain in their own homes. Existing law authorizes a county board of supervisors to elect to contract with a nonprofit consortium to provide for the delivery of in-home supportive services or to establish, by ordinance, a public authority to provide for the delivery of those services, in accordance with certain procedures. Existing law deems a public authority created under these provisions to be the employer of in-home supportive services personnel under the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act, which governs labor relations between local public employers and employees. Existing law also deems a nonprofit consortium contracting with a county to be the employer of in-home supportive services personnel for purposes of collective bargaining over wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment. Existing law grants recipients of in-home supportive services the right to hire, fire, and supervise the work of any in-home supportive services personnel providing services for them. Existing law prohibits the state and specified local public employers from deterring or discouraging public employees from becoming or remaining members of an employee organization. Existing law also requires specified public employers to provide exclusive employee representatives access to new employee orientations. Existing law generally grants the Public Employment Relations Board jurisdiction over violations of these	Oppose

		provisions. Existing law defines "public employers" who are subject to these provisions as including, among others, public agencies, cities, counties, and districts. This bill would expand the definition of "public employer," for purposes of those provisions, to include an employer who is subject to the In-Home Supportive Services Employer-Employee Relations Act, which the bill would create. The bill would establish a method for resolving disputes regarding wages, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment between the state and recognized employee organizations representing individual providers. The bill would provide for the right of employees, also known as individual providers under the act, to form, join, and participate in activities of employee organizations for the purposes of representation on all matters within the scope of employee organizations. The bill would define "employee" or "individual provider" for these purposes to mean a person authorized to provide in-home supportive services pursuant to the individual provider mode or waiver personal care services, as prescribed. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.	
AB 339 **Ortega D** Local public employee organizations: notice requirements.	ASSEMBLY APPR. 3/19/2025 - From committee: Do pass and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 4. Noes 0.) (March 19). Re-referred to Com. on APPR. 4/9/2025 9 a.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 1100 ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS, WICKS, BUFFY, Chair	Existing law, the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act, contains various provisions that govern collective bargaining of local represented employees and delegates jurisdiction to the Public Employment Relations Board to resolve disputes and enforce the statutory duties and rights of local public agency employers and employees. Existing law requires the governing body of a public agency to meet and confer in good faith regarding wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment with representatives of recognized employee organizations. Existing law requires the governing body of a public agency, and boards and commissions designated by law or by the governing body, to give reasonable written notice, except in cases of emergency, as specified, to each recognized employee organization affected of any ordinance, rule, resolution, or regulation directly relating to matters within the scope of representation proposed to be adopted by the governing body or the designated boards and commissions. This bill would require the governing body of a public agency, and boards and commissions designated by law or by the	Oppose

		governing body of a public agency, to give the recognized employee organization no less than 120 days' written notice before issuing a request for proposals, request for quotes, or renewing or extending an existing contract to perform services that are within the scope of work of the job classifications represented by the recognized employee organization. The bill would require the notice to include specified information, including the anticipated duration of the contract. The bill would also require the public agency, if an emergency or other exigent circumstance prevents the public agency from providing the written notice described above, to provide as much advance notice as is practicable under the circumstances. If the recognized employee organization demands to meet and confer within 30 days of receiving the written notice, the bill would require the public agency and recognized employee organization to promptly meet and confer in good faith, as specified. By imposing new duties on local public agencies, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.	
AB 470 **McKinnor D** Telephone corporations: carriers of last resort.	ASSEMBLY C. & C. 3/18/2025 - Re-referred to Com. on C. & C.	Existing law vests the Public Utilities Commission with regulatory authority over public utilities, including telephone corporations. Existing law authorizes the commission to fix just and reasonable rates and charges for public utilities. Existing law requires the commission, on or before February 1, 1995, to issue an order initiating an investigation and open proceeding to examine the current and future definitions of universal service in telecommunications. Pursuant to that provision, the commission issued a decision involving carriers of last resort, including the withdrawal process for carriers of last resort, defined as a carrier who provides local exchange service and stands ready to provide basic service to any customer requesting such service within a specified area. This bill would require a telephone corporation seeking to relinquish its carrier of last resort designation for an eligible area, as defined, to provide a notice to the commission, as described, and would require the telephone corporation's carrier of last resort designation for the eligible area to be relinquished upon the submission of the notice. The bill	Oppose

		would require the telephone corporation to modify its tariff for basic local exchange telephone service, as specified, and would require that the modified tariff be effective upon the submission of the notice. The bill would require the telephone corporation to administer and pay for a customer challenge process for customers who inform the telephone corporation that no alternative voice service, as defined, is available at their location, as specified. The bill would require the commission, as part of a specified rulemaking, to establish a transition plan that a telephone corporation would be required to follow before its carrier of last resort designation is relinquished for an area within its service territory other than an eligible area. This bill contains other existing laws. **Last Amended on 3/17/2025**	
AB 896 Elhawary D Foster care: placement transition planning.	ASSEMBLY HUM. S. 3/18/2025 - Re-referred to Com. on HUM. S.	Existing law generally provides for the placement of foster youth in various placement settings. Existing law requires, prior to making a change in the placement of a dependent child, a social worker or placing agency to develop and implement a placement preservation strategy to preserve the dependent child's placement. This bill would, among other things, require each county child welfare agency to adopt a placement transition planning policy for supporting foster children who are transitioning between placement settings and who are transitioning from foster care to reunification, and requires that the policy ensures that foster children are provided the opportunity to provide input on their placement transition and provides guidance to social workers for obtaining input and sharing information in placement transition planning. The bill would require, if a child's placement cannot be preserved, the social worker to ensure that there is appropriate placement transition planning, consistent with the county's adopted policy. The bill would require the State Department of Social Services to issue guidance to county child welfare agencies to describe best practices and strategies for successful placement transition planning, and would require county child welfare agencies to submit to the department its placement transition planning policy, as specified. By imposing new duties on counties, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. This bill contains other existing laws. **Last Amended on 3/17/2025**	Support

AB 946 **Bryan D** Chief probation officer: designee.	ASSEMBLY PUB. S. 4/2/2025 - In committee: Set, second hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author. 4/22/2025 8:30 a.m. - State Capitol, Room 126 ASSEMBLY PUBLIC SAFETY, SCHULTZ, NICK, Chair	Existing law requires every county to appoint a chief probation officer, and requires the chief probation officer to be nominated, as specified. Existing law requires the chief probation officer to perform the duties and discharge the obligations imposed on the office by law or by order of the superior court, including, among other things, the operation of juvenile halls pursuant to specified provisions. This bill would create an exception to those provisions by requiring, in a county with a population of at least 3,500,000 people, the chief probation officer, or a designee who is appointed by the county board of supervisors and who has jurisdiction over youth development, to perform those duties and discharge those obligations.	Oppose
AB 1156 **Wicks D** Solar-use easements: suspension of Williamson Act contracts: terms of easement: termination.	ASSEMBLY L. GOV. 3/24/2025 - Re-referred to Com. on L. GOV. 4/23/2025 10 a.m. - State Capitol, Room 127 ASSEMBLY LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CARRILLO, JUAN, Chair	The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, otherwise known as the Williamson Act, authorizes a city or county to contract with a landowner to limit the use of agricultural land to agricultural use if the land is located in an agricultural preserve designated by the city or county, as specified. The act authorizes the parties to mutually agree to rescind the contract in order to simultaneously enter into a solar-use easement if approved by the Department of Conservation, as specified. Existing law defines the term “solar-use easement” for these purposes to mean any right or interest acquired by a county, or city in a parcel or parcels determined to be eligible, as provided, where the deed or other instrument granting the right or interest imposes certain restrictions that effectively restrict the use of the land to photovoltaic solar facilities for the purpose of providing for the collection and distribution of solar energy and certain other incidental or subordinate uses or other alternative renewable energy facilities. This bill would revise the definition of the term “solar-use easement” to, among other changes, include a right or interest acquired by the Energy Commission, and to expand the authorized uses of the land under the easement to include solar energy storage and appurtenant renewable energy facilities. The bill would make various conforming changes in this regard. The bill would revise the conditions under which the land	Oppose

		subject to a Williamson Act contract may be subject to a solar-use easement, as described above, to instead require the suspension of the Williamson Act contract for the term of the solar-use easement, rather than the rescission of the contract, if the Department of Conservation determines that the parcel is eligible to be placed in the easement, as specified, **Last Amended on 3/20/2025**	
AB 1361 Bains D University of California: school of medicine in the County of Kern: feasibility study.	ASSEMBLY HIGHER ED. 3/27/2025 - Re-referred to Com. on Higher ED.	Existing law establishes the University of California Kern County Medical Education Endowment Fund. Upon appropriation by the Legislature, existing law requires moneys in the endowment fund to be allocated to the University of California to support the annual operating costs for the development, operation, and maintenance of a branch campus of an existing University of California School of Medicine in the County of Kern, and to conduct a feasibility study related to that campus. This bill would require the University of California, on or before January 1, 2027, to complete a feasibility study, in consultation with local voluntary stakeholders, to determine the steps necessary to establish a University of California medical school in the County of Kern, and to submit the feasibility study, including detailed findings, recommendations, and an implementation timeline, to the Governor and Legislature, as provided. The bill would require the feasibility study to include a comprehensive analysis of the requirements, challenges, and opportunities related to establishing a University of California medical school in the County of Kern, as provided. This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute. **Last Amended on 3/26/2025**	Support
SB 16 Blakespear D Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention program: housing element:	SENATE HOUSING 4/8/2025 - Set for hearing April 30 in HEALTH pending receipt. 4/22/2025 9 a.m. - State Capitol, Room 112 SENATE HOUSING, WAHAB, AISHA,	The Planning and Zoning Law requires a city or county to adopt a general plan for land use development that includes, among other things, a housing element. Existing law requires the housing element to include, among other things, an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints that are relevant to meeting these needs. For a local government that does not receive funding to address the population of individuals who are unhoused pursuant to certain state programs, this bill would require the assessment to include, among other	Oppose

Integrated Plan for Behavioral Health Services and Outcomes.	Chair4/30/2025 1:30 p.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 1200 SENATE HEALTH, MENJIVAR, CAROLINE, Chair	things, specified data regarding the population of individuals who are unhoused and a description of key actions that will be taken to reduce individuals who are unhoused based on the data. By imposing additional duties on local governments, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. This bill contains other existing laws. **Last Amended on 3/25/2025**	
SB 222 **Wiener D** Climate disasters: civil actions.	SENATE JUD. 3/28/2025 - From committee with author's amendments. Read second time and amended. Re-referred to Com. on JUD.	Existing law gives a person the right of protection from bodily harm and the right to possess and use property. If a person suffers bodily harm or a loss of their property because of the unlawful act or omission of another, existing law authorizes them to recover compensation from the person at fault, which is known as damages. This bill would authorize a person who suffered physical harm to their person or property totaling at least $10,000 to bring a civil action against a party responsible for a climate disaster to recover damages, restitution, specified costs, and other appropriate relief. The bill would make responsible parties jointly, severally, and strictly liable to a plaintiff for damages and restitution. The bill would require an action to be filed within 3 years of the date that the harm was or should have been discovered. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. **Last Amended on 3/28/2025**	Oppose
SB 357 **Menjivar D** Juveniles: delinquency.	SENATE PUB. S. 2/19/2025 - Referred to Com. on PUB. S.	Existing law subjects a minor between 12 and 17 years of age, who violates any federal, state, or local law or ordinance, and a minor under 12 years of age who is alleged to have committed specified serious offenses, to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, which may adjudge the minor to be a ward of the court. Existing law assigns various responsibilities relating to these minors to the probation officer, including, among others, the responsibility to supervise minors placed on probation and manage juvenile halls and other juvenile detention facilities. This bill would authorize the board of supervisors of any county to delegate to another county department all or part of the duties and authorities concerning those minors, or concerning the oversight or operation of juvenile detention facilities, that are granted to the probation department or a probation officer.	Oppose

SB 375 Grove R Wildfire prevention activities: Endangered Species Act: California Environmental Quality Act: California Coastal Act of 1973.	SENATE N.R. & W. 4/3/2025 - April 8 set for second hearing canceled at the request of author.	The California Endangered Species Act prohibits the taking of an endangered, threatened, or candidate species, except as specified. Under the act, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) may authorize the take of listed species by certain entities through permits or memorandums of understanding for specified purposes. Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Existing law requires a local agency to designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the State Fire Marshal, as provided. This bill would authorize a city, county, city and county, special district, or other local agency to submit to the department a wildfire preparedness plan to conduct wildfire preparedness activities on land designated as a fire hazard severity zone, as defined, that minimizes impacts to wildlife and habitat for candidate, threatened, and endangered species. The bill would require the wildfire preparedness plan to include, among other things, a brief description of the planned wildfire preparedness activities, the approximate dates for the activities, and a description of the candidate, endangered, and threatened species within the plan area. The bill would require the department, if sufficient information is included in the wildfire preparedness plan for the department to determine if an incidental take permit is required, to notify the local agency within 90 days of receipt of the wildfire preparedness plan if an incidental take permit or other permit is needed, or if there are other considerations, exemptions, or streamlined pathways that the wildfire preparedness activities qualify for, including, but not limited to, the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's California Vegetation Treatment Program. The bill would require the department to provide the local agency, in its notification, with guidance that includes, among other things, a description of the candidate, endangered, and threatened species within the plan area and measures to avoid, minimize, and fully mitigate the take of the candidate, threatened, and	Support

		endangered species, as provided. The bill would require the department, on or before July 1, 2026, to make a standard wildfire preparedness plan submission form publicly available on its internet website. The bill also would require the department, commencing January 1, 2027, to annually post on its internet website a summary of the wildfire preparedness plans submitted and include specified information in that summary. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.	
SB 496 **Hurtado D** Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation: appeals advisory committee: exemptions.	SENATE TRANS. 4/8/2025 - Set for hearing April 22. 4/22/2025 1:30 p.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 1200 SENATE TRANSPORTATION, CORTESE, DAVE, Chair	Existing law requires the State Air Resources Board to adopt and implement motor vehicle emission standards, in-use performance standards, and motor vehicle fuel specifications for the control of air contaminants and sources of air pollution that the state board has found necessary, cost effective, and technologically feasible. The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 establishes the state board as the state agency responsible for monitoring and regulating sources emitting greenhouse gases and requires the state board to adopt rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective greenhouse gas emission reductions from those sources. Pursuant to its authority, the state board has adopted the Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation, which imposes various requirements for transitioning local, state, and federal government fleets of medium- and heavy-duty trucks, other high-priority fleets of medium- and heavy-duty trucks, and drayage trucks to zero-emission vehicles. The Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation authorizes entities subject to the regulation to apply for exemptions from its requirements under certain circumstances. This bill would require the state board to establish the Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation Appeals Advisory Committee by an unspecified date for purposes of reviewing appeals of denied requests for exemptions from the requirements of the Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation. The bill would require the committee to include representatives of specified governmental and nongovernmental entities. The bill would require the committee to meet monthly and would require recordings of its meetings to be made publicly available on the state board's internet website. The bill would require the	Support

		committee to consider, and make a recommendation on, an appeal of an exemption request denial no later than 60 days after the appeal is made. The bill would require specified information relating to the committee's consideration of an appeal to be made publicly available on the state board's internet website. The bill would require the state board to consider a recommendation of the committee at a public meeting no later than 60 days after the recommendation is made. **Last Amended on 4/7/2025**	
SB 556 Hurtado **D** Habitat enhancement and restoration: floodplains.	SENATE APPR. 4/8/2025 - VOTE: Do pass as amended, but first amend, and re-refer to the Committee on [Appropriations] (PASS)	The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, approved by the voters as Proposition 4 at the November 5, 2024, statewide general election, authorized the issuance of bonds in the amount of $10,000,000,000 pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law to finance projects for safe drinking water, drought, flood, and water resilience, wildfire and forest resilience, coastal resilience, extreme heat mitigation, biodiversity and nature-based climate solutions, climate-smart, sustainable, and resilient farms, ranches, and working lands, park creation and outdoor access, and clean air programs. The act makes available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, $870,000,000 to the Wildlife Conservation Board for grant programs to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources and habitat and achieve the state's biodiversity, public access, and conservation goals. This bill would, from the above-described bond funds made available to the board, appropriate $43,000,000 to the board to support projects in the Counties of Kern, Kings, and Tulare for floodplain acquisition, habitat restoration, and associated conservation on floodplains, as provided. This bill contains other related provisions. **Last Amended on 3/28/2025**	Support
SB 567 Limón **D** Gravity-Based Energy Storage Well Pilot Program.	SENATE E.Q. 4/2/2025 - Set for hearing April 30. 4/30/2025 9 a.m. - State Capitol, Room 113 SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL	Existing law requires the State Oil and Gas Supervisor to supervise the drilling, operation, maintenance, and abandonment of wells so as to prevent damage to life, health, property, and natural resources, damage to underground oil and gas deposits from infiltrating water and other causes, loss of oil, gas, or reservoir of energy, and damage to underground and surface waters suitable for irrigation or domestic purposes by the infiltration of, or the	Support

	QUALITY, BLAKESPEAR, CATHERINE, Chair	addition of, detrimental substances. Existing law defines "wells" to mean oil or gas wells or other wells related to oil or gas production. Under existing law, a person who fails to comply with the requirements relating to the regulation of wells is guilty of a misdemeanor. This bill would, until January 1, 2035, establish the Gravity-Based Energy Storage Well Pilot Program and would authorize the supervisor to authorize the conversion of not more than 1,000 250 wells for use as gravity-based energy storage wells, as defined, to evaluate their use, including the establishment of appropriate operating conditions and physical parameters to safely generate energy. The bill would require idle wells that are authorized for use as gravity-based energy storage wells to be identified as gravity-based energy storage wells in a plan for the management and elimination of idle wells or updates to the plan required to be filed with the supervisor. The bill would require the mechanical integrity of gravity-based energy storage wells to be assessed by the Geologic Energy Management Division not less than annually. The bill would require an operator of a gravity-based energy storage well, in the event of a loss of mechanical integrity of the well or a leak to the environment, to notify the division, the State Air Resources Board, the appropriate regional water quality control board, and schools and community members within 3,200 feet of the well and to cease operation until the mechanical integrity is restored or to plug and abandon the well, as provided. The bill would require gravity-based energy storage wells to be continuously monitored for fluid leaks. The bill would specify that the authorization for wells to be used as gravity-based energy storage wells end at the termination of the pilot program. The bill would, by January 1, 2033, require the Secretary for Environmental Protection, in consultation with certain entities, to evaluate the pilot program and make recommendations to the Legislature for a framework to implement an ongoing Gravity-Based Energy Storage Well Program to regulate the operation of gravity-based energy storage wells. wells, as provided. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. **Last Amended on 3/26/2025**	

SB 707 **Durazo D** Open meetings: meeting and teleconference requirements.	SENATE JUD. 4/8/2025 - Set for hearing April 22. 4/22/2025 9:30 a.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 2100 SENATE JUDICIARY, UMBERG, THOMAS, Chair	Existing law, the Ralph M. Brown Act, requires, with specified exceptions, that all meetings of a legislative body, as defined, of a local agency be open and public and that all persons be permitted to attend and participate. This bill would, until January 1, 2030, require a city council or a county board of supervisors to comply with additional meeting requirements, including that all open and public meetings include an opportunity for members of the public to attend via a 2-way telephonic service or a 2-way audiovisual platform, as defined, that a system is in place for requesting and receiving interpretation services for public meetings, as specified, and that the city council or county board of supervisors encourage residents to participate in public meetings, as specified. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. **Last Amended on 4/7/2025**	Oppose
SB 845 **Pérez D** Pupil instruction: career technical education, career education, and apprenticeships.	SENATE ED. 4/1/2025 - From committee with author's amendments. Read second time and amended. Re-referred to Com. on ED. 4/9/2025 9 a.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 2100 SENATE EDUCATION, PÉREZ, SASHA RENÉE, Chair	Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to coordinate the development, on a cyclical basis, of model curriculum standards for required courses of study, including a career technical education course, for pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, as specified. Existing law requires the Superintendent to set forth these standards in terms of a wide range of specific competencies in each academic subject area, as specified. Existing law requires the Superintendent to seek advice of classroom teachers, school administrators, parents, postsecondary educators, and representatives of business and industry in developing these standards. This bill would require the Superintendent to set forth those standards in terms of a wide range of specific competencies in each career technical education subject area, rather than in each academic subject area, as specified. The bill would require the Superintendent to seek advice of career technical classroom teachers, instead of classroom teachers generally, and to also seek advice of representatives of labor, in developing those career technical education standards. The bill would define “cyclical basis,” for purposes of the development of those standards, as a period not exceeding 5 years. This bill	Support

		contains other related provisions and other existing laws. **Last Amended on 4/1/2025**	
SB 858 **Committee on Local Government** Local Government Omnibus Act of 2025.	SENATE L. GOV. 4/7/2025 - April 30 hearing postponed by committee. Set for hearing April 23. Set for hearing May 6 in JUD. pending receipt. 4/23/2025 9:30 a.m. - State Capitol, Room 113 SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DURAZO, MARÍA ELENA, Chair5/6/2025 1:30 p.m. - 1021 O Street, Room 2100 SENATE JUDICIARY, UMBERG, THOMAS, Chair	Existing law authorizes a county board of supervisors, by resolution, to authorize the use of a facsimile signature of the chairperson of the board on all papers, documents, or instruments requiring the signature of the chairperson, as provided, if certain requirements are met relating to the personal signature of the chairperson. Under existing law, if those requirements are met, the papers, documents, or instruments bearing the facsimile signature are accorded the same force and effect as though personally signed by the chairperson. This bill would remove the requirement for that authorization to occur by resolution of the board. The bill would authorize the board, in addition to authorizing a facsimile signature, to authorize the use of an electronic signature of the chairperson on all papers, documents, or instruments requiring the signature of the chairperson. Under the bill, a document bearing the electronic signature of the chairperson would have the same force and effect as if personally signed by the chairperson. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.	Co-Sponsor

March 3, 2025

Dear Governor Newsom, President pro Tem McGuire, & Speaker Rivas,

We, on behalf of the eight counties in California's Central Valley, write to respectfully request your prioritization of investments in our region for the upcoming fiscal year and years to come. The California Department of Finance has projected that the Central Valley will see the largest growth in the state over the next several decades. This is a critical moment to ensure adequate investment in the future while bearing in mind the outcomes of past decision-making.

As the elected Supervisors for this region, we individually and collectively want the best for the San Joaquin Valley and its residents. We are seeking your support and partnership to ensure prosperity for our shared constituents. Our priorities are as follows:

- Expedite Proposition 4 expenditures, specifically for water infrastructure, wildfire and extreme heat mitigation, flood control, and sustainable agriculture
- Address the dire energy and utilities affordability crisis
- Expand reliable access to broadband
- Fund further community-supported air quality improvements in the San Joaquin Valley
- Expedite the widening of State Route 99 from Bakersfield to Sacramento
- Ensure equitable reinvestment in the San Joaquin Valley under Cap & Trade reauthorization
- Permitting for oil and gas are best left to local authorities

Proposition 4 Expenditures
With the passage of Proposition 4 by the voters in the 2024 General Election, the state has a significant amount of money to better address the increasing prevalence of natural disasters in the state.

While we appreciate the inclusion of dollars from Proposition 4 in the January 10 Proposed Budget for extreme heat mitigation, sustainable agriculture, clean drinking water, and flood protection, we urge you to ensure these dollars find their way to the San Joaquin Valley and its vulnerable communities. Further, the $173.4 million for improved water storage and groundwater replenishment is welcomed,

but we feel this investment is worthy of considerable increase, even up to the full $386.25 million authorized for groundwater storage, banking, and recharge. We would also support an even greater authorization of the various water-related funding from Proposition 4. The impact of decreasing water supply has been remarkably detrimental to the Valley, its farmers, and the local economy overall. The funds approved by California's voters for water-related purposes should be put to good use as quickly as possible.

We of course understand the severity of recent wildfires in Southern California, and understand the need to provide immediate assistance there. We are grateful that money in the bond was preserved to help communities around the state. In the Central Valley, we know all too well the harm caused by catastrophic natural disasters. Many of our counties and communities have also recently experienced devastating fires, and we ask that money to help prevent more of these in the future be allocated throughout the state, especially for areas around the large swaths of state and federal land in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and foothills.

Energy Affordability

One of the most pressing issues facing San Joaquin Valley residents are utility costs. Keeping homes cool and the lights on in the summer is increasingly unaffordable locally.

Investor owned utilities continue to turn a profit in this state, and while we acknowledge and appreciate the vital services they provide to our constituents, the cost they pass on for things like undergrounding powerlines is unsustainable and inconsistent to the profits being made. We are looking to you to ensure investor owned utilities are focused first on their customers.

Further, many of our residents commute long distances. We understand the State's desire to move to lower emission vehicles, but our residents are considerably limited in their options considering electric vehicles currently on the market. While this market develops, the need for continued affordability at the pump cannot be underscored enough. Expediting the review of Ethanol 15 blends is good, but more must be done. Additionally, if our residents are going to be expected to pay the gas tax for road infrastructure improvements, electric vehicle owners should too.

Finally, we find it important to address California moving to a clean energy future. To be clear, we do not stand in opposition to grid diversification, especially if it lowers cost in the long run. In fact, the Central Valley has clearly proven its vital role in the State achieving its lofty decarbonization goals. We do, however, remain deeply concerned about the policy ramifications that our constituents feel more than most in the state. California must provide sufficient investment back into our region as land is fallowed for more large-scale solar and other alternative energy industries. Planning for these industries must be left to local discretion; local communities impacted by these planning decision must be at the table.

Reliable Access to Broadband

Access to reliable and affordable broadband is essential for full participation in today's economy, including access to education, healthcare, public safety and essential government services.

Our counties share the same policy goals as the State of California: connecting underserved areas to affordable high-speed broadband. The San Joaquin Valley, the world's most productive agricultural region, requires broadband to thrive. Broadband connectivity is vital for the region's residents, farms, and businesses to participate fully in the modern economy and not fall behind other California communities.

Our local leaders are committed to bridging the digital divide and will seek emerging opportunities to secure broadband infrastructure and digital inclusion funding for the San Joaquin Valley. However, we remain concerned about the distribution of broadband funding in California. The CPUC has approved more than $1 billion in funding to help communities connect to broadband through the Federal Funding Account (FFA) program. However, the San Joaquin Valley Region has not been a top priority for FFA funding. As of January 17, 2025, only $131 million of the more than $1 billion (11.8%) has been allocated in this critical agricultural region.

As California continues its broadband deployment with state and federal funding, we will continue to collaborate with the CPUC, state leaders, local governments and community leaders to ensure the specific needs of the San Joaquin Valley are met.

This also means existing carriers should be held to their obligation to provide service to *all* of our residents, especially those in rural areas. We acknowledge the development of new technology, but until that technology is available at an affordable price to all of our residents, we cannot go backwards in bringing connectivity to those who need it most. We ask that you oppose any such efforts, whether proposed legislatively or through petition at the Administrative level, by industry.

Support for Valley Air Quality

The San Joaquin Valley faces some of the most significant air pollution challenges in the country – a problem we take very seriously. Not only will continued support to improve air quality in the Valley have considerable positive impacts on public health, but it is also an important component of the state meeting its emissions reduction goals. For that reason, we respectfully request additional funding consistent with asks made by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

First, we ask for financial support in the transition away from open burning in the Valley. As you may know, in partnership with CARB, the Valley developed a plan to phase-out open burning. This phase-out finished at the end of 2024, and Valley growers can no longer open burn. Unfortunately, this phase out has created a significant economic disadvantage for growers in the San Joaquin Valley compared to those in other areas of the state that – albeit with strict requirements – continue to have the ability to open burn. During this transition, the State provided $180 million in 2021, all of which was expended in roughly three years. As our growers seek to comply with this phase-out in good faith, we ask that the State provide an annual allotment of $75 million to support compliance with open burning alternatives as this will both keep small farms in business while still achieving the pollution reduction efforts sought through this phase-out.

Next, we ask that funding for both the FARMER and AB 617 Community Air Protection program be restored to full funding. The FARMER program provides support in turning over high carbon-emitting

agricultural equipment while the Community Air Protection program supports pollution reduction with a community-based approach. Both of these programs align with the State's broader climate reduction goals while also providing a direct benefit to the residents of the Valley. As such, we respectfully request an inclusion in this year's budget of $200 million for the FARMER program along with $300 million in incentive funding per year and restoring implementation funding to $60 million per year for Community Air Protection program funding.

Completion of State Route 99

Important to the economic vitality of the San Joaquin Valley and the State is SR 99, which runs through all eight of our counties. As stated above, the Central Valley is burdened with considerable air quality challenges. Because of the significant amount of travel that takes place on the Interstate 5 freeway, which also runs through all eight of our counties, decreasing congestion on SR 99 is critically important to further air pollution locally. As such, we ask that you prioritize continued funding to complete the six-lane widening from Bakersfield to Sacramento.

Cap & Trade

Despite not expiring until 2030, we believe the reauthorization of Cap & Trade is likely to be a focal point of discussion within the Legislature this year. Should that be the case, we ask that important reinvestments into the Valley remain intact. While there will no doubt be extensive consideration of the allocations made through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, we believe it is important to underscore the size of the contributions made through operators based in the San Joaquin Valley. It is critical that dollars be reinvested into our communities in an equitable way towards sources prioritized by our community.

Permitting of Oil and Gas

Permitting, siting, and other land use decisions pertaining to natural resources and energy production are best left to the discretion of local officials who have budget authority, relevant local experience, the capacity to assess issues salient to local projects, and are directly responsible to local citizens through public hearings. Our counties have been responsible stewards of CEQA and will continue to implement the highest environmental standards while simultaneously supporting an 'all of the above' energy strategy to keep everyday costs down for our residents. We ask that this Administration and Legislature partner with us in that effort.

We appreciate your consideration of these priorities and reiterate our willingness and desire to continue this dialogue. To state it again clearly: we believe an economically diverse and affordable San Joaquin Valley is vital to California's success. We stand ready to collaborate with you in bringing this vision to fruition for all of us and future generations.

Sincerely,

Buddy Mendes, Chairman
Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Leticia Perez, Chairwoman
Kern County Board of Supervisors



Doug Verboon, Chairman
Kings County Board of Supervisors



Leticia Gonzalez
Madera County Board of Supervisors



Josh Pedrozo, Chairman
Merced County Board of Supervisors



Paul Canepa, Chairman
San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors



Buck Condit, Chairman
Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors



Pete VanderPoel, Chairman
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

CC: Senator Anna Caballero
Senator Melissa Hurtado
Senator Shannon Grove
Senator McNerney
Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil
Assemblymember Heath Flora
Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom
Assemblymember Juan Alanis
Assemblymember Alexandra Macedo
Assemblymember Tom Lackey
Assemblymember Jasmeet Bains
Assemblymember David Tangipa
Assemblymember Esmerelda Soria
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KATHLEEN KRAUSE
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

March 20, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 283 (Haney), IHSS Employer-Employee Relations Act – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 283 (Haney), which would significantly alter the structure of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program by shifting employer responsibilities from counties to the state. While we recognize and appreciate efforts to improve labor relations and streamline collective bargaining, this bill creates substantial concerns regarding local governance, funding obligations, and service quality for IHSS recipients.

Loss of Local Control and Oversight
Counties play a critical role in the administration of IHSS, ensuring services are tailored to meet the needs of our vulnerable residents. By centralizing employer responsibilities at the state level, AB 283 removes county discretion in managing provider relationships, making it more difficult to address unique local challenges, respond to workforce shortages, and maintain service continuity. Local public authorities and nonprofit consortia have developed effective structures for overseeing IHSS provider employment, and this bill disregards those established systems in favor of a one-size-fits-all approach.

Financial Implications for Counties
While AB 283 transfers employer-of-record status to the state, it does not provide clear funding mechanisms to ensure counties are not left with ongoing financial obligations. Counties currently contribute to IHSS provider wages, and without specific funding guarantees, we fear that counties may continue to bear financial burdens without decision-making authority over employment terms. This bill could lead to increased costs with little local input, placing additional strain on county budgets already struggling to meet other critical community needs.

Potential Disruptions to IHSS Service Delivery
The transition to a state-managed employer structure introduces significant uncertainty for IHSS

providers and recipients. Counties have long-established processes for provider enrollment, training, and case management, ensuring timely service delivery to those who depend on IHSS for daily living assistance. AB 283's restructuring of bargaining units and provider employment status may result in delays, administrative confusion, and unintended disruptions to services that impact our most vulnerable residents.

While we share the goal of strengthening IHSS provider rights and ensuring fair wages, AB 283 takes a misguided approach that undermines county authority, imposes financial risks, and threatens service stability. We urge the Legislature to reject this bill and instead pursue reforms that enhance IHSS workforce conditions while maintaining the critical role of counties in program oversight and administration.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and welcome the opportunity to discuss alternative solutions that balance the needs of IHSS providers, recipients, and county governments. However, as currently drafted, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this legislation and respectfully requests that you vote **NO on AB 283**.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 12, 2025

The Honorable Tina McKinnor
Chair, Assembly Public Employment and Retirement Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 5520
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 339 (Ortega), Revisions to contracting standards for local governments – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member McKinnor,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 339 (Ortega), which would place costly, impractical, and burdensome requirements on local government contracting processes. The proposed changes jeopardize agreements with vital service providers such as non-profits, community-based organizations, and other private entities, threatening the delivery of essential services to everyone, but especially services for California's most vulnerable.

AB 339 imposes new bureaucratic mandates for local government agencies when they want to hire outside contractors for jobs normally done by their employees. The law requires agencies to give at least 120 days' written notice to employee unions before:

- Requesting bids or quotes for a contract
- Renewing or extending an existing contract

The notice must include:

- How long the contract will last
- What work will be done
- How much it will cost
- A draft of the contract request (or similar details if not yet drafted)
- The reason why the agency thinks outsourcing is necessary

If the employee union demands to meet and confer within 30 days of receiving notice, the government agency must meet with them in good faith to talk about the decision and any effects on workers. The union can also request to reopen negotiations on parts of their labor agreement. This bill gives unions unchecked authority to impact outsourcing decisions and adds extra steps that

could slow down the procurement process for local government.

There are more than 4,800 local agencies in the state, most of which rely – at least in part – on contractors to provide a variety of local programs and services that, given our current public sector workforce shortages, would be difficult to provide without their capable assistance. Make no mistake: the provisions of AB 339 will be costly to implement. At a time when the state and local agencies are facing significant fiscal uncertainty, it is difficult to fathom that the extensive noticing and additional meet and confer obligations are worth the investment of scarce public resources. With the proposed requirements of AB 339 we anticipate (1) fewer non-profit providers, community-based organizations, and other private service providers willing to engage with local agencies, (2) exacerbated caseloads and workloads for our existing staff, and (3) increased costs for local agencies.

The noticing requirements contained in AB 339 will be time-consuming, especially for large contracts with multiple contractors and subcontractors, since the law applies to any job covered by a recognized employee organization. For local agencies with represented workforces, this means nearly every contract would be subject to noticing and possible meet and confer obligations. The parameters of this bill are so broad, in fact, they would apply to virtually every local service, including (but not limited to): jail health care, forest management and wildfire prevention, public works surveying, family reunification services, 9-1-1 dispatching, permitting, engineering, outside counsel, accounting, payroll, IT/Cybersecurity, RFP consulting services, real estate consulting, scientific monitoring and research, special education assistance, school nursing, and data collection, among others.

These changes are concerning because they have the potential to create a chilling effect on community-based organizations, who possess unique capabilities to reach and build trust with individuals and can often connect with people more effectively than government agencies. Restricting these partnerships could lead to higher expenses, fewer services, and even the loss of essential programs, leaving many without the help they need. Instead of limiting these partnerships, the focus should be on strengthening them to ensure communities, and your constituents, continue receiving vital support.

Local agencies are also the first to respond to full-scale emergencies such as natural disasters and pandemics and routinely respond to road hazards, infrastructure failures, and other urgent issues. To keep communities safe, they need flexible and straightforward contracting options, with clear expectations for everyone involved.

AB 339 represents a sweeping change to the fundamental work of local governments, but we remain unaware of a specific, current problem that this measure would resolve or prevent. We are keenly aware, though, of the very real harm that could result from this measure. AB 339 will not improve services, reduce costs, or protect employees and the added burdens brought on by the bill will likely undermine a collaborative and productive working relationship with private sector and non-profit partners, who local agencies regard as essential to meeting our statutory obligations and effectively serving our respective communities. As local communities grapple with pressing issues such as homelessness, crime, mental health and substance abuse needs, along with budget uncertainty at the federal, state, and local level, now is not the time to impose restrictions that will hinder our ability to address these ongoing challenges.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this legislation and respectfully requests that you vote **NO on AB 339**.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Public Employment and Retirement Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Tasha Boerner
Chair, Assembly Committee on Communications and Conveyance
1020 N Street, Room 169
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 470 (McKinnor), Carrier of Last Resort obligations – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Boerner,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 470 (McKinnor), which would allow Carriers of Last Resort (COLRs) to abandon their critical responsibility of ensuring all Californians—particularly those in rural and underserved areas—maintain reliable and affordable access to basic telephone service.

AB 470 grants telephone corporations unchecked authority to relinquish their COLR obligations simply by notifying the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that they believe a given area is "well-served" by alternative voice services. This self-determined process lacks independent oversight, creating financial incentives for corporations to withdraw from areas without sufficient consumer protections or verification.

Additionally, the so-called customer challenge process outlined in AB 470 is inherently flawed, as it occurs outside of a neutral regulatory venue like the CPUC. Even if a customer successfully demonstrates that no alternative service is available, the bill only guarantees two additional years of service, after which they may be left without any provider. This jeopardizes public safety, particularly for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and residents in remote communities who rely on landline services for emergency communications. Recent catastrophic wildfires in Kern County and across California have underscored the critical need for reliable telephone service, particularly in emergencies when cell networks may be down or inaccessible.

The CPUC's role is to ensure that all Californians have access to safe, reliable, and affordable utilities. AB 470 undermines this mission by prioritizing corporate interests over consumer protections. While we support the transition to modern telecommunications infrastructure, such a shift must be carefully managed to prevent service gaps—not used as a mechanism for companies to eliminate essential services with no real accountability.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose AB 470 and urge the Legislature to reject this bill.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Communications and Conveyance
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 3, 2025

The Honorable Alex Lee
Chair, Assembly Committee on Human Services
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 896 (Elhawary), Foster care placement transition planning - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Lee,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 896 (Elhawary), which would enable county child welfare agencies to adopt placement transition policies that support foster children and foster youth as they transition between placement settings and transition from foster care to reunification. The bill enhances agency collaboration with foster youth and caregivers to create transition policies that are supported by best practices.

Children and youth in the foster care system have experienced trauma as a result of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Minimizing further trauma is paramount. While in foster care, children and youth can experience multiple changes in placement, and while some placement changes can be beneficial (such as a move to connect to relative caregivers or to reunify), other changes can be unplanned and destabilizing. Placement changes can also be difficult for caregivers, families, siblings, social workers and other professionals involved in the child's life. Negative experiences for caregivers in particular may cause them to opt to forgo caring for additional foster children in the future. Difficult transitions can disrupt a foster child's journey towards healing from trauma if connections to important adults or siblings are disrupted or activities such as extracurriculars are temporarily interrupted.

California has benefitted from years of implementation efforts through the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), a partnership at the state-level between the Department of Social Services (DSS), County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), and Youth Law Center (YLC). QPI has provided concrete support and guidance to participating counties across the state, including support to counties to implement policies and practices that are child- and youth-focused by building partnerships between county child welfare agencies, resource families, youth and birth families.

AB 896 takes the lessons learned from several counties that participate in QPI and have implemented transition planning policies that have proven effective in reducing trauma and building rapport and trust across caregivers, social workers, and birth families, centered around the best interests of the child and youth.

AB 896 is grounded in child development research to promote a child's healthy development and continuing capacity to trust, attach to others, and build relationships in the future. AB 896 will improve permanency and well-being for foster children and youth by building trust between child welfare agencies and caregivers.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support AB 896 and respectfully urges you to advance this bill through the legislative process.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Human Services
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Nick Schultz
Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 946 (Bryan), Chief Probation Officer designees – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Schultz,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 946 (Bryan), which seeks to authorize the board of supervisors in counties with a population of at least 3.5 million to transfer all duties and authorities of probation departments—including both juvenile and adult probation services—to a county department focused on youth development.

This legislation would fundamentally alter the role of probation by shifting critical public safety responsibilities to a non-public safety entity. This includes the operation of juvenile halls and camps that provide supervision and care for youth involved in serious and violent offenses (including those realigned from the State Division of Juvenile Justice). It would also impact the supervision of individuals released from state prison onto Post-Release Community Supervision, felony and mandatory supervision, and the essential role of probation in making recommendations to the court.

Our Probation Department plays a vital role in balancing accountability and rehabilitation through evidence-based practices for youth, young adults, and adults involved in the justice system. We are deeply concerned about the potential consequences of this bill on public safety, the coordination of services at the county level, and the ability of the justice system to function effectively. The proposed changes would not only disrupt the continuity of services but also create significant challenges for the departments receiving these responsibilities and the communities they serve.

Kern County, while smaller than the 3.5 million population threshold specified in AB 946, is a large and diverse county with significant public safety and justice system responsibilities. We are concerned that this bill sets a dangerous precedent that could have serious implications for all jurisdictions across the state, potentially leading to broader efforts to dismantle or alter the role of probation in counties of all sizes.

This legislation also bears similarities to Los Angeles County's Measure A (2022), which granted the board of supervisors the authority to remove an elected sheriff from office. Both measures reflect a broader effort to shift power away from independent public safety entities and into the hands of politically appointed or non-public safety organizations. While Measure A directly targeted the authority of an elected law enforcement official, AB 946 would similarly undermine the role of county probation departments, which are crucial to maintaining public safety, overseeing rehabilitation efforts, and ensuring proper coordination within the justice system. Such shifts in authority raise concerns about transparency, accountability, and the potential politicization of public safety functions.

Probation departments have long been the foundation of the juvenile and criminal justice systems, ensuring a collaborative approach between courts, county agencies, and community organizations. The proposed redirection of responsibilities under AB 946 would compromise public safety, disrupt established service networks, and jeopardize the careful balance between supervision and treatment for youth and adults. Additionally, this bill raises serious concerns regarding local coordination, training requirements, fiscal impacts, and the implementation of state policies at the county level.

For these reasons, Kern County stands in strong opposition to AB 946. We urge you to consider the significant risks this bill presents to public safety and the integrity of our justice system.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 25, 2025

The Honorable Juan Carrillo
Chair, Assembly Committee on Local Government
1020 N Street, Room 157
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1156 (Wicks), Solar-use easements and suspension of Williamson Act contracts – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Carrillo,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 1156 (Wicks), which circumvents the cancellation requirements of Williamson Act contracts and undermines the contractual authority of counties.

Kern County has 1,478,807 acres under Williamson Act contracts (10 years) and 1,419,024 acres under Farmland Security Zone contracts (20 years). While we lead the state in acreage under these conservation programs, we also lead in permitting and developing renewable energy projects, with over 60,000 acres dedicated to solar alone.

AB 1156 seeks to streamline the process for renewable energy companies by circumventing the cancellation requirements of Williamson Act contracts and undermines the contractual authority of counties. It transfers decision-making power over land use from counties to the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the Department of Conservation—two state agencies that, while overseeing aspects of the Williamson Act and renewable energy projects, are not parties to the contracts between counties and landowners.

This legislation would allow landowners—who, in reality, are often solar companies leasing the land—to negotiate directly with the Department of Conservation regarding contract terms, without county oversight or agreement. Unlike zoning regulations, Williamson Act contracts are voluntary agreements between counties and landowners, exchanging property tax reductions for committed agricultural use. The Board of Supervisors, not the State, has sole authority over these contracts. Notably, since 2009, when the State ceased subvention payments, the Department of Conservation no longer audits the program or reviews contract cancellations.

The proposed changes in AB 1156 represent a veiled attempt by the solar industry to override county authority and avoid the formal cancellation process. By granting the CEC and the Department of Conservation jurisdiction over Williamson Act contracts for solar and energy storage projects, this bill creates a mechanism to circumvent the contractual rights of counties, particularly in the context of projects reviewed under AB 205's Opt-in Certification Program—which currently cannot modify or cancel Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contracts. Furthermore, it perpetuates a troubling

trend in the renewable energy industry of leveraging agricultural tax incentives while failing to contribute full property tax revenues to counties.

Since 1965, counties have faithfully implemented the Williamson Act, balancing agricultural preservation with evolving technologies. There are alternative pathways to appropriately site commercial-scale solar and energy storage projects without undermining county authority or contract integrity.

For these reasons, Kern County opposes AB 1156 unless amended to respect the contractual relationship between the Kern County Board of Supervisors and landowners.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Local Government
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Mike Fong
Chair, Assembly Committee on Higher Education
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1361 (Bains), UC Kern medical school feasibility study - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Fong,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1361 (Bains), which directs the University of California (UC) to conduct a feasibility study on establishing a medical school in Kern County. This legislation represents a crucial step toward addressing the severe shortage of physicians and healthcare professionals in our region.

Kern County and the broader San Joaquin Valley have long faced significant disparities in healthcare access due to a chronic shortage of medical providers. Our region has the lowest ratio of licensed medical professionals in the state, with just 157 physicians per 100,000 residents—far below the 411 per 100,000 seen in the Bay Area. This shortage is especially concerning in primary care, where demand continues to outpace the supply of providers. As many rural physicians near retirement, the gap in care is expected to grow even wider.

AB 1361 lays the groundwork for a long-term solution by requiring a comprehensive study of the challenges and opportunities associated with establishing a UC medical school in Kern County. Research has consistently shown that medical schools and residency programs located in rural areas play a key role in increasing the number of physicians who choose to practice in those communities. By recruiting students from rural backgrounds and offering specialized training in rural medicine, a medical school in Kern County would help build a sustainable pipeline of healthcare providers for the region.

This bill builds upon the momentum of AB 2357 (Bains, 2024), which established an endowment fund to support a UC medical school in Kern County. AB 1361 is the next critical step in making this vision a reality. We urge the Legislature's full support and appreciate your leadership in advancing healthcare access for Kern County and the entire San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Higher Education
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 21, 2025

Honorable Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 7310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Dr. Corey A. Jackson
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs): Rightsize County Administrative Funding

Dear Chair Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson and Chair Dr. Corey A. Jackson,

On behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, I urge your support for a one-time $245 million allocation in FY 2025-26 and an updated CalWORKs Single Allocation budget methodology starting FY 2026-27 to address chronic underfunding of program administration. These changes are essential to ensuring families receive the services they need while also helping them achieve long-term stability.

The CalWORKs program is a proven tool for breaking the cycle of poverty. However, counties are forced to divert funds from employment services to cover shortfalls in eligibility administration. In FY 2023-24 alone, counties overspent eligibility funding by $245 million, redirecting 20% of employment services funds to cover the shortfall—resources that should have been used for job training, case management, and other vital supports—not filling budget gaps.

A state assessment in FY 2023-24 confirmed that the current funding formula—unchanged since 2018-19—falls short by $210 million in covering actual costs. Without proper funding, counties cannot fully support families in gaining employment, securing childcare, and accessing training programs. Updating the budget methodology is critical to shifting CalWORKs from a compliance-driven system to a trauma-informed, family-centered program.

We urge you to support this one-time funding patch and budget update to ensure CalWORKs continues to serve families effectively, allowing counties to focus on lifting families out of poverty rather than shifting resources to fill funding gaps.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisor

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Governor's Proposal to Reform Community Corrections Performance Incentive Program (SB 678, 2009)

Dear Senator Wiener and Assembly Member Gabriel,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge your support for proposed changes to the SB 678 program currently before the Legislature for consideration as part of the 2025-26 state budget.

SB 678 is a landmark policy that established, for the first time, a state funding source for adult probation to invest in evidence-based supervision and treatment interventions to reduce probation admissions to state prison. It has successfully decreased reliance on incarceration in California and saved taxpayers over a billion dollars in state prison costs. Further, it has improved rehabilitation efforts without increasing crime rates. Probation success under SB 678 was the foundation for smart criminal justice reforms centered on reducing state prison admissions while ensuring accountability through community supervision and alternatives to incarceration. Statewide, Felony Probation admissions to prison have decreased from nearly 8% at the outset of the program to 2.5% in 2024.

Last year's state budget included legislative intent language to review the allocation methodology for the SB 678 grant program in line with the goal of providing sustainable funding for improved, evidence-based probation supervision practices and capacities that will improve public safety outcomes.

The Governor's January budget proposes to update the methodology for calculating incentive payments to counties with the intent to increase the performance-based incentive nature of the funding and reduce variability in the prior methodology. After careful consideration, Kern supports the Administration's proposed changes to the formula. While the changes will reduce the 2025-26 allocation by more than $10 million compared to the current statutory framework, the proposed changes to the formula strike a delicate balance between enhancing stability through performance maintenance payments and encouraging further reductions in prison admissions where appropriate through refreshed performance incentive payments.

Probation departments need the additional stability proposed for this critical program in order to continue the success that not only improves public safety but results in significant savings for the state in prison and parole costs.

Respectfully,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 5
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Jith Meganathan, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, Department of Finance
Amy Jarvis, Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 8, 2025

Honorable Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 7310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Dr. Corey A. Jackson
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: County-administered housing and homelessness programs - SUPPORT

Dear Dr. Weber Pierson and Dr. Jackson,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to respectfully request your support to maintain funding for critical county-administered housing and homelessness programs, including Bringing Families Home (BFH), Home Safe, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Housing Support Program (HSP), and the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP). These programs have a proven track record of success stabilizing, rapidly rehousing, and transitioning vulnerable populations at risk of homelessness into permanent housing while concomitantly advancing safety, permanency, and economic security for families in the child welfare system, low-income families receiving cash assistance through CalWORKs, older adults experiencing elder abuse, and people with disabilities.

To maintain core statewide access to services across these impactful housing and homelessness programs, we ask the State for a targeted investment of $309 million General Fund annually beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–26 with multi-year availability. To meet the needs of our populations across all four programs and avoid any service reductions, an investment nearing $472 million General Fund is required, however Kern is keenly aware of the challenging budget situation expected at the May Revision and we see opportunities to invest wisely despite fiscal uncertainty, while continuing to support vulnerable populations.

Compared to other local homeless response systems which exit 35% of overall participants into permanent housing,[1] Home Safe exits 62%, CalWORKs HSP exits 53%, BFH exits 54%, and HDAP exits 50% of clients into permanent housing.[2] Despite their demonstrated effectiveness, two of these programs—Home Safe and BFH—will cease to exist, while CalWORKs HSP and HDAP will face up to a 67% and 86% reduction, respectively, if no additional funding is included in the FY 2025-26 Budget. Funding cuts of this magnitude will jeopardize family reunifications, economic stability, and the overall health and welfare of our older adult populations. These reductions will result in longer stays in foster care for foster children, deepening their existing trauma; increased likelihood of

[1] Across Continuums of Cares in California in 2023, just 35 percent of exits in the Homeless Management Information System were to permanent housing. See data source: Housing and Urban Development, National Summary – CoC System Performance Measures since 2019.
[2] Per California Department of Social Services, percent of clients who exited to permanent housing in FY 2023-24.

institutionalization or premature death for older adults; and undermining of efforts to lift children and their families out of poverty in the CalWORKs program.

Given the uncertainty around continued funding and some counties' depletion of funds to-date, counties have been forced to scale back the number of individuals and families who receive housing assistance in order to keep the programs operational and prevent the loss of critical infrastructure, including contracts with community-based organizations specializing in housing and homelessness services. This impact has been acutely felt by our community-based providers, who partner with our agencies to provide direct services and supports, including legal assistance such as eviction protection, home modification and hazard abatement for older adults, and concrete items such as beds and other furniture that makes a house a home.

Most other housing programs have stringent eligibility requirements and/or limited flexibility to meet individual needs. BFH, Home Safe, HSP, and HDAP reach populations often untouched by the broader housing and homelessness system, bridging effectively to permanent housing solutions, while promoting health, safety, and well-being. These programs also help California to comply with federal and state laws and requirements with respect to meeting various outcome requirements and are highly cost-effective. For example, paying for an Adult Protective Services client's home back taxes (often less than $10,000) through Home Safe can yield significant cost savings from avoiding repeated hospitalizations and nursing home care, and securing Social Security benefits for homeless adults through HDAP reduces the costs to law enforcement and other continuums of care.

Continued investment is critical to California's goal of eradicating homelessness and building a comprehensive and coordinated approach that protects our most vulnerable Californians from experiencing homelessness. These housing programs have led to expanded networks and leveraging of resources with local Coordinated Entry Systems and Continuums of Care to serve as a bridge to permanent housing options. Continued funding will preserve the existing infrastructure, capacity, and relationships with community-based providers—partnerships that have taken years for counties to establish and maintain.

We urgently encourage the Administration and the Legislature to invest in preserving critical funding for these programs. These housing and homelessness programs are integral to achieving positive program outcomes by helping vulnerable populations remain safe and achieve their housing goals and economic stability.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors urges your support for this request.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 21, 2025

Honorable Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 7310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Dr. Corey A. Jackson
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS): Administrative Rebase Funding

Dear Chair Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson and Chair Dr. Corey A. Jackson,

On behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, I urge your support for the County Welfare Directors Association of California's (CWDA) request to update the IHSS budget methodology in the May Revision to address chronic underfunding of program operations.

The IHSS program is essential to California's Master Plan for Aging, helping older adults and individuals with disabilities live independently at home while reducing burdens on families. By 2040, California's 65+ population will reach 11.4 million, and recent Medi-Cal expansions will further increase IHSS demand. However, counties lack the funding needed to keep up with this growth.

IHSS relies on county social workers to assess applicants, determine care needs, enroll providers, and ensure timely payments. Yet, the current funding model (unchanged since 2017-18) does not account for growing caseloads or key administrative tasks, leaving counties understaffed and overwhelmed. This leads to delays in processing applications and required reassessments, putting vulnerable Californians at risk.

CWDA has worked with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to reassess funding needs, with results expected in the May Revision. We strongly urge the Administration to fully fund county IHSS operations in the 2025-26 State Budget to ensure timely access to services and prevent costly institutionalization.

Investing in IHSS now is crucial to supporting California's rapidly aging population and ensuring they can age with dignity at home.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 27, 2025

The Honorable Aisha Wahab
Chair, Senate Housing Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3330
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 16 (Blakespear), Homelessness facility operating costs – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Wahab,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 16 (Blakespear), which imposes significant financial and administrative burdens on counties without providing adequate funding or flexibility to effectively address homelessness in our communities. While we recognize the importance of addressing homelessness through coordinated efforts, this bill creates unrealistic mandates that will strain county resources and disrupt ongoing local initiatives.

First, the requirement that counties contribute 50% of the expected costs of city-operated shelters, without guaranteed funding sources, places an undue financial burden on counties already struggling with limited budgets. Many counties, especially those with smaller populations or fewer financial resources, will find it infeasible to meet this requirement without sacrificing other essential services. Though the bill allows counties to declare financial infeasibility through a resolution, it ultimately gives the state the power to determine county contributions, undermining local fiscal autonomy.

Second, the bill's mandate for an expanded housing element assessment and integrated plan for behavioral health services increases administrative workloads without ensuring the necessary financial and technical support. Local governments are already required to collect and analyze extensive housing data, and this additional mandate will divert valuable resources away from direct services that could more immediately address homelessness.

Third, withholding 50% of Round 7 Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program funds until state approval of an update to the regionally coordinated homeless action plan creates a bureaucratic bottleneck that could delay critical services. Counties and cities need reliable and timely funding to maintain continuity in homelessness programs, and this provision risks destabilizing ongoing efforts.

Additionally, the bill's provisions requiring counties to integrate Round 7 HHAP activities into their Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) plans place further administrative burdens on counties without providing corresponding funding or flexibility. The MHSA was designed to address long-term mental health needs and repurposing it to accommodate homelessness programs without additional resources may undermine essential mental health services that are already stretched thin.

Finally, while we support the goal of enhancing regional coordination, a rigid, state-mandated approach does not account for the unique challenges different counties face in addressing homelessness. Local governments must have the flexibility to develop and implement solutions tailored to their specific needs rather than be subject to one-size-fits-all mandates that may not be effective in all jurisdictions.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes SB 16 and urges you to reconsider its provisions to ensure counties are not unfairly burdened with unfunded mandates that compromise their ability to serve vulnerable populations effectively. We appreciate your attention to our concerns and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on meaningful, sustainable solutions to homelessness.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Housing Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 21, 2025

The Honorable Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3240
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 222 (Wiener), Climate disaster civil actions – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Umberg,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, in lockstep with CalChamber and a multitude of other stakeholder groups, to express our strong opposition to SB 222 (Wiener), which authorizes individuals to bring civil actions against parties deemed responsible for natural disasters and other extreme weather events. This bill, which closely resembles the previously introduced SB 1497 (Menjivar, 2024), would create significant economic and legal challenges for California while failing to meaningfully address the impacts of natural disasters.

SB 222 closely mirrors the intent and provisions of SB 1497, known as the "Polluters Pay Climate Cost Recovery Act of 2024", which sought to hold fossil fuel companies financially accountable for climate-related damages in California. SB 1497, which Kern County also opposed, was ultimately moved to the inactive file in May 2024.

SB 222 would impose substantial costs on California residents and businesses by allowing individuals and attorneys to sue energy companies for damages related to natural disasters, including fires, floods, and extreme weather events. This bill does not require clear evidence of causation and instead applies vague and retroactive liability standards reaching back to 1965. A study by the California Center for Jobs and the Economy indicates that SB 222 would:

- Increase gasoline prices by 63%, reaching $7.89 per gallon by 2026;
- Raise the average household's annual costs by $6,200;
- Increase electricity rates by 31%; and
- Lead to nearly 300,000 job losses per year, reducing wages and state tax revenues.

California is already struggling with an affordability crisis. Rather than enacting policies that further burden residents and businesses with higher costs, the Legislature should focus on solutions that make California more livable and economically sustainable.

SB 222 is riddled with legally questionable mandates that could result in costly and prolonged litigation. Key concerns focus on:

- Due Process: The bill imposes liability on energy companies without requiring proof of causation and applies vague, retroactive standards.

- Equal Protection: The bill unfairly targets a single industry for climate-related costs while ignoring the global nature of climate change and its multiple contributing factors.

- First Amendment: SB 222 could punish companies for statements deemed "misleading" or "deceptive," even if they constitute legitimate political speech.

- Supremacy Clause: The bill prevents companies from raising its unconstitutionality as a defense in court.

- Fifth, Fourteenth, and Eighth Amendment: The bill levies excessive fines and unfair penalties on targeted industries.

Given these substantial legal flaws, SB 222 would undoubtedly face extensive court challenges, ultimately delaying any potential outcomes and providing no immediate benefit to Californians affected by natural disasters.

SB 222 would also exacerbate the financial strain on California's insurance system by requiring the California FAIR Plan to file lawsuits against energy companies for climate-related damages. If private insurers do not file lawsuits under this bill, they would be penalized with an additional 10% assessment. This provision could further destabilize the already volatile property insurance market, making it even more difficult for Californians to secure affordable coverage.

By imposing billions in arbitrary, retroactive liability on a single industry, SB 222 sets a dangerous precedent for all sectors of California's economy. If this framework were applied to other industries, businesses across the state could face similar unpredictable liabilities, discouraging investment, innovation, and job growth.

In light of these concerns and considering the similarities between SB 222 and the previously shelved SB 1497, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this bill. We urge the Legislature to reject this misguided proposal and instead focus on policies that address disaster recovery and resilience without imposing excessive economic and legal burdens on Californians.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Judiciary Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 275 (Smallwood-Cuevas), Eligible training provider list - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Caballero,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for SB 275 (Smallwood-Cuevas), which seeks to streamline the continued eligibility process for the California Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and prevent disruptions in workforce training services due to administrative delays.

The ETPL is a critical tool in connecting job seekers with high-quality training programs funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-B. These programs are essential to meeting California's workforce demands and ensuring individuals have access to skills that lead to sustainable employment. However, the current requirement for training providers to submit continued eligibility documentation every 365 days—rather than on a biennial basis, as permitted under federal guidelines—places an unnecessary burden on providers, local workforce boards, and the Employment Development Department (EDD).

This issue is further compounded by delays in EDD's review process, which frequently results in providers being removed from the ETPL through no fault of their own. In some cases, entire regions have lost all their eligible providers due to administrative backlogs, limiting access to vital workforce training programs. SB 275 offers a commonsense solution by shifting the review period to a biennial cycle and ensuring that providers remain on the ETPL while their applications are under review.

Kern County is committed to strengthening workforce development opportunities for our residents and businesses. By reducing administrative barriers and ensuring training continuity, SB 275 will help us better support job seekers, local employers, and economic growth. We appreciate your leadership on this issue and urge the Legislature's full support for this important measure.

Respectfully,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Jesse Arreguin
Chair, Senate Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 545
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 357 (Menjivar), Probation and youth treatment delegation – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Arreguin,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 357 (Menjivar), which seeks to authorize the board of supervisors in any county to delegate all or part of the duties and authorities concerning minors—currently entrusted to probation departments and probation officers—to another county department.

Probation has long been a cornerstone of the juvenile justice system, serving both juveniles (ages 12-17) and emerging adults (ages 18-24) adjudicated for offenses ranging from minor misdemeanors to serious and violent felonies. The effectiveness of the juvenile justice system is directly tied to the specialized roles and responsibilities carried out by probation. By overseeing the full continuum of care, Probation is uniquely positioned to implement prevention, intervention, and deflection strategies that prioritize rehabilitation while maintaining public safety. These efforts, combined with extensive training and research-based approaches, allow Probation to focus on keeping youth safely within their communities when appropriate while reserving detention for those who pose a genuine risk to public safety. When detention is necessary, it must be managed by professionals trained in both rehabilitative and safety practices. Probation's role is critical in balancing the needs of youth, families, the community, the county, and ultimately the courts, ensuring that youth receive individualized rehabilitation plans while maintaining necessary safeguards.

Kern County's Probation Department has extensive training and experience in evidence-based approaches to working with youth, young adults, and adults. We are deeply concerned about the potential consequences of SB 357, including its impact on community safety, service coordination at the county level, collaboration with the courts, and the ability of the justice system to function effectively. Additionally, shifting these responsibilities to non-probation departments would create operational challenges for recipient agencies and disrupt services for the vulnerable populations they serve.

Similar to the concerns raised by AB 946 (Brayn), which proposes to transfer probation responsibilities to a youth development-focused department in large counties, SB 357 raises serious questions about the potential erosion of the probation system statewide. Both bills seek to shift fundamental public safety functions away from trained probation professionals, threatening the continuity of services, weakening established safeguards, and disrupting the delicate balance between rehabilitation and accountability.

This bill raises significant questions about its implications for community safety, local coordination among agencies, workforce training requirements, fiscal impacts, and the implementation of state policies governing the juvenile justice system. The disruption of existing structures could weaken essential public safety services and hinder the ability to provide appropriate supervision and treatment for youth.

For these reasons, Kern County strongly opposes SB 357. We urge you to consider the long-term ramifications of this bill and its potential to undermine the effectiveness of probation services that are fundamental to public safety and youth rehabilitation.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Monique Limón
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 375 (Grove), Wildfire preparedness streamlining - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Limón,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for SB 375 (Grove), a vital measure that will enhance wildfire preparedness by streamlining regulatory processes and eliminating unnecessary delays. By addressing inefficiencies in the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the California Coastal Act, this legislation will accelerate critical wildfire mitigation efforts, including vegetation management, controlled burns, and firebreak construction.

Our state continues to endure devastating wildfires that destroy communities, displace families, and strain emergency resources. Recent incidents, such as the Palisades and Eaton fires, have caused billions of dollars in damage, underscoring the urgency of proactive wildfire prevention. Unfortunately, current regulatory hurdles impede timely action, increasing the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

SB 375 provides a practical solution by ensuring that wildfire mitigation projects can move forward efficiently without compromising environmental protection. The bill strengthens coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) by requiring prompt guidance on permitting and environmental compliance, thereby reducing unnecessary project delays. Additionally, it mandates annual updates on wildfire preparedness plans to promote transparency and accountability.

By fostering efficiency and interagency collaboration, SB 375 will empower local governments and fire prevention agencies to take decisive action in reducing wildfire risks, protecting property, and saving lives. For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors urges the swift passage of SB 375.

Respectfully,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 27, 2025

The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 7720
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 496 (Hurtado), Advanced Clean Fleets appeals process — SUPPORT

Dear Senator Blakespear,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, in lockstep with the California State Association of Counties, to express our strong support for SB 496 (Hurtado), which would create much-needed flexibility for compliance with the state's zero emission vehicle (ZEV) fleet regulations.

Counties are working diligently to upgrade fleet vehicles while ensuring that they continue to provide the many critical services residents rely on for their most essential daily needs. The California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) rule sets ambitious compliance deadlines for fleets to transition to ZEVs, requiring access to adequate utility infrastructure, assurance of vehicle availability and technology to support a wide spectrum of highly specialized services that counties provide. While the ACF allows exemption requests when fleets cannot meet compliance timetables, the rule does not provide clarity on how exemptions are evaluated, nor does it provide an appeals process for denials by CARB.

SB 496 would aid counties by providing a clear process for appealing denied exemptions, giving the regulated community recourse when vehicles or infrastructure aren't available in the expected compliance timeline. Additionally, SB 496 would update the emergency vehicle exemption, allowing vehicles that are used to respond to and support critical operations during emergencies and disasters to continue to protect our communities. SB 496 also modifies the daily usage exemption to allow more flexibility for low-usage vehicles that might not be cost-effective for replacement under the rule. Finally, SB 496 removes requirements to purchase ZEVs before the infrastructure is available to use them, preserving precious budget flexibility for local governments at a time when every dollar counts.

SB 496 will improve the ACF so that county governments can implement the requirements without compromising the health and safety of California residents. For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports SB 496 and encourages you to vote YES when it comes before your Committee.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 27, 2025

The Honorable Monique Limón
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 556 (Hurtado), Floodplain Restoration – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Limón,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for SB 556 (Hurtado), which secures crucial Proposition 4 funds to advance floodplain restoration and habitat conservation projects in Kern, Kings, and Tulare Counties. These projects represent an essential investment in flood management, groundwater recharge, and environmental restoration for our region.

The historic flooding of 2023 underscored the urgent need for improved flood control infrastructure and sustainable water management in the southern San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin. The ongoing challenges of groundwater overdraft, land subsidence, and increasing climate volatility demand proactive solutions that SB 556 effectively addresses. By providing dedicated funding for multi-benefit floodplain restoration, this legislation will help mitigate flood risks, enhance groundwater sustainability, restore vital fish and wildlife habitats, and create economic opportunities for local communities.

Kern County has long faced disproportionate challenges in securing state investments for critical water infrastructure. SB 556 helps rectify this imbalance by directing much-needed resources to our communities. This bill will provide tangible benefits, including flood safety improvements, clean water access, job creation, and expanded recreational opportunities for our community.

We urge your support for SB 556 and stand ready to collaborate on efforts to ensure its successful passage. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to the well-being of California's Central Valley communities.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 14, 2025

The Honorable Monique Limón
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 567 (Limón), Gravity-Based Energy Storage Wells – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Limón,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for your bill, SB 567, which would create a Gravity-Based Energy Storage Well Pilot Program until January 1, 2035, allowing up to 1,000 inactive oil and gas wells to be converted into energy storage systems.

These inactive wells would help generate and store energy with regular safety checks, constant leak monitoring, and immediate shutdowns if a well experiences any problems. The pilot program allows ample implementation time with a review scheduled in 2033 to decide if it is meeting expectations.

Kern is committed to helping our oil and gas companies repurpose their assets to enhance financial stability, create jobs, and generate essential county revenue. Supporting continued employment for oil and gas workers is crucial for the long-term economic strength and sustainability of our community. Transforming inactive wells for uses such as energy storage, carbon capture and sequestration, and geothermal applications provides valuable job opportunities for local workers who already possess the expertise needed to drive these projects forward.

Similarly, the pilot program will create an opportunity to establish technology and research hubs in Kern, connecting local higher education institutions with tech companies to develop innovation centers focused on new energy projects. By capitalizing on these opportunities, communities with inactive wells can rejuvenate their economies, generate sustainable jobs, and transition into emerging industries while utilizing existing infrastructure and skilled labor.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this legislation and urges its passage in the Committee.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 27, 2025

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chair, Senate Local Government Committee
State Capitol, Room 407
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 707 (Durazo), Open meeting mandates – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Durazo,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our concerns with your bill, SB 707, which would impose unfunded mandates on local governments and significantly increase administrative and financial burdens without providing state reimbursement. While we support public access and transparency in government, SB 707 imposes impractical and costly requirements that would strain county resources and create logistical challenges in conducting public meetings.

Key Concerns:

1. Unfunded Mandate – The bill requires counties to implement expanded teleconferencing, translation services, and increased public outreach without state reimbursement, shifting the financial burden to local governments already struggling with limited budgets.

2. Operational and Logistical Challenges – Mandating two-way teleconferencing, live webcasting, and in-person meeting locations will be particularly difficult for counties with large rural areas, limited broadband access, and insufficient IT infrastructure. This creates an inequitable standard that disproportionately affects less-resourced jurisdictions. Likewise, the bill language is unclear whether jurisdictions will have to provide alternative teleconferencing sites for the public to attend and participate in meetings.

3. Language Accessibility Requirements – While ensuring language access is important, requiring multilingual agendas based on a 20% threshold fails to consider local capabilities and could lead to significant costs, delays, and compliance difficulties, particularly in counties with highly diverse linguistic populations. The bill is unclear if these requirements would also apply to other Brown Act committees within a local government and whether translated versions of an online agenda would meet the new requirements.

4. Loss of Local Control – The bill removes flexibility for counties to determine the most effective means of conducting public meetings, overriding existing best practices tailored to local needs. This one-size-fits-all approach does not account for the unique demographics, geography, and fiscal constraints of individual counties.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully opposes SB 707 and urges you to consider amendments to this measure that provide state funding, implementation flexibility, and reasonable exemptions for counties facing technological or financial barriers. We appreciate your attention to this matter and welcome further discussion on practical solutions that enhance public engagement without overburdening local governments.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Local Government Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Sasha Renée Pérez
Chair, Senate Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 845 (Pérez), Career technical education and apprenticeships - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pérez,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for your bill, SB 845, which enhances career technical education (CTE), career education, and apprenticeship opportunities for students across California. This bill makes necessary updates to the state's workforce development programs, streamlining regulatory requirements and expanding access to work-based learning experiences that prepare students for high-demand careers.

SB 845 strengthens career technical education by refining curriculum standards, ensuring alignment with industry needs, and incorporating input from career technical educators and labor representatives. It also improves work-based learning opportunities by broadening the eligibility for school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, and state special schools to establish and maintain work experience education programs. These changes will allow more students, including those in grade 10 and above, to earn academic credit for participating in work-based learning activities such as apprenticeships, internships, and mentorships.

Kern County strongly supports initiatives that promote workforce readiness, particularly in our local industries that rely on a skilled labor force. By establishing a system for tracking work-based learning and enhancing partnerships between K-12 schools, community colleges, and apprenticeship programs, SB 845 will create a stronger pipeline from education to employment. These updates will ensure that students are equipped with the skills and experience necessary to succeed in today's economy.

We urge the Legislature's full support of SB 845 and appreciate your leadership in advancing career education and workforce training opportunities for California's students.

Sincerely,

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Education Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange


CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS of CALIFORNIA
a program of CALICO


Cast
COALITION TO ABOLISH SLAVERY & TRAFFICKING


CRDV network
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3sgf.org


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FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATIONS


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Bill Wilson Center


California Coalition for Youth
40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY




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CLTCOA
California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association


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CALIFORNIA CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION


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CATALYST


CENTER FOR DOMESTIC PEACE
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CFJN
California Family Justice Network


Center for Community Solutions
Hope, Healing and Prevention


CALIFORNIANS FOR SAFETY AND JUSTICE


CASA de ESPERANZA
HOUSE OF HOPE


Center For Hope & Strength
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CASA OF VENTURA COUNTY


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San Diego
Chadwick Center
for Children & Families


Child Advocacy Center
CAC
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY


CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY CENTER
of Santa Clara County


COMMUNITY
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COMMUNITY VIOLENCE
SOLUTIONS
ENDING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND FAMILY VIOLENCE


CRC
COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER


Covenant
House
California


CONTRA COSTA
SENIOR LEGAL SERVICES


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Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
STANISLAUS COUNTY


Community
Solutions


CSAC


East Los Angeles
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A Place of Hope
DOVES
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Assisting Families Victimized
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COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
The Home of the Redwoods


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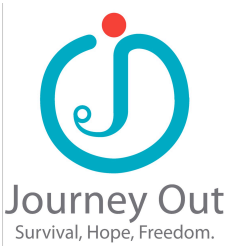

THE COUNTY OF FRESNO
1856


INTERFACE
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES


Jenesse Center, Inc.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION & PREVENTION


Jewish
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Service
Moving Forward
Together


JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE LA


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CALIFORNIA


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FOUNDATION
of
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY


COUNTY OF LAKE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA


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MARIN
Justice for all


LAKE FAMILY
RESOURCE CENTER


CFJ
Counsel for Justice
LACBA


LEGAL AID
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Lassen Family Services, Inc.
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KINGS COMMUNITY
KCAO
ACTION ORGANIZATION


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VICTIM SERVICES
COUNTY OF MODOC
CALIFORNIA
530-233-3311


MCC
Modoc Crisis Center


MONARCH SERVICES
SERVICIOS MONARCA







NLSLA

Neighborhood Legal Services
of Los Angeles County



NEWS
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES
NURTURING EMPOWERMENT WORTH SAFETY
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RAPE CRISIS TEAM

NORTH COUNTY
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RESOURCE CENTER





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PEACE
OVER
VIOLENCE
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Public
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District Attorney
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SHEPHERD'S DOOR
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SAN
DIEGO
LGBT
COMM
UNITY
THE CENTER


SAN
SENIOR ADVOCACY
NETWORK


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CALIFORNIA


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DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
CONSORTIUM
ABUSE
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THE CENTER


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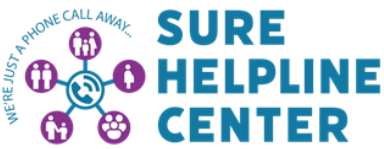


































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February 26, 2025

Senator Mike McGuire
Senate President pro Tempore

Assembly Member Robert Rivas
Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Scott Wiener
Chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee

Assembly Member Jesse Gabriel
Chair of Assembly Budget Committee

Senator Laura Richardson
Chair of Senate Budget Subcommittee 5 on Corrections, Public Safety, Judiciary, Labor and Transportation

Assembly Member James Ramos
Chair of Assembly Budget Subcommittee 6 on Public Safety

Dear Pro Tem McGuire, Speaker Rivas, Chair Wiener, Chair Gabriel, Chair Richardson, and Chair Ramos:

We, the 244 undersigned organizations, representing every county in California, ranging from sexual and domestic violence agencies, to district attorneys, to children's advocacy centers, write requesting $176 million every year for five years to address continuous cuts to the federal Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA) and prevent the potentially catastrophic impact these cuts will have on survivors of crime.

VOCA is at the center of California's response to supporting victims of crime and is relied on by local governments, law enforcement, and service providers to fund resources that provide critical care to those facing the traumatic impacts of being a survivor of crime. These programs include counseling, rapid rehousing, legal services, crisis response, and other essential resources

that support vulnerable individuals over both the short and long term. Entities facilitating these programs, which will already need to lay off staff, scale back services, and increase wait times to connect with victims, will now, in some cases, be forced to shut down completely if this minimum amount of funding is not provided. The impacts of these cuts will fall hardest on smaller programs, communities that have been historically underserved, and rural programs. These programs in 2022 alone assisted over 816,000 survivors across the state.

“I am a survivor of sexual and domestic violence. I was held hostage, beaten, raped, tortured, and shot. If rape crisis centers didn’t exist, I would have never been able to tell my story. The staff at the rape crisis center lifted me from the ground where I was left to die.” - Elvira Herrera

In 2024, California made the choice to assist these survivors by allocating $103 million in one-time funding and passing AB 2432 (Gabriel) to address short-term and long-term solutions.

AB 2432 represents a critical advancement in ensuring sustainable funding for crime victim services in California by establishing a new revenue source through accountability measures for corporate misconduct. By holding corporations who harm the public accountable for financial and legal wrongdoing, the bill promises to generate significant resources in the years ahead to support survivors and the services they rely on. While AB 2432 is a vital step toward insulating California’s crime victim services from the volatility of federal funding, its revenue will depend on the successful prosecution of future corporate cases, which will take time to yield results. Immediate and direct financial support remains essential to prevent a disruption in services that form the backbone of California’s response to crime victims.

The $103 million provided in the June final budget was the amount requested by the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to maintain current funding levels for FY24-25. Cal OES shared publicly that this was the bare minimum needed to support the nearly 400 programs experiencing a 44.7% cut in federal funding, with no additional funding to carry over to FY25-26. With the combination of these efforts, our state agreed to supporting survivors for the foreseeable future.

"This funding was vital for our children's advocacy center to continue delivering services to our entire county. It allows us to continue providing child victims of abuse with forensic interviews and mental health services. Losing these funds would have cut out our therapy department completely and would have forced law enforcement to decide which cases of child abuse were most 'important', leading to fewer hurt children getting services. We want to say, 'Thank you for allowing us to continue being the crucial service provider in our county for kids of all types of abuse.'" says Denise Wyatt, Executive Director of Family Healing Center in Fresno, California.

While we wait for AB 2432 to take effect, survivors still find themselves in a precarious situation. With ongoing instability in federal funding and a new Congress and administration, the future of VOCA remains uncertain.

Programs and the crime survivors they serve will be deeply impacted by these cuts. As a result of this reduced funding, organizations may need to lay off staff, scale back on services specific to

historically marginalized and underserved communities, increase wait time to connect victims of crime to valuable services, and more. For survivors, this will reduce their ability to access the support and healing they need and deserve. The impacts of these cuts will fall hardest on smaller programs, rural programs, and communities that have been historically underserved including LGBTQ+ people and people of color. Data has consistently shown that LGBTQ+ people experience hate violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault at higher rates than non-LGBTQ people, with trans folks, bisexual women, and BIPOC LGBTQ+ folks at particularly high risk. We cannot afford to place more restrictions and barriers on LGBTQ+ people's ability to access support, safety, housing security, and legal protections.

To be clear, a choice to not fund these services is a choice to stand by as programs serving 816,000 survivors are cut dramatically. Not providing this minimal investment also has the potential to exacerbate our homelessness crisis, silence immigrant and undocumented communities, and leave survivors at risk of being victimized yet again. We understand that you as state leaders are continuing to navigate through a challenging budget cycle. However, we believe amongst California's top priorities should be ensuring that crime victims are not further victimized because of a lack of resources to support their recovery.

Supporting survivors of crime is one of the most impactful public safety investments that California can make and we strongly urge you to prioritize this funding request.

Sincerely,

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Children's Advocacy Centers of California
Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking
Legal Aid Association of California
Los Angeles LGBT Center
The Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network
The LGBTQ Center of Long Beach
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Joined by:

<u>National</u>
Global Transgender Safety Tasks Force USA Inc.
Just Detention International
National Center for Youth Law

<u>Statewide</u>
California Crime Victims Assistance Association (CCVAA)
California Elder Justice Coalition
California Family Justice Network
California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association

California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.
California State Association of Counties
California Victims Resource Center
California Women's Law Center
Californians for Safety and Justice
Children's Advocacy Centers of California Advisory Committee
Covenant House California
Family Violence Appellate Project
OneJustice
Rural County Representatives of California
Smart Justice California
Urban Counties of California
Western Center on Law and Poverty

Alameda County
A Safe Place
BAWAR
CALICO
Choose Your Path Foundation
Family Violence Law Center
Safe Alternatives for Violent Environments Inc. (SAVE)
Treeclimber Media LLC
Tri-Valley Haven

Alpine County
Live Violence Free

Amador County
Operation Care

Butte County
Catalyst Domestic Violence Services

Calaveras County
The Resource Connection, Calaveras Crisis Center

Colusa County
Casa de Esperanza

Contra Costa County
Community Violence Solutions
Contra Costa County
Contra Costa Senior Legal Services
STAND! For Families Free of Violence

Del Norte County
Rural Human Services

El Dorado County
Live Violence Free
The Center for Violence-Free Relationships

Fresno County
Central Valley Justice Coalition
Family Healing Center
Fresno County
Marjaree Mason Center
Rape Counseling Services of Fresno

Glenn County
Catalyst Domestic Violence Services

Humboldt County
Humboldt County
Humboldt Domestic Violence Services
North Coast Rape Crisis Team

Imperial County
Sure Helpline Center

Inyo County
Wild Iris Family Counseling and Crisis Center
CASA of the Eastern Sierra

Kern County
Kern County
Open Door Network
Women's Center-High Desert, Inc.

Kings County
Kings Community Action Organization

Lake County
Lake County
Lake Family Resource Center

Lassen County
Lassen Family Services, Inc.

Los Angeles County
A Window Between Worlds
Antelope Valley Domestic Violence Council
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California (AJSOCAL)
Bet Tzedek Legal Services
Center for the Pacific Asian Family
Community Legal Aid SoCal
Downtown Women's Center
East Los Angeles Women's Center
FreeFrom
Foothill Family Service
Haven Hills, Inc.
House of Ruth, Inc.
Inner Circle Children's Advocacy Center
Jenesse Center, Inc.
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Journey Out
Korean American Family Services
LACBA Counsel for Justice
Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice
National Organization for Women, Hollywood chapter
Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles
New Directors Counseling Center
New Star Family Justice Center
Pánfila Domestic Violence HOPE Foundation
Peace Over Violence
Positive Results Center
Project: PeaceMakers, Inc.
Project Sister Family Services
PublicCounsel
Rainbow Services, Ltd.
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Western American Area
Shepherd's Door Domestic Violence Resource Center
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, LA
South Asian Helpline and Referral Agency
StrengthUnited
Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative
Survivor Justice Center
The People Concern
This Hits Home and Pánfila Domestic Violence HOPE Foundation
Women Organizing Resources Knowledge and Services
Women's & Children's Crisis Shelter

YWCA Glendale and Pasadena
YWCA Greater Los Angeles

Madera County
Community Action Partnership of Madera County

Marin County
Center for Domestic Peace
Community Violence Solutions
Legal Aid of Marin

Mariposa County
Alliance for Community Transformations

Mendocino County
Project Sanctuary, Inc.

Merced County
Alliance for Community Transformations
Valley Crisis Center

Modoc County
Modoc Crisis Center - A division of TEACH, Inc.
Modoc County Victim Services

Mono County
Wild Iris Family Counseling and Crisis Center
CASA of the Eastern Sierra

Monterey County
Monterey County
Monterey County Rape Crisis Center

Napa County
Napa County District Attorney's Office
NEWS 2018

Nevada County
Community Beyond Violence
Sierra Community House

Orange County
Abrazar, Inc.
Child Guidance Center

Community Legal Aid SoCal
Families Forward
Human Options
Laura's House
Orangewood Foundation
Public Law Center
Radiant Futures
Sisters of St. Joseph Healthcare Foundation
Waymakers

Placer County
Placer County
Sierra Community House
Stand Up Placer

Plumas County
Plumas Rural Services, Inc.

Riverside County
Gray's Trauma-Informed Care Services Corp
REACH
Riverside County
SAFE Family Justice Centers
Shelter From The Storm, Inc. (SFTS)

Sacramento County
3Strands Global Foundation
California Coalition for Youth
CHAN-BOF for Peace
Opening Doors, Inc.
Sacramento LGBT Community Center
Waking the Village
WEAVE INC

San Benito County
Community Solutions

San Bernardino County
Desert Sanctuary Inc.
DOVES of Big Bear Valley, Inc.
Family Assistance Program
Option House, Inc.
Partners Against Violence
San Bernardino County District Attorney

San Diego County
Center for Community Solutions
Center for Hope and Strength
Chadwick Center for Children and Families
Community Resource Center
Free to Thrive
Jewish Family Service of San Diego
North County LGBTQ Resource Center
Rooting Movements
San Diego County District Attorney
San Diego LGBT Community Center
San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program

San Francisco
Asian Women's Shelter
Bay Area Legal Aid
Community United Against Violence
Cooperative Restraining Order Clinic
Futures Without Violence
Rally Family Visitation Services of SFMH
Safe & Sound
San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium
San Francisco Women Against Rape
Self-Help for the Elderly
W.O.M.A.N., Inc.

San Joaquin County
Partners for International Cooperation
PREVAIL (formerly Women's Center - Youth & Family Services)

San Luis Obispo County
CASA of San Luis Obispo
Center for Family Strengthening
Child Advocacy Center San Luis Obispo County
Lumina Alliance

San Mateo County
Children's Advocacy Center San Mateo County
Rape Trauma Services: A Center for Healing and Violence Prevention

Santa Barbara County
Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County
North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center

Standing Together to End Sexual Assault

Santa Clara County
Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)
Bill Wilson Center
Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County
Community Solutions
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence
Pro Bono Project Silicon Valley
Santa Clara County
YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley

Santa Cruz County
Monarch Services
Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center

Shasta County
Children's Legacy Center
One SAFE Place

Sierra County
Sierra Safe Program

Siskiyou County
Siskiyou Domestic Violence & Crisis Center

Solano County
SafeQuest Solano, Inc.
Solano Advocates for Victims of Violence (SAVV)
Victims Empowerment Support Team

Sonoma County
Family Justice Center Sonoma County
Redwood Children's Center
Sonoma County
Sonoma County District Attorney
Verity
YWCA Sonoma County

Stanislaus County
Court Appointed Special Advocates of Stanislaus County
Family Justice Center of Stanislaus
Healthy Alternatives to Violent Environments

Senior Advocacy Network

Sutter County
Casa de Esperanza
Sutton County

Tehama County
Empower Tehama

Trinity County
Human Response Network
Trinity County DA Victim Witness Assistance Program

Tulare County
Central California Family Crisis Center, Inc.
Family Services of Tulare County

Tuolumne County
Tuolumne County District Attorney's Office
Tuolumne County District Attorney Victim/Witness

Ventura County
CASA of Ventura County
Coalition for Family Harmony
Interface Children & Family Services
SOROPTIMIST STOP Human Trafficking Committee, Camino Real Region
Ventura County
Ventura County District Attorney

Yolo County
Empower Yolo, Inc.
Yolo County Children's Advocacy Center, the MDIC
Yolo County District Attorney

Yuba County
Casa de Esperanza
Yuba County

Individuals
Tabitha Thomas

Item #6

April 14, 2025

Legislative Program Committee
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

RESPONSE TO REFERRAL REGARDING ELECTION INTEGRITY MATTERS
Fiscal Impact: None

On January 28, 2025 the Board of Supervisors (BOS) received a report from the CAO regarding various items related to local elections, including the option of separating the Registrar of Voters (ROV) position from the Auditor-Controller's Office and creating a standalone position that is appointed by the BOS. As part of that report, consideration of changes in election law at the state and federal level through the legislative process were referred to the Legislative Program Committee (LPC) for further evaluation. This item outlines a range of legislative issues and potential policy opportunities for consideration by the LPC related to election integrity, voter verification, and voter registration requirements at both the state and federal levels. The following summary is intended to present key facts, weigh potential impacts, and provide a framework for the LPC's discussion and direction.

STATE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

Issue #1: Changes in law to allow for citizenship verification

Current California law prohibits local governments from enacting or enforcing any ordinance requiring a person to present identification for the purpose of voting. Several bills under consideration would repeal this prohibition and authorize or require citizenship verification at the time of registration and voting:

- **AB 25 (California Voter ID and Election Integrity Act of 2025)** would repeal the local prohibition and require individuals to provide documentation of citizenship with their voter registration. It would also direct county elections officials to verify citizenship for existing registrants.

- **SB 405** would similarly remove the prohibition on local governments requiring ID for in-person voting or ballot submission.

- **AB 1077** proposes limiting DMV participation in voter registration under the California New Motor Voter Program by prohibiting registration prompts for individuals presenting documentation indicating non-citizenship.

Consideration: These bills may support increased confidence in election security but could introduce barriers for eligible voters lacking documentation. Legal implications should be considered in light of federal rulings (see "Federal Level Considerations" below).

Issue #2: Signature Verification Standards and Improvements

The current law under Elections Code §3019 limits signature verification for vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots to specific documents, such as affidavits of registration or forms issued by elections officials. Some counties report difficulty using DMV-generated signatures, which may be too stylized or inconsistent for reliable VBM comparison.

- **AB 1116** would allow voters to upload digitized signatures via the Secretary of State's website and permit elections officials to use these for VBM comparison even if the person has not been issued a California driver's license or state identification card, as long as the person provides the last four digits of their social security number with their affidavit.

Consideration: While this could improve access and flexibility, it may also introduce authentication concerns or raise questions about security and consistency in signature standards.

Issue #3: Additional Signature Cards for Verification

One potential state legislative opportunity may involve authorizing local elections offices to collect additional voter signature cards at the county level for expanded verification purposes.

Consideration: This scenario would require the County to pursue legislation to expand Elections Code §3019. This option could strengthen VBM verification and support cure efforts but may require infrastructure and outreach, including provisions for in-person signature updates and identity verification, similar to DMV standards.

Issue #4: Timely Removal of Ineligible Voters (Deceased, Incarcerated, Mentally Unfit)

Current law under Elections Code §2205–2212 outlines when and how county officials can cancel voter registrations for individuals who have died, been incarcerated, or found mentally incompetent.

- The county registrar is required to cancel registrations of deceased individuals based on monthly reports, and notifications must be sent to voters prior to cancellation.
- There may be an opportunity to evaluate whether these procedures are being followed consistently and timely at the local level.

Consideration: Should delays in list maintenance be identified, the County ROV may consider proposing statutory timeframes for cancellation or additional coordination requirements among agencies.

Issue #5: Residency Verification for Candidates for Office

Under the current Elections Code §8028 and §8040, candidates declare residency and other qualifications under penalty of perjury when filing a declaration of candidacy. However, verification is not required at the time of filing.

Consideration: A possible legislative opportunity may be to require elections officials to verify residency documentation at the time of candidacy filing. Modifying or narrowing the exception that allows someone other than the candidate to pick up the declaration may also be considered to improve transparency.

Issue #6: Alternative Sources for Signatures and Party Selection

Currently, DMV records serve as the primary source for signature and party preference collection during voter registration.

Consideration: If concerns persist regarding the quality of DMV-generated signatures or voter intent, the LPC may explore the possibility of sponsoring legislation that would allow another state agency or independent body to provide more consistent and accessible data.

Issue #7: Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) and Same-Day Registration

California Elections Code §2170–2173 permits Conditional Voter Registration (CVR), allowing eligible individuals to register and cast a provisional ballot within the 14 days preceding an election, including on Election Day. While this process is legally available, there may be some confusion due to public messaging—such as the Secretary of State's website—which identifies the registration deadline as 14 days before the election.

Consideration: The LPC may wish to explore whether clarification or adjustments to CVR-related communication or policy would be appropriate, particularly in light of recent requests from constituents around eliminating or limiting same-day voter registration.

FEDERAL LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

Issue #1: Federal Citizenship Verification Proposals

H.R. 22/S. 128 – Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act proposes requiring documentary proof of U.S. citizenship to register to vote in federal elections. This bill would also impact voter registration systems nationally, aligning with broader efforts to verify voter eligibility.

Consideration: The bill could strengthen election security efforts but may also raise access concerns and would likely face legal challenges similar to those recently addressed by the federal courts (see below).

Issue #2: Ninth Circuit Decision on Arizona Voter Laws

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals recently struck down several provisions of Arizona's **HB 2492** and **HB 2243**, finding them to be preempted by the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and in violation of the Civil Rights Act. Key findings:

- Requirements for documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) and documentary proof of residency (DPOR) were found to be unlawful under federal law when applied to state-form and federal election applicants.
- Provisions authorizing citizenship checks based on suspicion, and voter registration cancellations within 90 days of an election, were invalidated.
- Certain documentation requirements were also found to violate the pre-existing LULAC Consent Decree (*League of United Latin American Citizens of Arizona v. Reagan, 2006*)[1].

Consideration: These rulings suggest that similar legislative efforts at the state level may face legal risks unless carefully tailored to avoid federal preemption and civil rights violations.

Issue #3: Legislation to Overturn Trump Administration Executive Order 14248

On March 25, 2025 President Trump issued an Executive Order 14248 titled "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections", which requires proof of citizenship for federal voter registration, disallows mail-in ballots postmarked by Election Day but arriving after the election, and directs federal agencies to review state voter rolls. The Executive Order borrows heavily from the SAVE Act and has been challenged in court with 19 states suing the Trump Administration arguing the order is unconstitutional.

[1] A 2006 federal lawsuit challenging Arizona's voter registration procedures under Proposition 200, a voter-approved initiative that required individuals to provide documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) to register to vote.

On March 31, 2025 Congressman Abraham Hamadeh (R-AZ) introduced **H.R. 2499** to codify **Executive Order 14248**.

On April 1, 2025, Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA) introduced **S. 1240 – the Defending America's Future Elections Act**, which seeks to overturn the executive order issued by President Trump. **S. 1240** would repeal these federal directives and prohibit federal agencies including the newly created Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) from accessing or analyzing state-level voter registration data.

Consideration: These bills reflect competing federal measures regarding voter registration requirements and illustrate the tension between federal and state policy directions on voting. The passage or failure of these measures will likely influence the feasibility of related state-level initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The LPC may wish to consider whether to formally support, oppose, or monitor the legislation identified in this report based on the issues outlined above. Each proposal has potential policy, legal, and administrative implications that may affect Kern County's election operations, voter confidence, and compliance with state and federal law.

The LPC may also wish to consider an amendment to the County's Legislative Platform to include language regarding election-related legislation in general. The change would enhance the Board's ability to act on current and future elections legislation and expedite the time it takes to move from review to advocacy in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. regarding these policy issues.

Lastly, in regard to concerns with local signature verification protocols and voter roll cleanup, the BOS has already taken proactive steps through the legislative process to establish a standalone ROV in Kern. Through our advocacy in Sacramento, a draft amendment to Government Code §26802.5 has been included in the Local Government Omnibus Act of 2025 (SB 858), which would allow Kern to join other general law counties that can restructure their elections departments and appoint a dedicated ROV. If SB 858 becomes law, the BOS would have the opportunity to directly improve operational efficiencies and oversight in the Elections Department and provide enhanced accountability to the public.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss and provide direction.

Sincerely,

Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

NA:TB Response to Referral Regarding Election Integrity Matters – LPC

Attachment

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Election Integrity & Legislative Considerations

Apr. 14, 2025

Legislative Program Committee

Overview

- On January 28, 2025 the BOS made a referral to the Legislative Program Committee (LPC) to review potential changes in election law at the state and federal level via the legislative process

- **Purpose**: Evaluate election law changes and policy options

State-Level
Issue #1 – Citizenship Verification

- AB 25 - Requires citizenship documentation & verification
- SB 405 - Allows local voter ID requirements
- AB 1077 - Limits non-citizen registration via DMV
- **Consideration:** Balancing security and accessibility

State-Level
Issue #2 – Signature Verification Standards

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- AB 1116 – Allows digital signatures for VBM

- **Consideration:** Allows flexibility and access, but could introduce authentication and security risks

State-Level
Issue #3 – Additional Signature Cards

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- Proposal: Local collection of signature cards
- Goal: Strengthen VBM verification and cure efforts
- Needs: Infrastructure, outreach, ID verification

State-Level
Issue #4 – Voter Roll Maintenance

- Current law: Elections Code §2205–2212
- Issue: Timeliness and consistency of removals
- Opportunity: Propose statutory timeframes & interagency coordination

State-Level
Issue #5 – Residency Verification for Candidates

- Current law: Declaration under penalty of perjury
- Proposal: Require documentation at filing
- Goal: Improve transparency and accountability

State-Level
Issue #6 – Signature Sources & Party Preference

- Current law: DMV is main source
- Proposal: Allow alternative state/independent sources
- Goal: Improve signature quality and voter intent clarity

State-Level
Issue #7 – Conditional & Same-Day Registration

- Current law: CVR allowed within 14 days, including Election Day
- Proposal: Clarify messaging or adjust policy
- Goal: Eliminate public confusion

Federal-Level
Issue #1 – SAVE Act

- H.R. 22/S. 128 – Requires DPOC for federal registration

- Implications: Security vs. access, potential legal challenges

Federal-Level
Issue #2 – 9th Circuit Ruling on Arizona Laws

- Key invalidated provisions: DPOC/DPOR, suspicion-based checks, 90-day cancellations

- Implications: Legal precedent for state-level initiatives

Federal-Level
Issue #3 – Executive Order & Response Legislation

- EO 14248 - Citizenship proof, mail-in ballot restrictions, voter roll review
- H.R. 2499 - Codifies the EO
- S. 1240 - Repeals the EO
- Implications: Federal-state tensions on voter policy

Local Legislative Efforts

- SB 858 – Draft amendments to Government Code §26802.5
- Purpose: Standalone ROV for Kern County
- Benefits: Improved oversight & public accountability

Conclusion & Next Steps

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LPC Direction Needed

- Support/Oppose/Monitor identified legislation
- Consider Legislative Platform amendment(s)
- Continue advocacy for SB 858


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