

AGENDA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STANDING COMMITTEE – LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER – 5th FLOOR CAO LARGE CONFERENCE 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.

December 8, 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#

Remote participation options are provided as a convenience only. In the event of technical difficulties, the meeting will continue in person uninterrupted

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. Approve minutes from the October 27, 2025 meeting – APPROVE

5. Approve Legislative Program Committee meeting dates for calendar year 2026 – APPROVE

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

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

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

9. 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 may request assistance at the County Administrative Office, Fifth Floor, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California or by calling (661) 868-3198. 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 \$500 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 within the 12 months prior to the final decision; and for 12 months following the date of the final decision, members of the Board of Supervisors shall not accept, solicit, or direct a campaign contribution of \$500 or more from the applicant or contractor, their agent, or any financially interested participant. Members of the Board of Supervisors who have received, and applicants, contractors or their agents who have made, campaign contributions totaling more than \$500 to a Board member in the last 12 months, 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.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STANDING COMMITTEE – LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER – 5th FLOOR CAO LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
1115 TRUXTUN AVE.
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October 27, 2025 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

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+1 831-296-3421

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1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL: PHILLIP PETERS & JEFF FLORES PRESENT

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: NO PUBLIC COMMENT

4. Approve minutes from the August 11, 2025 meeting – APPROVE: FLORES FIRST – PETERS SECOND

5. 2026 State and Federal Legislative Platform – DISCUSS; MAKE RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO APPROVE: FLORES FIRST – PETERS SECOND

6. Annual report on State lobbying efforts; direct staff to act as necessary – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION: PAUL YODER REPRESENTING SHAW YODER ANTWHI SCHMELZER & LANGE GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS

7. **Annual report on Federal lobbying efforts; direct staff to act as necessary – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION: BEN GOLDEEN, REPRESENTING TOWNSEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS**
8. **~~Federal Legislative Consultation Services~~—HEAR AND DISCUSS: ITEM NOT HEARD DUE TO INSUFFICIENT NOTICE PER GOV. CODE §54954.2(a)(2)(A)**
9. **~~State Legislative Consultation Services~~—HEAR AND DISCUSS: ITEM NOT HEARD DUE TO INSUFFICIENT NOTICE PER GOV. CODE §54954.2(a)(2)(A)**
10. **Direction for new committee business at future meetings – NONE PRESENTED**

11. ADJOURNMENT

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ITEM #5

December 8, 2025

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

PROPOSED 2026 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

This is to request that the LPC review and approve the proposed 2026 Legislative Program Committee (LPC) meeting dates. Beginning in February, the proposed meeting dates will recur on the second Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and are as follows:

February 9, 2026
March 9, 2026
April 13, 2026
May 11, 2026
June 8, 2026
July 13, 2026
August 10, 2026
September 14, 2026
October 12, 2026
November 9, 2026
December 14, 2026

Meetings will be held on the 5th Floor of the County Administrative Center in the CAO Large Conference Room and will also be available virtually via the Microsoft Teams platform.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC review and approve the 2026 LPC meeting dates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Anderson".

Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

NA:TB 2026 LPC Meeting Dates

cc: All County Department Heads
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
Townsend Public Affairs

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: December 8, 2025

Subject: Legislative Program Committee Federal Affairs Report

Over the past two months, the federal government shutdown brought congressional activity to a near standstill, delaying progress on critical legislative priorities and appropriations work. With the shutdown resolved through a short-term continuing resolution, Congress and the administration are now racing to make up for lost time, tackling a backlog of funding negotiations and policy initiatives before the end of the year. This compressed timeline has heightened urgency across Capitol Hill as lawmakers seek to advance appropriations, major program authorizations, and regulatory actions that were stalled during the shutdown.

Federal Legislative Updates

Federal Government Shutdown Ended on November 12

The federal government shutdown officially ended on November 12 when a number of moderate Senate Democrats agreed to vote with Republicans to pass a modified version of the House-passed clean continuing resolution, [HR 5371](#), with an end date of January 30, 2026. The House then passed the measure, returning to Washington DC after being out of session since September 19, followed by the President signing the resolution that evening.

In exchange, Democrats were assured a December floor vote in the Senate to extend the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance premium subsidies set to expire at the end of the year, the reversal of layoffs of federal workers during the shutdown, and a temporary prohibition on further layoffs until January 30, 2026. There is no guarantee the vote to extend the subsidy passes, and House Speaker Mike Johnson [refused](#) to guarantee a floor vote in the regardless of Senate action. Attached to the shutdown ending continuing resolution were three of the twelve regular, full-year appropriations bills intended to jumpstart a return to the normal process of funding the government.

The three full-year appropriations bills are generally the bipartisan versions previously passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Included are the Agriculture-FDA, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Legislative Branch bills, which would fully fund the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh), another program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/CalWORKS).

Also included are a number of [extensions](#) of authorities for Farm Bill programs not previously included in HR 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, and authorities for certain telehealth, prescription, and health center programs that expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2025 on September 30.

Congress Makes Further Movement Towards Finalizing Appropriations Process

The Senate moved towards finalizing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 appropriations process in November, releasing its versions of the [Energy and Water](#) and [Financial Services and General Government](#) bills. Congress has until January 30, 2026 to pass the nine remaining full-year appropriations bills and avert another, albeit partial, government shutdown.

Senators are also reported to be planning a larger minibus of five appropriations bills, though House Appropriations Committee Chairman Tom Cole has expressed skepticism at the House's willingness to pass a minibus of that size. The nine remaining [bills](#) include the majority of discretionary spending and earmarks, notably including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD); Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS); Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS); and Defense packages currently being negotiated between the House and Senate. The House bills are generally in line with the President's [skinny budget request](#) and its [appendix](#) released earlier this year, while the Senate bills are generally bipartisan and maintain or only slightly modify current spending levels.

Congress is also considering a full-year continuing resolution (CR) for any bills they are unable to negotiate before the January 30, 2026, deadline, though appropriators have made it clear that this is a last resort. deadline, though appropriators have made it clear that this is a last resort. The first two weeks of session in December will likely be consumed by attempts to pass a health care package before December 12, as Senate Democrats were promised a vote on health insurance premiums in order to end the government shutdown. That leaves one week of session in December and three in January before the deadline. It generally takes committee staff six weeks to compose floor-ready bills from a final agreement on topline numbers. With the holidays, it may take additional time, leaving the House and Senate on a tight timeline to resolve the differences between their funding bills and avert a second shutdown.

Congress Readies Health Care Package for December Vote

Increased health insurance premium subsidies enacted in 2021 are set to expire at the end of the year, leading to an increase in costs for consumers purchasing their insurance through Covered California. As a result, Congressional Republicans are seeking ways to reform the Affordable Care Act. Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) has [proposed](#) shifting the subsidy amount into individual Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and subsidy recipients into lower-tier higher-deductible health plans, while Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) has [floated](#) a compromise extension of the subsidies with new income limitations and additional flexibilities for HSAs. Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) [released](#) his own plan, creating a modified form of HSAs called Trump Health Freedom Accounts that could be used to pay both premiums and deductibles, along with the introduction of a state waiver program.

The competition between these plans, along with the President's short-lived [proposal](#) to extend the health insurance premium subsidies with additional limitations on eligibility, will likely consume Congress's schedule for the first two weeks of December, as the self-imposed deadline for action is December 12.

House Committee on Natural Resources Advances Permitting Reform Bill

On November 20, The House Committee on Natural Resources held a [markup](#) of a number of bills, including [HR 4776](#), the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act, which was passed out of committee on a bipartisan basis. The bill represents the most significant reforms to federal environmental permitting in years and would notably create parity between California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reviews and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews.

This means a completed CEQA review, since California has higher environmental standards, could satisfy the requirements of NEPA for certain federally funded projects. This would save developers and local jurisdictions significant time and resources in building housing and other infrastructure using federal dollars.

Natural Resources Chairman Bruce Westerman has expressed optimism the bill will see a floor vote by the end of the year, though potential passage will likely be pushed into 2026.

California's Proposition 50 Maps at the Center of Expanding Federal Litigation

The statewide special election on November 4 resulted in voter approval of Proposition 50 however, the measure has since become the subject of two separate federal lawsuits that could significantly affect its implementation for the 2026–2030 election cycles. With Proposition 50's passage, California is positioned to advance new congressional districts pursuant to the provisions enacted in [AB 604](#) (Aguiar-Curry/Gonzalez, 2025).

California's new congressional map is now facing parallel legal challenges that question its validity. The actions, filed independently by the U.S. Department of Justice and the California Republican Party, argue that the Legislature relied too heavily on racial data when drawing the new districts.

The first lawsuit was [filed](#) on November 5 by Assemblymember David Tangipa, the California Republican Party, and several individual plaintiffs in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, naming Governor Newsom and Secretary of State Shirley Weber as defendants. The plaintiffs argue that the Legislature engaged in an unauthorized mid-decade redistricting, contrary to state constitutional limits that allow redistricting only once per census cycle. They further contend that race was used as a predominant factor in the map-drawing process, citing an expansion of Latino-majority or "Voting Rights Act" districts without what they view as adequate legal justification. The lawsuit asks the court to declare Proposition 50 unconstitutional and reinstate the prior congressional district map before the 2026 election cycle.

A second lawsuit, [filed](#) on November 13 by the U.S. Department of Justice, mirrors and broadens many of these challenges. The DOJ argues that the newly adopted map relies too heavily on racial demographics, particularly in its treatment of Hispanic voters, in ways that may violate the Equal Protection Clause and the Voting Rights Act. While the DOJ's challenge follows the Republican Party's lawsuit, it signals heightened federal scrutiny of California's redistricting process and increases the potential legal exposure facing the State.

Together, the lawsuits introduce substantial legal and political uncertainty for the proposed changes to California's congressional landscape. From a legal standpoint, the cases will test the boundaries of permissible consideration of race in the redistricting process and clarify whether Proposition 50 permits the mid-cycle replacement of district lines. Politically, the outcomes could

affect the competitiveness of several congressional districts and may influence how states approach both racial and partisan considerations when redrawing maps in future cycles.

Both cases are pending, and no timeline has been set for resolution. Until the courts determine the fate of Proposition 50 and the resulting congressional map, the State's redistricting framework and the districts that will be used in upcoming elections remain uncertain.

Department of Justice Sues California to Prevent Undocumented Immigrants from Receiving In-State Tuition, Scholarships, and Subsidized Loans

On November 20, the Department of Justice (DOJ) [announced](#) a lawsuit against the State of California and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges among others to bar the state from providing in-state tuition, scholarships, and subsidized loans to undocumented immigrants. The [complaint](#) alleges noncompliance with [8 USC 1623\(a\)](#), which prevents granting education benefits to undocumented immigrants if those benefits are not also afforded to all US citizens regardless of residency.

California Education Code was modified by AB 540 (Firebaugh, 2001) to [create](#) a nonresident tuition exemption for undocumented students who graduated from high school in California, or attended a minimum of three years (full-time) of classes at any school in the state, including a community college. DOJ has filed similar lawsuits against other states, following multiple Executive Orders (EOs) signed early in the current Administration seeking to prevent undocumented immigrants from accessing public benefits. These include [EO 14218](#), titled Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Open Borders and [EO 14287](#), titled Protecting American Communities From Criminal Aliens. Both orders ask DOJ and the Department of Homeland Security to increase enforcement of [8 USC 1611](#), which ostensibly prevents undocumented immigrants from accessing federal public benefits.

In June, a District Court Judge in Texas [agreed](#) with the DOJ on this issue, though notably the State of Texas declined to mount a defense to lawsuit. The most similar case, currently being litigated in Illinois, remains [active](#), as does another case in [Kentucky](#). It is likely the California Department of Justice, led by Attorney General Rob Bonta, will work with colleges and universities to defend the statute.

Department of the Interior to Open Offshore Drilling Leases in California

On November 20, the Department of Interior (Interior) [announced](#) a [Secretary's Order](#) to reopen the National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program after it was previously limited under the Biden Administration. The leases, to be granted before October 2026, would include at least six zones on the West coast, including in California, and allow for the exploration, siting, construction, and operation of new offshore drilling platforms. The 60-day notice on the order requires a public comment period, which is expected to open by early December.

Despite new leases being issued in other parts of the country, California has not seen new drilling platforms constructed since the 1980s, largely due to public opposition and tourism and fishery dependent economies noting the negative impacts of a potential spill. Governor Gavin Newsom [announced](#) his opposition to the move by Interior.

The state has robust environmental protection laws, [including](#) the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the California Coastal Sanctuary law, and the California Coastal Act, which

could at least delay construction or incentivize oil and gas companies to prioritize other sites not in California.

Senate Advances Wildfire and Aviation Safety Legislation

Continuing to work through the government shutdown, the Senate advanced legislation through committees addressing aviation safety concerns surrounding the January 2025 crash in Washington, DC and wildfire legislation partially authored by California Senator Alex Padilla.

[S 2503](#), The Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform (ROTOR) Act strengthens military flight regulations and disallows the military from declining to use or install civilian compatible transmitters on military aircraft. It also requires the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to review and evaluate helicopter routes near major airports and take additional deconfliction measures.

[S 1462](#), the Senate version of the Fix Our Forests Act with House companion [HR 471](#), which passed the House in January, would initiate a series of regulatory and programmatic changes designed to support wildfire prevention in western states. The Senate version would create new programs and designate cross-jurisdictional “firesheds” to promote collaboration. It would also create a single interagency program for communities in the wildland-urban interface to build and retrofit infrastructure to be wildfire resistant and expand federal programs supporting forest health.

Given the bipartisan and bicameral nature of the bills, they are prime candidates to receive floor votes in the Senate before the end of the year.

HUD Releases New Continuum of Care Funding Opportunity with New Structure for Permanent Supportive Housing

On November 13, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [released](#) a new Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY25 Continuum of Care (CoC) Competition and Youth Homeless Demonstration Program Grants (YHDP), which fundamentally restructures the CoC competition and types of projects that will be funded. The NOFO intentionally rebalances the portfolio toward transitional housing and Supportive Services Only projects and conditions a much larger share of funding on enforcement-oriented approaches.

The most consequential change is a 30% cap on the amount of annual renewal demand (ARD) funding available for permanent supportive housing (PSH). Previously, 90% of funding was allocated for PSH, and CoC’s operating PSH programs in that 90% were classified as Tier 1 and considered part of the ARD, providing strong protection to existing projects.

Impacts on California

Overall, in California, the revised NOFO is [anticipated](#) to leave the state with a \$410 million gap in funding for CoCs and could cause nearly 27,000 individuals to lose their housing. Currently, 30% of permanent housing beds in California are funded by CoC, including 34% of PSH. On November 25, Governor Gavin Newsom [announced](#) a lawsuit seeking to protect the program.

Nationwide, these changes are expected to have significant impacts on the estimated 170,000 PSH recipients, who are individuals with severe disabilities, mental illness, and chronic health conditions that rely on the CoC funding for housing. HUD CoC is generally designed to quickly

rehouse homeless individuals, families, persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and youth while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness. Since January, the Administration has sought to change the federal government's posture towards homelessness. The NOFO is seen as complying with Executive Order (EO) [14321](#), titled Ending Crime and Disorder on America's Streets, which directed the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the HUD Secretary to end support for housing first policies.

The Administration is instead emphasizing temporary supportive housing with work or treatment requirements for a general maximum of 24 months, a major shift from the housing first model that has generally defined federal government support over the last decade. At the end of October, a group of Republicans in Congress circulated a [draft letter](#) advocating for a one-year clean extension of the program, allowing more time for the Administration to develop its policy. Senate Democrats responded to the NOFO release with their own [letter](#).

Food Assistance/SNAP Benefits Delayed by Government Shutdown, Now Administered

Resulting from the federal government shutdown, the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh), notified state administrators in late October that they would not have funding available for benefits payments in November 2025. Citing the imminent exhaustion of prior-year funds, the Administration directed contractors and FNS not to accept the state data required to administer benefit payments.

This was controversial due to the existence of a contingency fund in Title IV of [HR 4366](#), the last full-year appropriations bill enacted by Congress, which continued through FY25 (October 30, 2025). The Administration [argued](#) that ongoing benefits payments was not a permissible use of the fund. On October 31, two federal judges [issued](#) orders contradicting the Administration's argument, requiring they at least partially fund benefits for the month of November. On November 3, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and USDA [filed](#) in one of the cases stating that they would make the funding accessible by November 5 as required, though due to the size of the contingency fund they would only be able to provide 50% of the benefit amount for November. They provided further procedural details in a separate [filing](#) in the other case, and during a hearing stated that DOJ did not intend to appeal the decision, despite a [statement](#) by the President to the contrary that was later rescinded.

On November 6, the judge in one of the cases [ruled](#) the Administration had to provide 100% of benefits payments for November and utilize additional funding. DOJ and the USDA [appealed](#) the decision, though on November 7 USDA sent an [update](#) to state administrators that they will make full benefits available in accordance with the November 6 court order.

The federal government shutdown ended on November 12, and the majority of benefits have been paid, though they were [delayed](#) due to the significant administrative burden on states and contractors to supply the information required to administer them.

County Federal Legislative Positions

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 3944	Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act of 2026	Rep. John Carter	Support	A bill to fund the Department of Veterans Affairs and military construction projects for Fiscal Year 2026.	Became law (P.L. 119-37) as part of H.R. 5371 11/12/2025 Amended in the Senate, passed the Senate by Yea-Nay vote 81-15 8/1/2025 On passage passed the House by the Yeas and Nays: 218 – 206 6/25/2025
H.R. 3132	CHOICE for Veterans Act of 2025	Rep. Jack Bergman	Oppose	To amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for certain fee agreements for services rendered in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of initial claims and supplemental claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.	Ordered to be Reported by the House Committee on Veterans Affairs by the Yeas and Nays: 12 - 11. 5/6/2025

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 2499	To Codify Executive Order 14248	Rep. Abraham Hamadeh	Support	The bill would codify Executive Order 14248 entitled "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections," giving it the full effect of law.	Introduced and referred to the Committees on House Administration, Judiciary, and Ways and Means. 3/31/2025
S. 1240	Defending America's Future Elections Act	Sen. Alex Padilla	Oppose	S. 1240 seeks to repeal Executive Order 14248, entitled "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections", and prohibit federal coordination and use of certain data sources to verify voter eligibility.	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration 4/1/2025
H.R. 22/S. 128	SAVE Act	Rep. Chip Roy/Sen. Mike Lee	Support	A bill to require documentary proof of US citizenship when registering to vote in federal elections.	H.R. 22 Received in the Senate 4/10/2025 House. On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 220 - 208 (Roll no. 102) 4/10/2025
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	Hearing Held, Senate Agriculture Committee 3/6/2025 Received in the Senate 1/28/2025

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
				management projects, and implementing forest management projects and other activities.	House, passed 279-141 1/23/2025
S.1462	Fix Our Forests Act	Sen. John Curtis	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.	Ordered to be favorably reported by Senate Agriculture Committee 10/21/2025 Hearing held, Senate Committee on Agriculture 5/6/2025

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

Phillip Peters District 1
Chris Parlier District 2
Jeff Flores District 3
David Couch District 4
Leticia Perez District 5



NANCY ANDERSON
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

November 13, 2025

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

The Honorable Adam Schiff
U.S. Senate
SD-B40B, Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S. 1462, Fix Our Forests Act - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Padilla and Senator Schiff,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for the Senate version of the *Fix Our Forests Act* (S. 1462), and to respectfully urge the inclusion of several critical provisions from the House-passed version, H.R. 471, that are essential to protecting our communities from catastrophic wildfire.

Kern County has experienced firsthand the devastating impacts of wildfire, including the 2024 Borel Fire, which burned over 59,000 acres and destroyed hundreds of structures. It was our largest wildfire on record. This follows the devastating Erskine Fire in 2016 and the French Fire in 2021. These events underscore the urgent need for comprehensive federal action to reduce hazardous fuels, restore forest health, and support local fire resilience.

We commend the Senate bill's focus on establishing the Wildfire Intelligence Center, emphasis on long-term collaboration, data sharing, and community preparedness. However, we believe the following provisions from H.R. 471 would significantly strengthen the legislation through operational effectiveness:

1. Fireshed Management Areas and a Dedicated Fireshed Center

The House bill's creation of "fireshed management areas" and a centralized Fireshed Center would provide a powerful framework for identifying high-risk landscapes and coordinating cross-jurisdictional fuel reduction efforts. This model would allow for more targeted, data-driven interventions in areas like Kern County's wildland-urban interface, where wildfire risk is most acute. The Fireshed Center would also serve as a hub for integrating federal, state, tribal, and local planning and ensure that resources are deployed where they are most needed.

2. Streamlined NEPA Compliance and Interagency Strike Teams

H.R. 471 proposes practical reforms to accelerate forest health projects by simplifying National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews and deploying interagency “strike teams” to expedite compliance with NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act. These changes would reduce bureaucratic delays that have historically hindered urgent fuel treatment work, enabling faster deployment of thinning, mechanical treatments, and prescribed burns, all tools that are critical to protecting Kern County’s communities and infrastructure.

3. Litigation Reform to Expedite Forest Restoration

The House version includes provisions to limit certain types of litigation that have delayed forest restoration projects. While maintaining environmental safeguards, these reforms would provide greater legal certainty and allow urgently needed treatments to proceed without prolonged court delays. For counties like ours, where fire seasons are growing longer and more destructive, this operational flexibility is essential to saving lives and property.

4. Biochar Demonstration Projects and Expanded Stewardship Contracting

H.R. 471’s inclusion of biochar pilot programs and expanded stewardship contracting authority would create new economic opportunities for rural communities while supporting forest health. Biochar production can reduce waste from thinning operations and sequester carbon, while stewardship contracts allow local contractors and fire crews to participate in long-term forest management, thus building local capacity and resilience.

5. Reforestation and Nursery Infrastructure Investments

While the Senate bill includes important seed supply and watershed provisions, the House version goes further by investing in reforestation capacity, seedling supply chains, and nursery infrastructure. These investments are critical to post-fire recovery and long-term forest regeneration, especially in areas like Kern County that have experienced repeated large-scale burns.

We believe that a final version of the *Fix Our Forests Act* that blends the Senate’s collaborative vision with the House’s operational tools will best serve the needs of wildfire-prone counties like ours. We appreciate your leadership on this issue and stand ready to support your efforts to advance this vital legislation. Thank you for your continued commitment to protecting California’s communities and natural resources.

Sincerely,



Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern House Delegation
Townsend Public Affairs



MEMORANDUM

To: Kern County Board of Supervisors Legislative Program Committee
Supervisor Phillip Peters, District 1
Supervisor Jeff Flores, District 3

From: Paul Yoder, Partner, SYASL
Dylan Elliott, Advocate, SYASL

Date: December 8, 2025

Subject: Legislative Program Committee State Affairs Report

As this will be the last LPC meeting in 2025, we think it prudent to “set the stage” for the upcoming legislative session year.

Political Landscape

2026 will be Gavin Newsom’s last year as California Governor. Regardless of what his future may hold, it is clear that he will focus on attempting to complete the best narrative he can relative to his tenure running the state. It will not be easy with a state budget deficit projected by the Legislative Analyst’s Office at \$18 billion.

Despite the projected deficit, don’t be surprised if the Governor proposes one or two new initiatives, or proposes additional funding for initiatives of his already launched. Policy-wise, it is likely that the Legislature and Governor will continue to explore new public policy in the areas of housing and land use, water, energy (even after last year’s significant pieces of legislation), insurance, bonds, artificial intelligence, November ballot initiatives, and more.

In the Senate, Senator Monique Limon has already been voted by her caucus to be the next Pro Tem. The official vote of all state senators will occur in early January when the Legislature is back in session. Given that this is the second year of the two-year cycle, many expect Senator Limon to announce new committee, subcommittee chairs, and overall committee membership prior to the holidays so that new committee chairs can oversee committees that must meet in January to hear “two-year bills” (bills that were introduced last year but did not move in 2025).

The Assembly remains relatively stable for now, with Speaker Rivas still in charge. However, Speaker Rivas is rumored to be considered a run for Congress if the courts uphold the voters approval of Proposition 50. If this occurs, then there will instantly be a battle to succeed him.

Lastly, 2026 is obviously an election year, which means dozens of legislators will be running for reelection to the Legislature. Election years often see members laying off some bills that they would normally vote for, which historically has helped counties in opposing legislation. Developments, and statements made in the race for California’s next Governor may also affect the arcs of various bills.

2026-27 State Budget

As mentioned above, there is another projected state budget deficit. However, this could be mitigated somewhat by early summer by several factors including, but not limited to the following:

- Additional taking of capital gains in late December and into the new year;
- Utilizing reserves (currently at approximately \$15 billion);
- More internal borrowing (the State's estimated month to month cash flow is approximately \$80 billion)
- Early budget actions in January to reduce the rate of spending especially in health and social services

Regardless, the Governor and the Legislature must begin to deal with the impacts to California from H.R. 1. At the time this memo is being prepared, it is not known whether Congress will extend health care subsidies. If they do, then it is status quo. If they don't, then 4 million Californians will be at least somewhat affected, and this will be an additional cost driver in the 2026-27 State Budget.

Dealing with H.R. 1 could mean the reopening of 1991 Realignment, which is the mechanism for counties to received money annually for health, behavioral health, and social services programs. More specifically, dealing with H.R. 1 could have significant impacts on counties that still maintain county hospitals, such as Kern County.

For Proposition 36, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP), Care Court and other programs for which additional funding to counties is vital for proper implementation, a lot will depend on the macro fiscal and political variables described above.

Proposed State Legislation

[Meadows Field Airport – SB 661 \(Hurtado\)](#)

SB 661 would, instead of directing sales tax revenue on jet fuel sales to the State's General Fund, would redirect revenue to the Aeronautics Account for airport and aviation purposes, bringing California into federal compliance and providing a financial windfall for select airports, described below. This bill proposes to allocate the redirected funding to specific types of airports based on their size and passenger boarding numbers, referred to as enplanements. The funds would be allocated for airports and aviation-related purposes. The formula contained in the bill would be advantageous to Meadow's Field in Bakersfield. SB 661 made it out of the Senate but the author decided to make it a two year bill to be heard next year in the Assembly.

[SB 222 \(Wiener\): Affordable Insurance and Climate Recovery Act](#)

This bill is also a two-year bill. It fell just one vote shy in the Senate Judiciary Committee; however, reconsideration was granted so the author could be back in 2026.

[AB 303 \(Addis\): Battery Energy Safety & Accountability Act](#)

This bill is technically a two-year bill, but – as currently written – seems to face a very uphill climb in 2026 if the author decides to try again. The bill to watch now is SB 283 (Laird), which would establish the Clean Energy Safety Act of 2025 and requires various provisions to address fire safety standards for energy storage systems.

[AB 283 \(Haney\): In-Home Supportive Services Employer-Employee Relations Act](#)

AB 283 has moved out of the Assembly with even a couple of republican votes on the floor. AB 283 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. This bill became a two-year bill very late in 2025.

Wildfire Insurance

Nothing significant to report on this issue now.

[AB 470 \(McKinnor\) – Caller of Last Resort \(COLR\)](#)

This bill proposed to establish a process that requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to allow a telephone corporation to relinquish its status as a “carrier of last resort” (COLR). AB 470 is one of the more controversial bills in 2025, especially for Californians living in the rural areas. Basically, AB 470 would facilitate the pulling of copper wire “land lines” for telephone service, etc. AB 470 stalled late in 2025. It is expected that the author will introduce a new bill on this topic.

Earmarks

SYASL is working the Kern County state legislative delegation on a new list of requests supplied by the County. Although it will be another tough year fiscally, we will always look for every opportunity on earmarks.