

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.

April 13, 2026 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: 254 377 660 413 17

Passcode: v7u3Do2e

Or join by Phone:

+1 831-296-3421

Phone conference ID: 954 461 748#

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 March 9, 2026 meeting – APPROVE

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

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

7. AB 2022 (Gonzalez), Disabled veteran homeowners exemption – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION

- 8. AB 2214 (Jackson), Proposed Community Reinvestment Account under the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF) – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 9. SB 948 (Arreguin), Firearms safety certificates – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 10. SB 88, Increased regulations on school transportation – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 11. AB 1421 (Wilson), Road usage charge technical advisory committee – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 12. AB 2445 (Hoover), State Capitol Annex and other public infrastructure projects – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 13. AB 2342 (Hoover), Gubernatorial authority to reverse parole decisions – RECEIVE AND FILE; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 14. Direction for new committee business at future meetings – DISCUSS; PROVIDE DIRECTION**
- 15. 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
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March 9, 2026 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: 271 027 752 932 88

Passcode: cv7kU9ET

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: JEFF FLORES AND PHILLIP PETERS PRESENT

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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4. Approve minutes from the February 9, 2026 meeting – APPROVED: SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND

5. Approve revised Legislative Program Committee meeting dates for calendar year 2026 – APPROVED: SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND

6. Update on Federal issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary – RECEIVED AND FILED; BEN GOLDEEN, REPRESENTING TOWNSEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS; SUPERVISOR PETERS GAVE DIRECTION FOR ACTION ON TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

7. Update on State issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary – RECEIVED AND FILED; PAUL YODER & DYLAN ELLIOTT REPRESENTING SHAW YODER ANTWHI

SCHMELZER & LANGE GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS; NO DIRECTION PROVIDED

8. Direction for new committee business at future meetings – DISCUSSED; NO NEW DIRECTION PROVIDED

9. ADJOURNMENT – ADJOURNED TO NEXT MEETING 4/13/2026 - 2:00 PM

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MEMORANDUM

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

From: Townsend Public Affairs
Ben Goldeen, Federal Advocacy Director
Spencer Street, Senior Associate
Christopher Townsend, President

Date: April 13, 2026

Subject: Legislative Program Committee Federal Affairs Report

March saw key developments in Washington, DC and overseas. This report provides an overview of key federal policy developments that may affect County priorities and operations. It summarizes progress in the Fiscal Year 2027 appropriations process, including the status of Kern County community project funding requests, and highlights major legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions underway in Washington, D.C. The report also outlines developments in areas of particular relevance to counties, including election administration, transportation and aviation safety, housing and homelessness, emergency management, agriculture, and environmental programs, and concludes with an update on the County's adopted federal legislative positions.

Fiscal Year 2027 Appropriations Update

Townsend Public Affairs, working in close coordination with county staff, submitted six community project funding requests to Kern County's congressional delegation during the month of March. A list of the projects, the requested dollar amount, and their status is below and will be updated as the project's progress.

Project	Delegation Member	Dollar Amount of Request	Status
Panama Road Rehabilitation Project	Valadao	\$4,898,770	Submitted, pending official notice
Gun Club Road Rehabilitation Project	Valadao	\$6,852,000	Pending official notice
California City Boulevard Extension Project	Obernolte, Fong, Padilla, Schiff	\$6,100,000	Pending official notice
Buena Vista Aquatic Recreation Area Pavement Restoration	Fong, Padilla, Schiff	\$3,000,000	Pending official notice

Emergency Communications Center Backup Generator	Valadao	\$1,000,000	Pending official notice
First Responder Emergency Communications Extreme Conditions Vehicle Equipment	Padilla, Schiff	\$500,000	Pending official notice

These projects are being vetted by the delegation members and the House and Senate Appropriations Committee. Official notice of project selection will be made by members of the House of Representatives on or before April 17, 2026 through postings on their official websites. Senators will post their list of projects on various dates throughout the months of April and May.

Federal Legislative Update

After Initial Failure in the House, President Revives Homeland Security Shutdown Deal

After the House [rejected](#) the Senate's plan to end the ongoing shutdown affecting the non-immigration enforcement agencies under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on March 27, passing their own measure to end the shutdown, negotiations seemed completely stalled until April 1.

On April 1, the President [hinted](#) at a possible deal, asking Congress to fund the immigration enforcement agencies under DHS for three years using a partisan reconciliation package, which would not need the 60 votes usually required in the Senate, and passing the Democrat-supported appropriations bill funding the non-immigration enforcement elements of DHS through the normal appropriations process. This was followed by a [joint statement](#) from Senate Majority Leader John Thune and House Speaker Mike Johnson affirming the plan.

With the President supporting the tactic, it is likely the Speaker has the required support to pass the legislation though it may require some level of bipartisan support. The House may also need to return to DC in order to pass the measure and send it to the President's desk.

Appropriators Head into Fiscal Year 2027, Await the President's Budget Request

Despite the ongoing partial government shutdown, appropriators in the House held a series of [hearings](#) on March 25 and 26, soliciting committee members' policy requests and general commentary on the forthcoming Fiscal Year 2027 bills. They are waiting for the President's Budget Request which, depending on the content, will serve as either a basis for negotiations or a statement of the Administration's values, before formally beginning the FY27 appropriations process. The Appropriations Committees in both the House and Senate have announced and begun to solicit requests from rank-and-file members and Senators for local projects and desired funding levels.

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), led by Director Russ Vought, previously [indicated](#) a March 30 target to release their budget request, later [delaying](#) it to April 3.

House Committee Marks Up the ALERT Act on Aviation Safety

On March 26, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a [markup](#) of an [amended](#) version of [HR 7613](#), the Airspace Location and Enhanced Risk Transparency (ALERT) Act of 2026, an aviation safety bill drafted following the deadly crash between a commercial airliner and an Army helicopter in January 2025. The House Committee on Armed Services [simultaneously](#) considered the amendment in the nature of a substitute (ANS) in their own markup.

The House legislation differs from the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation bill [S 2503](#), the ROTOR Act, which failed to pass the House under suspension on February 24 after the Department of Defense came out in [opposition](#) to the legislation.

Both bills expand the requirements for virtually all aircraft and helicopters to use Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) transponders to communicate their positions. The House's ALERT Act also contains a number of other provisions, including a controversial prohibition on the use of ADS-B data for revenue collection by airports and additional collision avoidance system requirements.

Senate Unanimously Passes Padilla's "Tyler's Law" for Opioid Screening in Emergency Rooms

On March 23, the Senate passed [S 921](#), Tyler's Law, by unanimous consent. The bill, co-authored by Senator Alex Padilla of California, would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide hospitals with guidance on fentanyl testing in emergency room drug screening tests.

The bill has a House companion led by California Representatives Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Ted Lieu, and Ohio Republican Bob Latta. The bill follows the passing of a Los Angeles teenager who died from fentanyl poisoning after being admitted to an emergency room where fentanyl was not included in the standard drug testing panel.

Fentanyl is the leading cause of overdose deaths in the United States, accounting for over 70% of all fatalities in 2023. Senator Padilla stated that increased testing and better testing practices can hopefully reduce the number of fatal overdoses.

Voter ID Bill Challenges Senate Calendar, Potential Impacts for Counties

[S 1383](#), a bill amended to become the SAVE America Act, saw significant debate in the Senate starting on March 17 following [pressure](#) from the President to consider it on the Senate floor. The bill is unlikely to meet the 60-vote threshold to end debate and proceed, though Senate Majority Leader John Thune [agreed](#) to open debate on the bill, which, due to Senate rules, is unlimited. A group of conservative supporters of the bill has vowed to continue debate for as long as necessary to pass the legislation.

The bill would require all current voter rolls be reset and require citizens to re-register in person with either a passport or birth certificate. It contains no advance appropriations to provide counties, which administer most voter rolls and vital records across the country, with additional funding to re-register and complete enhanced eligibility verification for voters. The bill also requires matching identification to be presented when a voter goes to cast their ballot. Democrats argue that the bill would disenfranchise large numbers of Americans who do not have a passport

or would have to locate both their birth certificate and any name change documents made following marriage.

House Republicans Meet in Florida for Annual Policy Conference

House Republicans [held](#) their annual policy conference the week of March 9, seeking to establish a unified agenda for the remainder of the year in the lead-up to midterm elections this November. Leadership met early in the month without all their members and [committed](#) to pursuing a second reconciliation package, the same legislative vehicle as HR 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act/Working Families Tax Cut Act. The Republican Study Committee previously [released](#) their [draft reconciliation framework](#), titled Making the American Dream Affordable Again. House Budget Committee Chairman Arrington, who worked on the framework, [discussed](#) additional cost-shifting to states and fraud-prevention in the legislation to reduce federal spending.

The President has not indicated he needs Congress to enact the remaining components of his agenda, with one exception, the SAVE Act, a voter ID bill over which he is [pushing](#) to end the filibuster in the Senate, and [vowed](#) to block any legislation from moving forward until the SAVE Act is passed.

For their part, House Republican Leadership is [hopeful](#) they can move both a larger reconciliation package, some version of the housing policy legislation moving through the Senate, and highly specific bills to shore up incumbents before the midterms, even if debate on specific policies is ongoing.

Housing Policy Bill Progresses, House GOP Pushes for Conference Committee

A compromise housing policy bill [progressed](#) in the Senate on March 10 and [passed](#) on March 12, though conservative Republicans in the House and Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing Chairman Mike Floor are [warning](#) a conference committee may be required to finalize it.

[S 2651](#), the ROAD to Housing Act was unanimously passed out of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs last year and rolled into the 2026 National Defense Authorization Act. It was [struck](#) by House Financial Services French Hill who offered his own bipartisan bill in 2026, [HR 6644](#), the Housing for the 21st Century Act, which passed the House on February 9. The bill was further [amended](#) in the Senate and renamed [the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act](#), as the amendment combines the two bills and adds some other policy priorities, including a temporary ban on the Federal Reserve creating a central bank digital currency.

The primary difference between the two bills is philosophical, with the ROAD to Housing Act focusing on how federal government action can better support affordable housing development and the Housing for the 21st Century Act focusing on inducing private investment and increasing programmatic flexibility.

The combined legislation introduces a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) incentive program with a penalty based on a rolling national average, reauthorizes and significantly reforms HOME Investment Partnerships to fill funding gaps and enable private development, makes modest reforms to federal environmental review requirements (NEPA), and starts a grant program for Planning and Implementation projects. The combined bill contains no additional funding or advance appropriations.

Congress Moves Towards Brownfields Reauthorization

The House Energy and Commerce [held](#) an initial hearing considering four legislative packages to reauthorize the [Brownfields](#) program under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The program provides funding and technical support to communities looking to redevelop contaminated sites.

The proposed reforms to Brownfields include increasing focus on the use of contaminated sites to develop artificial intelligence (AI) data centers, a proposal that would allow private companies to access and compete for EPA funding if they co-owned the property with a public entity, cost sharing arrangement restructuring, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permitting reforms, and changes to spending levels.

The Administration and EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin have been supportive of Brownfields since taking office last year, Congress is also eager to reauthorize the program, though may face challenges given time constraints in the lead up to the November election.

House Agriculture Committee Advances Farm Bill

The House Committee on Agriculture held [markups](#) of a new [Farm Bill](#) on March 3 and 4. The bill covers agricultural subsidies, commodities market regulations, and nutrition assistance programs such as CalFresh. It normally comes before Congress once every five years, but has not been fully reauthorized since 2018, and was last modified by [HR 1](#), the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which introduced new cost-sharing arrangements and limited eligibility for certain nutrition assistance programs.

The markups addressed the potential impacts of HR 1's changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh). Under HR 1, the State of California will be subject to increased administrative cost-sharing and a portion of benefits costs will be calculated based on the State's payment error rate. A group of members argued for further delays on the cost-sharing provisions or for a more gradual increase in state costs, but the proposed amendments were not adopted.

President Signs Executive Order on Federal Election Procedures

On March 31, the President signed an [Executive Order](#) (EO) titled "Ensuring Citizenship Verification and Integrity in Federal Elections," which seeks to implement some of the Administration's priorities related to election security and restrict mail-in voting.

The EO follows the Senate declining to advance [S 1383](#), a modified Veteran's bill that now includes the SAVE America Act, the President's voter ID legislation requiring in-person voter registration with either a passport or birth certificate among other measures.

The EO directs the Postmaster General of the United States Postal Service (USPS) to engage in rulemaking to codify mail-in ballot requirements, communicate with State Secretaries of State in advance of the election, track and provide approved lists of mail-in/absentee voters, assign absentee voters a unique barcode for their ballots, and provide technical assistance to states with mail-in voting programs to ensure security.

The EO further directs the Secretaries of Commerce and Homeland Security and the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration to establish the infrastructure necessary to compile and transmit a state citizenship list to all the states in advance of a federal election. The

Department of Homeland Security already maintains a database under the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program, which states can use to [verify](#) an individual's eligibility to vote or receive other federal benefits.

Some of the EO's provisions related to mail-in voting [appear](#) to go beyond current federal practice, while other provisions touch on responsibilities already addressed in existing federal law. States are already required to verify voter eligibility at the time of registration and, in some cases, may use DHS systems as part of that process.

President Extends FEMA Review Council

On March 24, the President signed an [Executive Order \(EO\)](#) titled "Further Continuance of the Federal Emergency Management Review Agency Review Council." The EO extended the existence of the Council until 10 days after its required report to the President is submitted or May 29, 2026.

The Council was created in January 2025 by EO [14180](#) and was due to produce recommendations for the President to reform the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by July, 2025, but has received multiple extensions since. In December 2025, a draft report of their recommendations was [leaked](#) and their final meeting was abruptly canceled.

The leaked report [recommended](#) significantly downsizing the Agency and shifting many of its core responsibilities to states, having FEMA only provide technical assistance and administer block grants made to states for disaster response and mitigation efforts.

DOT and FAA Suspend Use of Visual Separation for Airplanes and Helicopters

On March 18, the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) [announced](#) the publication of a [general notice](#) to suspend the use of visual separation between airplanes and helicopters. This follows a year-long investigation into the causes of the crash between a passenger plane and a military helicopter in early 2025 over Washington, DC.

The [new notice](#) requires air traffic controllers to maintain affirmative radar contact with helicopters, regardless of military operational status. The Department of Defense (DoD) has [pushed back](#) against the ROTOR Act, a draft bill that would require military helicopters to use civilian visible transponders while training in US airspace and make other reforms, expressing concern it would inhibit covert operations and training. It is unclear whether or not DoD/Military aircraft will be required to abide by the updated general notice.

Department of Transportation Announces Supplemental Funding for Public Transportation in FIFA World Cup Host Cities

On March 3, Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Sean Duffy [announced](#) formula allocations of \$100 million in supplemental funding for public transportation to support cities hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup games.

[HR 1748](#), the last appropriations minibus for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, provided funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), allocated on a formula basis calculated based on stadium capacity and games to be played.

FTA has [released](#) other resources and technical assistance intended to support local governments and public transportation agencies preparing for major events, including the 2028

Olympics. Adjacent jurisdictions have continued to advocate for funding given the ancillary impacts they may face.

HUD Proposes Rule Allowing for Certain Jurisdictions to Impose Work Requirements and Time Limits on Housing Assistance

On March 2, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) (NPRM) in the Federal Register to allow certain jurisdictions to implement work requirements and other conditions on federal housing assistance recipients.

The NPRM would allow local housing authorities and private property owners renting to tenants using federal housing assistance, including Housing Choice Vouchers, Project Based Vouchers, and Project-Based Rental Assistance, to impose work requirements and a 24-month time limit on program participation.

In order to place the restrictions, a jurisdiction must meet certain requirements to be considered by HUD as “performing well,” including if it is not in receivership and is not designated as a troubled performer under the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS), Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), or Small Rural PHA Assessment, as applicable. PHAs that are designated as troubled performers under any of these assessments would not be permitted to adopt work requirements or time limits.

This follows previous action and an [op-ed](#) by HUD Secretary Scott Turner, stating the Administration’s intention to enforce self-sufficiency standards for federal housing assistance recipients.

County Federal Legislative Positions

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 7437	Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act	Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet	Support	A bill to improve federal transportation programs by ensuring funding reaches communities efficiently and is used where it delivers the greatest public benefit	Referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure 2/9/2026

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 7296	SAVE America Act	Rep. Chip Roy	Support	A bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require proof of United States citizenship to register an individual to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.	Passed the House as S.1383 by yeayay vote 218-213 2/11/2026
S.1272	Trade Review Act	Sen. Maria Cantwell	Support	A bill to provide for notification to, and review by, Congress with respect to the imposition of duties.	Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. 4/3/2025
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 Yeas and Nays vote 81-15 8/1/2025 On passage passed the House by the Yeas and Nays: 218 – 206 6/25/2025

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
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
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

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
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 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
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

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R. 3109	REFINER Act	Rep. Bob Latta	Support	This bill requires the Department of Energy to direct the National Petroleum Council to publish a report on petrochemical refineries located in the United States.	House. On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays 230-176 (Roll no. 303) 11/20/2025

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

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



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 16, 2026

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Valadao,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for community project funding for the Kern County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) energy and communications project. This investment is essential to protect public safety and strengthen the reliability of the County's emergency response infrastructure.

Kern County's emergency communications system depends on equipment that is now well beyond its service life, including a backup generator that is more than 40 years old. This generator poses a significant risk of failure during major power outages, which would jeopardize the County's ability to maintain uninterrupted 911 operations. Replacing this unit is critical to ensuring that law enforcement, fire services, and emergency medical responders can continue to communicate during wildfires, earthquakes, severe weather events, and other large-scale incidents.

The project also includes the acquisition of a modern Computer-Aided Dispatch platform. Upgrading to a current system will improve call processing and enhance real-time information sharing between dispatchers and field personnel. It will strengthen coordination between the Kern County Sheriff's Office and the Bakersfield Police Department by allowing both agencies to access shared visibility of active calls and available resources. These improvements will reduce response times, support coordinated decision-making, and increase the overall resilience of the County's emergency communications network.

Thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to public safety.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Phillip Peters, written in a cursive style.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Kern County General Services Division
Kern County Fire Department
Kern County Sheriff's Office
Townsend Public Affairs

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

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



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

March 26, 2026

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

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Vince 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: H.R. 7437, the Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act – SUPPORT

Dear Congressional delegates,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for the *Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act* (H.R. 7437). This bipartisan bill would make significant improvements to federal transportation programs to help more counties like our access formula funding for crucial transportation projects.

Counties are crucial players in our nation's surface transportation systems, **owning 44 percent of public road miles and 38 percent of bridges. This includes 27 percent of Federal-aid highway miles and thousands of "on-system" bridges.** Here in Kern County, we own approximately 3,300 miles of public roadway and 137 bridges. These assets are integral parts of our regional transportation system, connecting communities and moving the people and goods that power our economy.

Despite our significant ownership and responsibilities, counties struggle to reliably access federal formula transportation dollars, which comprise the bulk of federal transportation spending. **Analysis shows that all local governments, not just counties, receive less than 15 percent of federal formula funding.** This limited access to formula funding – coupled with rising input costs, capacity

constraints and state-imposed financial restrictions – has created significant disparities in the condition between county-owned and other locally owned infrastructure and state-owned infrastructure. Nationally, for example, locally owned bridges are twice as likely to be classified as being in “poor condition.” These trends are reflected here in Kern County, where we own 30 percent¹ of all poor condition bridges located in the county.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) made record investments in transportation infrastructure, but due to most of the funding moving through the formula program, many counties did not reap the benefits. In the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, counties need more reliable access to formula dollars to work to reduce these disparities and invest in the important assets that we own and maintain.

The bipartisan BASICS Act provides a strong framework for how to do that. This bill, which is endorsed by organizations representing thousands of local government leaders – including the National Association of Counties and the National Association of County Engineers – would increase the share of federal formula funding that is available to counties while also making necessary process improvements to ensure formula funds reach locally selected projects.

Specifically, this bill would:

- Grow the versatile Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program, which provides flexible funding that benefits both states and locals.
- Provide counties and other local governments with access to federal formula funding for bridges and safety infrastructure.
- Support metropolitan planning organizations and fortify project selection authority to ensure locally selected projects properly advance with federal funding.
- Fund rural/regional transportation planning organizations to boost the capacity of rural counties and improve their access to formula funding.
- Strengthen the intergovernmental partnership by promoting increased coordination between states, counties and other units of local government.

Kern believes that the provisions in the BASICS Act are important for ensuring that counties retain a baseline level of access to federal funding in the next reauthorization bill, especially if there will be an emphasis on consolidating discretionary opportunities and prioritizing formula funding. Importantly, counties and states are partners in delivering infrastructure, not competitors for resources. **As such, Kern believes that Congress can and should develop a bill that keeps states whole while improving access for counties and other local governments.**

1

<https://explorer.naco.org/?dset=Bridges&ind=Share%20of%20County%20Owned%20Structurally%20Deficient%20Bridges>

As Congress continues to develop the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, the Kern County Board of Supervisors urges our delegates to cosponsor H.R. 7437 and to ask leadership in the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee to include provisions from the BASICS Act in its base text.

Sincerely,

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

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Kern County Public Works Department
National Association of Counties
Townsend Public Affairs

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



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 16, 2026

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Valadao,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for Fiscal Year 2027 community project funding for the Panama Road Rehabilitation Project. This project addresses a critical segment of Panama Road between Chevalier Road and State Route 184. The corridor is a vital east–west connector for residents, agricultural operations, school transportation, and commercial activity in southeastern Kern County. Years of heavy use have left the roadway in deteriorated condition that now requires full rehabilitation to maintain safe and reliable travel.

Kern County proposes a comprehensive reconstruction plan that includes hot mix asphalt overlay, targeted dig-outs, and full depth road reconstruction where needed. The project will also install thermoplastic striping and pavement markings that will improve visibility and safety for motorists. Engineering estimates place the total cost at \$4,898,770, including cold planning, roadway excavation, aggregate base, asphalt placement, traffic control, stormwater compliance, finishing work, water supply development, mobilization, and a contingency necessary to responsibly manage construction risk.

Panama Road supports essential community and economic functions. It links rural neighborhoods to jobs and services in Bakersfield and provides a primary route for agricultural workers and goods moving through the region. Current roadway conditions create safety concerns, slow travel times, and increase vehicle wear for residents who rely on this corridor daily. Improving this roadway will promote safer mobility, enhance regional goods movement, and support continued economic stability for the unincorporated communities it serves.

Federal investment in this project will allow Kern County to move forward with a long-overdue rehabilitation that the local community strongly supports. The County has demonstrated readiness to proceed and has developed a clear scope of work that will deliver tangible improvements for residents and businesses. This is precisely the kind of transportation investment that strengthens rural infrastructure and supports long-term economic vitality.

Thank you for your consideration of Kern County's request. I appreciate your ongoing commitment to improving infrastructure and transportation safety throughout the Central Valley. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

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

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Kern County Public Works Department
Townsend Public Affairs



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

ITEM #6

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: April 13, 2026

Subject: Legislative Program Committee State Affairs Report

Committee Hearings Begin

As of March 25th, all of the bills that authors intend to have heard during this legislative session were formally in print (bills will continue to be amended as a result of authors' negotiations with first house policy committee chairs). Shortly after, the Legislature went on a brief Recess before their return on Monday April 6th for what is a packed April. Every bill introduced this year that has a fiscal impact on the State must be heard by May 1st with any remaining bills needing to be heard by May 8th. The total number of bills introduced in 2026 is just shy of 1,800, which means it is a similar number that require hearing this month.

Amidst the extensive policy hearings that will be taking place, budget committees and their subcommittees in both houses will continue to hear items pertaining to the state budget, including impacts to the state created by implementing H.R. 1. As such, the California State Association of Counties has presented their statewide budget ask to the Legislature and Governor's Office. In total, CSAC is seeking \$1.9 billion in fiscal year 2026-27 ramping up to \$4.5 billion in fiscal year 2027-28. Of the \$1.9 billion being sought this year, \$761 million would be for indigent care services, \$500 million for counties with public hospitals like Kern County, \$373 million for implementation of new eligibility requirements, and \$224 million for county behavioral health departments.

Perhaps the most important update since this Legislative Program Committee last met is the introduction of [SB 1329 \(McNerney\)](#), which the Kern County Board of Supervisors has already moved to oppose. In short, SB 1329 would create an artificial formula for the assessment of large-scale solar projects that would favor project proponents and owners at the expense of the local jurisdictions in which they operate. This effort, being run in the final year before the sunset of the current property tax exclusion from which large scale solar has benefited for years, would set a deeply troubling precedent that would further harm Kern County and other local governments who have been significant contributors to the development of California's clean energy availability. SYASL has hit the ground running on behalf of the County in opposing this bill alongside statewide affiliate groups and individual jurisdictions that share the County's opposition to this proposal.

Aside from SB 1329, below is a list of bills consistent with those we provided in our previous update with a few new additions. As noted before, there are roughly 1,800 new bills in 2026. As such, this is not an all-encompassing list, but we believe that the bills listed below are among the most important for Kern County and its residents to be aware of at this point in time.

New Legislation of Note

[SB 1289 \(Hurtado\)](#) – Will be amended to include language that would require non-RCRA hazardous waste generated in California and destined for land disposal be disposed of only in landfills regulated under Subtitle C of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), ensuring disposal occurs in facilities designed for hazardous waste; SYASL staff believes this could support operation at the Buttonwillow Clean Harbors Facility.
SYASL Recommendation: Support once language negotiated with the first policy committee in print

[SB 1404 \(Stern\)](#) – Would reinstate the fire prevention fee, a currently suspended charge on homeowners of structures in the State Responsibility Area, from January 1, 2027 through January 1, 2031.
SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[SB 1411 \(Stern\)](#) – Would authorize the California High Speed Rail Authority to enter into new funding commitments with the above-described moneys outside of the Merced to Bakersfield segment in any amount for additional activities that maximize the efficiency of delivering the project.
SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[AB 2606 \(Ellis\)](#) – creates a formal partnership between the Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division and California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) to research and test cleaner energy technologies using existing oil and gas infrastructure.
SYASL Recommendation: Support

Previously Shared Legislation of Note

Wildfire Insurance

[AB 1680 \(Calderon\)](#) – Would enact broad reform and expansion of the California FAIR Plan. Specifically, the bill would expand coverage to water damage and on-property liability, direct the Department of Insurance to hire more FAIR Plan dedicated staff, expanding public access to the Governing Committee, develop a capital and liquidity management plan, among other reform.
SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[SB 982 \(Wiener\)](#) – Would authorize the Attorney General to bring a civil action against a party responsible for climate-attributable damage to recover losses suffered by the California FAIR Plan Association, funds borrowed from the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank, or costs to insurance policyholders arising from a past climate disaster.
Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes SB 982.

[SB 876 \(Padilla\)](#) – Aims to implement broad reform in the insurance claim and payout process. Specifically, this bill would require a Department of Insurance approved disaster recovery plan for insurers, increasing penalties on insurers for violations during declared emergencies, expanding upfront payments, requiring increased updates to policyholders from insurers to address adjustment delays, among other things.
SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[AB 1795 \(Gipson\)](#) – States the intent of the Legislature to set forth standards and protocols to ensure the health and safety of residents and for the proper handling of smoke damaged residential property insurance claims caused by wildfires.
SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[SB 1301 \(Allen\)](#) – Requires property insurers to provide a notice of nonrenewal six months in advance and detail specific reasons for nonrenewal along with granting the policyholder the opportunity to make necessary repairs or adjustments to their property in order to maintain coverage.

SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

Oil and Gas Bonding

[AB 2716 \(Avila Farias\)](#) – Would repeal the prohibition on self-insurance or corporate guarantee as an acceptable form of financial assurance by a well operator. Additionally, it would exempt those who purchase a well solely for the purpose of plugging and abandoning from bonding and financial assurance requirements.

SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

[AB 2461 \(Hart\)](#) – Expands existing bonding requirements to a person who acquires, or intends to acquire, the right to control a well or production facility. This includes, but is not limited to, the direct or indirect sale or exchange in a single or series of related transactions by the stockholders of the operator of more than 50% of the voting stock of the operator and a liquidation or dissolution of the operator, among other transactions. Additionally, the bill would eliminate the existing production level exemption of bonding requirements.

SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

Healthcare

[AB 1547 \(Bains\)](#) – Would require the University of California, on or before January 1, 2028, to complete a feasibility study, and reasonably attempt to consult with local stakeholders, to determine the steps necessary to establish a branch campus of an existing University of California medical school in the County of Kern.

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors supports AB 1547.

[AB 1852 \(Bains\)](#) – Creates a secondary pathway to establish a medical school in Kern County if the University of California does not take formal steps to do so by July 1, 2027. Specifically, this bill authorizes California State University, Bakersfield and the Kern Community College District to form the Kern Medical Education Authority, a local public entity empowered to operate a medical school, hire staff, issue bonds, and grant MD degrees upon accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education.

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors supports AB 1852.

Human Resources/Employment

[AB 1564 \(Ahrens\)](#) – Would prohibit a public employer from questioning a public employee or their representative (as specified) regarding communications made in confidence between an employee and an employee representative within the scope of the recognized employee organization's representation.

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes AB 1564.

Carrier of Last Resort (COLR)

[AB 2443 \(McKinnor\)](#) – Would require the PUC to develop a reasonable process for a carrier of last resort to be relieved by January 1, 2029, of that status in areas where customers have other options for voice service.

Note: This bill is very similar to AB 470 (McKinnor) which was opposed by the Kern Board of Supervisors and was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee. There is a pending rulemaking process before the PUC, and the author has indicated a desire to let that play out with this bill serving as a vehicle depending on that outcome.

SYASL Recommendation: Monitor

Two Year Bills of Note

[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. The would allocate redirected funding to specific types of airports based on their size and passenger boarding numbers. 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.

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors supports SB 661.

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

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. Although this bill is far along in the process, it stalled last year and was placed on the Senate Inactive File.

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors changed its position from Oppose to Support if Amended. Before moving the bill to the Inactive File, the author amended the bill to require that the state will assume full responsibility for the nonfederal share of cost increases resulting from statewide bargaining agreements, something explicitly asked for in the Board of Supervisors' Support if Amended letter to the author.

[AB 1383 \(McKinnor\): Public Employees' Retirement Benefits](#)

This bill modifies the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA) to increase pensionable compensation, defined benefit retirement formulas, and contribution cost sharing. *Kern County staff have estimated that the fiscal impact of this bill could result in \$13 million in costs annually.*

Note: The Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes AB 1383.

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Leticia Perez District 5



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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March 25, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento CA, 95814

RE: County H.R. 1 Budget Request

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge the State to take appropriate steps to ensure counties are not disproportionately affected by the implementation of H.R. 1. Safeguarding a stable and reliable safety net for our residents continues to be a central priority for the Board. Toward that end, I write to share a multi-year H.R. 1 budget request that was developed jointly with counties and county association partners.

H.R. 1 will increase county health and human services program costs due to expanded demand for indigent medical care, direct cost shifts to counties, increased county eligibility workload, and changes to Medi-Cal financing. Analyses by the California State Association of Counties suggests that the impact of these changes could result in county costs ranging from \$6.0 billion to \$9.5 billion annually at full implementation. As a result, counties have collectively developed a multi-year request for state funding of **\$1.9 billion in 2026-27 and \$4.5 billion in 2027-28** to address these impacts. This request is outlined below and further detailed in the coalition H.R. 1 County Budget Multi-Year Request attachments.

County Indigent Care – \$761 million in 2026-27 and \$2.4 billion in 2027-28 and ongoing

Counties are mandated to provide indigent care to low-income Californians who have no other source of health care. When the Affordable Care Act was implemented and demand for indigent care dramatically reduced, the Realignment funding provided to counties to meet this mandate was redirected by the state. With more than one million people estimated to lose Medi-Cal coverage because of H.R. 1, California residents will come to counties for these services and counties currently do not have a funding source to provide this care on behalf of the state. Of those expected to lose coverage, an estimated 417,000 residents will likely seek and qualify for indigent care services. Counties need the State to provide funding for state-mandated basic health care for these 417,000 residents. The indigent care funding request also includes \$200 million in one-time funding in 2026-27 to rebuild the infrastructure that will be needed to provide this care and \$50 million in ongoing funding for public health programs to provide services to individuals who lose health care coverage.

Public Hospital Systems – \$500 million in 2026-27 and \$850 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

County public hospital systems rely on a funding mechanism known as state-directed payments to cover the non-federal share of costs for providing inpatient Medi-Cal services. H.R. 1 reduces the ability of states to use these payments, which will significantly reduce public hospital system revenues. Counties request funding to begin stabilizing public hospital system revenues and protect patient care.

County Eligibility – \$373 million in 2026-27 and \$402 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

The county eligibility workforce plays an essential role in helping individuals and families obtain and retain Medi-Cal coverage and CalFresh benefits. Counties face a substantial increase in workload because of the new Medi-Cal community engagement requirements, more frequent Medi-Cal redeterminations, and reinstated and expanded CalFresh work requirements. The eligibility request reflects the increased funding that will be needed for counties to implement the new eligibility requirements and maximize the number of people who can obtain exemptions or meet the work requirements to keep their health care and nutrition assistance. It also includes two budget neutral CalFresh items: (1) provide a temporary match waiver allowing counties to draw down full federal funding; and

(2) hold counties harmless for penalties occurring outside of county control which are exacerbated by H.R. 1.

County Behavioral Health – \$224 million in 2026-27 and \$828 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

In addition to Medi-Cal specialty mental health services and substance use disorder services, counties provide behavioral health coverage to other individuals. Demand for these services is likely to increase as individuals lose eligibility for Medi-Cal. This budget request will support counties in providing services to this population.

In summary, the county H.R. 1 multi-year budget request is intended to mitigate direct harm to our residents who will lose health and nutrition services. Providing these needed resources will help prevent cuts to other critical services that counties provide. This comprehensive multi-year request addresses the wide-ranging impacts to county health and human services programs. With this funding, counties will be able to maximize the number of individuals who retain Medi-Cal and CalFresh, rebuild county indigent care programs to serve individuals who lose health coverage, and protect irreplaceable patient care that is provided by public hospitals.

Addressing the health care and nutrition assistance needs of individuals impacted by H.R. 1 *must* be a fundamental, structural element of the state's budget in 2026-27 and for years to come. We have attached information that details this multi-year budget request. Kern County is eager to work with your Administration and the Legislature to find fiscal and policy solutions to protect our residents. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

Attachments:

County H.R. 1 Budget Request Summary
County H.R. 1 Budget Request Analysis

cc: Nathan Barankin, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Nathan.barankin@gov.ca.gov
Christine Aurre, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Christine.aurre@gov.ca.gov
Nani Coloretti, Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor
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Kim Johnson, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
Kim.johnson@chhs.ca.gov
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange



Total H.R. 1 County Multi-Year Budget Request

H.R. 1 represents a fundamental shift of fiscal responsibility for safety net programs from the federal government to states and counties.

The table below outlines California Counties' Multi-Year Budget Request for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 fiscal years.

	2026-27	2027-28
Indigent Care *	\$761 million	\$2.4 billion
Funds state mandated, subsistence level care assuming 33% percent of those losing Medi-Cal coverage due to work requirements seek this care and are eligible for services.		
Public Hospital Systems	\$500 million	\$850 million
Begins stabilizing public hospital system revenues and protecting patient care.		
County Eligibility	\$373 million	\$402 million
Funds implementation of new eligibility requirements for Medi-Cal and CalFresh and robust screening and supports to maximize the number of individuals who can retain coverage and assistance.		
County Behavioral Health	\$224 million	\$828 million
Funds behavioral health services for individuals who will lose Medi-Cal coverage and seek services from counties.		
TOTAL	\$1.9 billion	\$4.5 billion

** Note that the indigent care request includes \$200 million in 2026-27 in one-time infrastructure building funds, to be available for expenditure over three years, and \$50 million in each year for increased county public health costs to provide services to those who lose health care coverage.*

Key Facts

- This request assumes that county indigent care programs serve 33% of the people who lose Medi-Cal coverage due to community engagement requirements.
- Counties would provide indigent care services to approximately 417,000 people.
- Roughly 880,000 people who lose state Medi-Cal coverage due to work requirements would likely have no health care coverage.



Healthcare



Food



California Counties' H.R. 1 Multi-Year Budget Request

In order to ensure that individuals and families continue to have access to medical care and nutrition benefits, the state budget must provide a significant, multi-year investment to counties to prevent critical harm from occurring in California's communities.

- In February 2026, county partners collectively released an **H.R. 1 Fact Sheet** detailing a range of \$6 billion to \$9.5 billion annual fiscal impact at full implementation to counties. This fact sheet provides a range of costs due to the uncertainty related to the actual number of Californians who will go to counties for services they would have otherwise received from the state.
- Since the fact sheet's release, county partners have worked to educate legislators, the administration and the public on the essential work counties will be required to perform on behalf of the state to meet the needs of California communities as they begin to implement H.R. 1.
- Providing resources to mitigate the detrimental impacts of H.R. 1 is a structural part of the state's budget and one of the overarching issues that must be addressed this budget year and the years moving forward.
- Counties are not able to address these impacts on our own and a true partnership over a multi-year period with the state is needed in order to prevent our safety net from crumbling.
- California counties request \$1.9 billion in 2026-27 and \$4.5 billion in 2027-28 to address the impacts of H.R. 1. See the additional coalition document for a more detailed description and analysis of the budget resources needed for counties to continue serving our communities.



Healthcare



Food



County Approach to H.R. 1 Implementation and Funding Needs

H.R. 1 will result in a large number of people seeking indigent medical care from counties and substantial financial impacts to counties due to changes to Medi-Cal financing, increased county workload, and cost shifts. Since the passage of H.R. 1, the California State Association of Counties and affiliated organizations – County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), County Medical Services Program (CMSP), California Association of Public Hospitals & Health Systems (CAPH), County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA), Urban Counties of California (UCC), and Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) – have worked to analyze the programmatic impacts, quantify the costs likely to be imposed by H.R. 1 and to develop a responsible multi-year budget request to implement the various requirements of H.R. 1.

In January, counties released a [county coalition document](#) that outlines our advocacy principles in response to H.R. 1. These include:

- **Maintain Coverage and Benefits** - Counties support efforts to maximize the ability to keep people enrolled in state and federal safety net programs using systems with existing and proven competencies like the county eligibility workforce.
- **Fund New Requirements** - Counties support ongoing and stable revenues for any new or expanded administrative requirements and service responsibilities and to address federal funding cuts.
- **Keep Existing Commitments** - Counties oppose reduced funding for existing county programs and responsibilities, unfunded expansions of existing mandates, or new unfunded mandates.



Healthcare



Food

- **Increase Efficiency** - Counties support streamlining efforts that can create program coordination, improve accuracy, and support county staff in managing increased workload.
- **Provide Relief and Reduce Burdens** - Counties support appropriate relief from existing mandates where possible and reducing state-level requirements that add costly administrative burdens.

H.R. 1 and the State Budget

Funding for health and human services programs such as Medi-Cal and CalFresh is second only to K-14 Education/Proposition 98 funding as a share of the state budget and exceeds Proposition 98 when factoring in federal funds. Addressing the impacts on Medi-Cal, including providing care to those who may lose coverage, as well as CalFresh, will be a fundamental, structural element of the development of the 2026-27 state budget. The following information provides a more detailed description and analysis of county costs and the services that will be provided with this funding.

	2026-27	2027-28
Indigent Care *	\$761 million	\$2.4 billion
Public Hospital Systems	\$500 million	\$850 million
County Eligibility	\$373 million	\$402 million
County Behavioral Health	\$224 million	\$828 million
TOTAL	\$1.9 billion	\$4.5 billion

** Note that the indigent care request includes \$200 million in 2026-27 in one-time infrastructure building funds, to be available for expenditure over three years, and \$50 million in each year for increased county public health costs to provide services to those who lose health care coverage.*

Analysis of County H.R. 1 Budget Request for Community Health and Nutrition Services for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 Fiscal Years

The requirements of H.R. 1 will have a generational impact on the relationship between the state and California counties. Fundamentally, this law shifts the delivery and cost of providing healthcare and nutrition services from the federal government to the state and counties. Therefore, addressing the health care and nutrition assistance needs of individuals impacted by the H.R. 1 changes to Medi-Cal and CalFresh will be a fundamental, structural element of the state's budget in 2026-27 and moving forward.

Counties analyzed the programmatic impacts of H.R. 1 on county administered state programs—such as Medi-Cal and CalFresh—as well as the downstream effects on other county services and subsequently estimated the associated costs of these changes.

In developing cost estimates, counties relied on estimates from the state regarding the number of people who will be subject to new H.R. 1 policies, such as new Medi-Cal community engagement requirements and reinstated CalFresh work requirements. Counties also relied on estimates from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) regarding the number of people who are anticipated to lose Medi-Cal coverage.

County Indigent Care Programs

Background: Historically, counties provided indigent care to low-income Californians who had no other source of health care. Those county indigent care programs are only required to provide basic, subsistence-level health care, not comprehensive health insurance. Providing such care is mandated by the state, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 17000. To fund those state-mandated services, counties were provided 1991 Realignment funding.



Total Budget Request: \$761 million in 2026-27 and \$2.4 billion in 2027-28 and ongoing (\$200 million of 2026-27 amount is one-time)

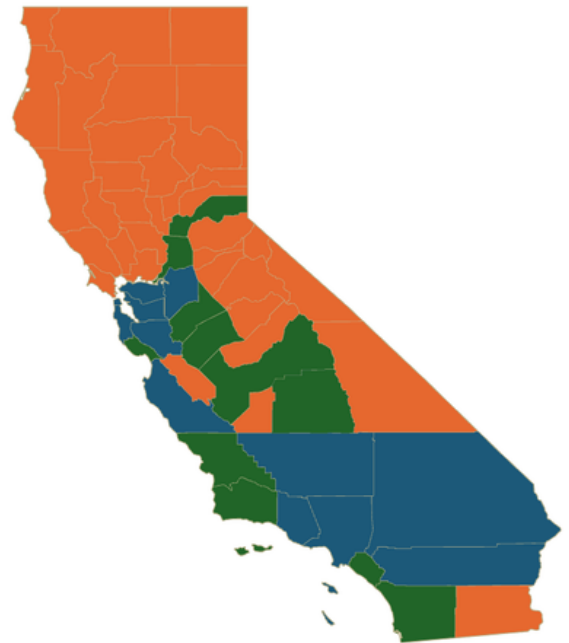


After the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which expanded coverage through Medi-Cal and Covered California, county indigent care programs were dramatically scaled down. The state began annually redirecting 1991 Health Realignment funding that had historically supported indigent care—through AB 85 (Chapter 24, Statutes of 2013)—to other purposes. The state also reduced the rate of growth for 1991 Realignment revenues deposited into the health subaccount, further diminishing the funding available to counties for indigent care and public health.

Counties are not obligated to provide services to individuals who are undocumented and behavioral health services are not included in the indigent care mandate. The eligibility requirements, cost sharing requirements, and benefit levels varied considerably between counties.

Counties provide indigent care programs using three models:

- **County Medical Services Program (CMSP)** – 35 rural and semi-rural counties collectively contract with clinics and hospitals to provide indigent care.
- **Article 13 Counties** - 11 counties provide indigent care either directly, through contracted providers, or through hybrid models.
- **Public Hospital System Counties** – 12 counties use their public hospital systems to either exclusively or significantly provide indigent care.



Details of County Budget Request to Operate Indigent Care Programs

Counties previously **estimated the overall anticipated costs** to provide services across a range of estimated demand for services.

To construct a responsible and realistic request for state funding to operate county indigent care programs, given the impacts of H.R. 1, counties made a number of key assumptions.

- Section 17000 requirements do not require counties to provide coverage for undocumented individuals. Counties focused on the population of individuals who are projected by DHCS to lose Medi-Cal coverage due to community engagement requirements, adjusted to only reflect the share of that population with satisfactory immigration status.
- Counties assumed that 33% of those who lose Medi-Cal coverage will seek care and be eligible for services from county indigent care programs. Counties assumed that the enrollment rate would be at the low end of estimated enrollment scenarios, because of the limited set of services provided, eligibility requirements of county programs, cost sharing requirements used by many counties, and county efforts to assist those seeking indigent care with reenrolling in Medi-Cal, if they are eligible.
- Counties estimated per person per month costs based on a combination of historic per member costs for pre-ACA indigent care programs (trended forward to reflect inflation in costs) and current health care costs for the kinds of services that are typically provided by indigent care programs. For CMSP counties, the estimated per person per month cost is \$551, for Article 13 counties it is \$331 per person per month, and for public hospital system counties it is \$421 per person per month.
- Counties will need to rebuild the infrastructure to operate indigent care programs. This funding will be used to establish core systems and capabilities across the twenty-three non-CMSP counties, including clinical infrastructure, information technology systems, fiscal, legal, and administrative infrastructure, and workforce and operational support. These funds will also support the development of systems and processes within indigent care programs to collect the documentation needed to support the state and county eligibility workforce in making medical frailty and disability determinations required to exempt people from Medi-Cal community engagement requirements, allowing some people to return to full-scope Medi-Cal coverage.



- Because Medi-Cal community engagement requirements begin in January 2027 and individuals will be subject to community engagement requirements upon their annual (and then six-month) redetermination date, counties assume that individuals who will seek services from indigent care programs will begin doing so in the last quarter of the 2026-27 budget year.
- Note that this estimate assumes that 67% of individuals with satisfactory immigration status who lose Medi-Cal eligibility due to work requirements (about 880,000 individuals) and all undocumented individuals who lose Medi-Cal coverage will likely no longer have a source of health care coverage.

County Indigent Care Programs Multi-Year Budget Request

- Infrastructure Building – ***\$200 million in 2026-27***, to be used over three years.
- Direct Medical Services and Administration
 - ***\$561 million in 2026-27*** to support the delivery of direct medical services to newly eligible medically indigent adults and associated administrative support in the 23 non-CMSP counties. (This includes \$50 million per year in 2026-27 and ongoing for increased county public health costs to provide services to those who lose health care coverage.)
 - ***\$2.4 billion in 2027-28 and ongoing*** to provide medical services in all 58 counties.



Public Hospital System Financing



Background: For decades, California's public hospital systems have been required to fund the non-federal share of inpatient Fee-For-Service Medi-Cal costs without receiving State General Fund support for those expenditures. Since Medi-Cal managed care base rates do not cover the cost of providing care, public hospital systems have relied on federal supplemental payments, including state directed payments, to supplement base rates. H.R. 1 targets these payments, which will reduce public hospital system revenue by \$2.3 billion annually once H.R. 1 is fully implemented.

Total Budget Request: \$500 million in 2026-27 and \$850 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

Details of Anticipated Fiscal Impacts to Public Hospital System

H.R. 1 will increase fiscal pressures on California's public hospital systems by capping and reducing state directed payments, reducing the federal match for emergency care for childless adults with Unsatisfactory Immigration Status, and reducing the number of patients with Medi-Cal coverage. This will lead to an estimated reduction in federal funding of \$3.4 billion annually once H.R. 1 is fully implemented.

County Multi-Year Budget Request to Support the Operation of Public Hospital Systems

In order to begin offsetting the impact of the coming reduction in SDPs, counties request **\$500 million in 2026-27 and \$850 million in 2027-28 and ongoing** to begin stabilizing public hospital system revenues and protecting patient care.

County Eligibility Workforce



Background: The county eligibility workforce assists individuals and families with obtaining and retaining coverage and benefits, drawing down additional federal funds to do so. As the H.R. 1 Medi-Cal community engagement requirements are implemented and counties are required to reinstate CalFresh work requirements, there will be new costs for the increased county eligibility work to assist eligible Medi-Cal and CalFresh enrollees in maintaining their enrollment.

Total Budget Request: \$373 million in 2026-27 and \$402 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

Details of Anticipated Fiscal Impacts to County Eligibility Workforce

For Medi-Cal, there will be increased workload related to the new work and community engagement requirements for existing enrollees and new applicants who will be required to demonstrate compliance one month before enrollment, as well as a doubling of redeterminations. This includes properly identifying and certifying key exemptions, supporting enrollees engaged in qualifying activities, and connecting enrollees to employment, educational, and volunteer opportunities. DHCS estimates that up to 2.8 million enrollees (60%) will require some form of manual county-worker support and verification.

For CalFresh, there will be increased workload related to the changes to the reinstated and expanded work requirements. This includes robust screening to identify those who are exempt from work requirements, supporting recipients who are not exempt with overcoming documentation challenges, and connecting them with employment and training opportunities. CDSS estimates that nearly 1 million recipients will require some form of manual county worker support and verification. In addition, for CalFresh, the federal government is reducing its contribution to administration costs from 50 percent to 25 percent, resulting in an increase of the county share from 15 percent to 22.5 percent.

Methodology for Anticipated Cost Estimate for County Eligibility Workforce

To construct a responsible and realistic request for state funding for county eligibility work for Medi-Cal and CalFresh, counties made the following assumptions to capture the workload necessary to support H.R. 1.

- **For Medi-Cal, an estimated additional 2,000 eligibility workers statewide will be required to accommodate the following additional hours of workload –**
 - Additional 3.5 hours per client, per year for robust exemption and compliance review for individuals who cannot be verified by automated data matches.
 - Additional 50 minutes per client for those initially deemed noncompliant for follow up to resolve documentation issues.
 - Additional 1.2 hours per client, per year for the more frequent six-month eligibility redeterminations.
- **For CalFresh, an estimated up to additional 400 – 500 eligibility workers statewide will be required to accommodate the following additional hours of workload –**
 - Additional 3.92 to 4.25 hours per client, per year to explore eligibility for exemptions or provide support in understanding needs to retain benefits.

County Eligibility Workforce Multi-Year Budget Request

To implement the eligibility requirements of H.R. 1, counties request ***\$373 million in 2026-27 and \$402 million in 2027-28 and ongoing*** to implement the increased eligibility requirements of H.R. 1. Likewise, we also request two budget neutral actions.

	2026-27	2027-28
Medi-Cal Eligibility Workforce	\$270 million	\$344 million
CalFresh County Eligibility Workforce	\$103 million	\$58 million
Total	\$373 million	\$402 million

- **CalFresh County Share of Cost Match Waiver** - Adopt a temporary CalFresh match waiver that maintains county contributions at 2024-25 levels, allowing counties to draw down the full amount of federal funds and state funds commensurate with what has already been budgeted.
- **CalFresh Penalties Hold Harmless** - Enact statutory changes to hold impacted counties harmless for any penalties for payment accuracy that result from circumstances outside of county control, which are exacerbated by H.R. 1.

Analysis of County H.R. 1 Budget Request for Community Behavioral Health Services for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 Fiscal Years

County Behavioral Health Programs



Background: Under current law, county behavioral health programs provide Medi-Cal specialty mental health services and substance use disorder services, largely using Realignment funding. Counties also provide behavioral health services to other individuals using other fund sources such as from the Behavioral Health Services Act. Under 1991 Realignment, county behavioral health programs are required to provide services to those not enrolled in Medi-Cal, to the extent that resources are available. As people lose eligibility for Medi-Cal, some of those individuals may seek care for their behavioral health needs from counties. To the extent that resources are available, counties would provide services to that population.

Total Budget Request: \$224 million in 2026-27 and \$828 million in 2027-28 and ongoing

Details and Methodology of Anticipated Fiscal Impacts to County Behavioral Health Programs

As people lose Medi-Cal eligibility due to the changes in H.R. 1, there will be increased demand for behavioral health services. Because county indigent care programs are not required to and historically did not provide behavioral health services, people who need services may turn to county behavioral health programs.

To estimate the demand for services, counties relied on estimates from DHCS of the number of people who are projected to lose Medi-Cal coverage due to community engagement requirements, the change to six-monthly eligibility redeterminations, and the elimination of full scope Medi-Cal benefits for certain migrant populations. Counties used the current penetration rate for Medi-Cal behavioral health services (the share of the Medi-Cal enrolled population that currently receives these services) to estimate the number of people likely to seek services and a range of costs per enrollee of \$6,300 per year to \$21,000 per year, to reflect the possible utilization of services.





To construct a responsible and realistic request for state funding to provide behavioral health services to those who lose Medi-Cal eligibility, counties made a number of key assumptions:

- Counties relied on estimates from the Department of Health Care Services of the number of people who are projected to lose Medi-Cal coverage due to community engagement requirements, the change to six-monthly eligibility redeterminations, and the elimination of full scope Medi-Cal benefits for certain migrant populations.
- To determine how many of those people may seek services for behavioral health needs, counties used the current penetration rate for Medi-Cal behavioral health services (the share of the Medi-Cal enrolled population that currently receives these services) to estimate the number of people likely to seek services. This equates to about 27,000 people seeking services in 2026-27 and 89,000 individuals seeking services in 2027-28.
- Counties assumed that the statewide average cost to provide services will be about \$10,000 per enrollee per year, which is a mid-range estimate of the current cost to provide behavioral health services.

County Behavioral Health Multi-Year Budget Request

Based on these assumptions, counties anticipate that up to 89,000 people will seek services. To provide services to those who lose Medi-Cal coverage and seek services, Counties request ***\$224 million in 2026-27 and \$828 million in 2027-28 and ongoing***



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March 9, 2026

The Honorable Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
1021 O Street, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dawn Addis, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1
1021 O Street, Suite 4120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Concerns with the Governor's 2026-27 Budget Proposal – CalFresh and Medi-Cal

Dear Chairs Jackson, Menjivar, and Addis,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to respectfully urge action in the Budget Act of 2026 to support counties' in helping clients navigate major federal changes enacted under H.R. 1 affecting both CalFresh and Medi-Cal. County eligibility workers serve as the front line for administering these programs and helping low-income Californians access essential nutrition and health coverage.

Without targeted State investments and statutory protections for counties and eligibility workers, the proposed budget will create serious risks to continuity of food assistance and health coverage for vulnerable Californians. In Kern, approximately 200,000 residents receive CalFresh and 456,000 residents receive Medi-Cal. These residents depend on county-administered eligibility systems that must now implement new federal requirements on an accelerated timeline and without adequate funding.

Budget action is needed to ensure counties can implement H.R. 1 responsibly to minimize preventable benefit loss, protect state and federal funding, and mitigate downstream impacts associated with reduced access to concrete supports like increases in homelessness, involvement in the child welfare system, uncompensated care, and decreases in life expectancy.

Protect Food Access Through Adequate Support for ABAWD Implementation

Effective June 1, 2026 in California, H.R. 1 significantly expands the federal Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) three-month time limit and work requirements, placing nearly one million Californians at risk of losing food assistance unless they meet complex work requirements or qualify for exemptions.

These new rules will require counties to conduct multiple rounds of exemption screening, engage and educate clients, and assist non-exempt clients to ensure they are compliant and meet their required work hours. Many of these beneficiaries will be those with unstable employment or minimal data footprints in the eligibility system, making them particularly at risk of losing benefits and requiring intensive engagement and conversation between the eligibility worker and client to protect their benefits.

Without adequate funding in the amount of **\$9.3 million General Fund in FY 2025-26, \$103 million General Fund in FY 2026-27, and \$58 million General Fund ongoing**, eligible individuals are likely to lose benefits due to procedural barriers rather than true ineligibility. Counties will need sufficient staffing to:

- Conduct robust screening for exemptions.
- Provide clear and repeated client education on complex requirements.
- Support non-exempt CalFresh recipients in overcoming documentation challenges.
- Monitor compliance and intervene before inappropriate discontinuances and refer clients to employment and training programs.
- Reduce churn, error rates, and downstream costs.

In Kern County, these requirements will require significant new staffing and operational resources at a time when counties are already operating at capacity. Adequate funding is essential to prevent avoidable hunger and disruption in food assistance.

We also note that the **Budget Act of 2025 provisionally set aside \$20 million General Fund** for county administration to implement ABAWD requirements and support affected clients, subject to Department of Finance approval. **We call on the Legislature to request the Administration release these funds immediately** and offset the aforementioned budget request to support the imminent implementation of these requirements.

Kern County faces significant operational impacts associated with the imminent expansion of CalFresh ABAWD work requirements under the CalFresh Program. Implementing and monitoring these requirements will significantly increase administrative workload for eligibility staff, including tracking exemptions, verifying participation in qualifying work or training activities, and processing time-sensitive case actions. In a large and geographically diverse county like Kern, these responsibilities will require additional staffing capacity and coordination with workforce and community partners to ensure eligible residents do not lose benefits due to administrative barriers. The proposed \$20 million in state and ongoing resources would allow Kern County to strengthen customer service by investing in worker retraining and cross-program staff support, improving data-sharing and interoperability with state systems to better verify exemptions and participation, and expanding partnerships with community-based organizations and local workforce development boards to connect CalFresh participants with employment and training opportunities. These investments would help ensure the County can implement the ABAWD requirements efficiently while minimizing disruptions to food assistance for eligible households and maintaining timely, responsive service for residents seeking support.

Protect Medi-Cal through County Administration and CPI Adjustments

H.R. 1 imposes major new and onerous requirements on certain adults in Medi-Cal, including work and community engagement requirements and more frequent eligibility redeterminations, affecting approximately 4.6 million Californians beginning January 2027.

Counties will be responsible for implementing these changes and supporting millions of enrollees in navigating new reporting and verification requirements. Many affected individuals will require direct assistance from county eligibility workers because their exemptions or compliance cannot be verified automatically through existing data sources, meaning they are at an increased risk of losing their Medi-Cal coverage.

We are urging your support for increased Medi-Cal administrative funding, which leverages enhanced federal funding of 75 percent, as follows:

- **\$230.9 million General Fund in FY 2026-27,**
- **\$304.7 million General Fund in FY 2027-28,**
- **\$175.9 million General Fund in FY 2028-29, and**
- **\$114.1 million General Fund ongoing thereafter.**

At the same time, counties face serious constraints in keeping up with baseline growth in costs due to the suspension of Medi-Cal Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments through FY 2027-28. Without CPI adjustments, county administrative funding is not keeping pace with rising salary and operating costs, threatening counties' ability to retain experienced eligibility staff. Counties also request your support for **restoration of CPI adjustments beginning FY 2026-27 and ongoing (\$78.5 million total funds, \$39.2 million General Fund).**

Kern County will face a significant increase in Medi-Cal eligibility workload under H.R. 1, requiring more frequent verifications, complex eligibility assessments, and intensified client assistance at a time when staffing and systems are already stretched. Without additional administrative funding, the County risks longer processing times, reduced customer service capacity, and preventable interruptions in health coverage for the approximately 456,000 Medi-Cal beneficiaries we serve. To prepare, Kern County is strengthening data-sharing and interoperability efforts, expanding cross-program staff training, and coordinating with managed care plans, CBOs, and workforce partners to support seamless eligibility navigation. However, without additional administrative funding, the scale of new responsibilities could significantly strain county operations and increase the risk of coverage disruptions for eligible residents.

Adequate investment in Medi-Cal administration and restoration of CPI adjustments are critical to:

- Prevent avoidable coverage loss
- Maintain a stable eligibility workforce
- Support timely redeterminations
- Maximize federal administrative funding
- Reduce downstream uncompensated care costs

Without these investments, counties will struggle to implement H.R. 1 in a manner that preserves access to care and protects the State's historic investments in health coverage.

Authorize a CalFresh Match Waiver to Protect State and Federal Funding

H.R. 1 also shifts CalFresh administrative costs to states and counties, triggering an automatic increase in county match requirements under 1991 realignment law beginning in October 2026.

This cost shift is estimated to exceed \$200 million annually for counties. Without relief, some counties may be unable to meet match requirements, potentially leaving substantial state and federal funds unclaimed. Counties will be in danger of not being able to run their programs because they do not have the funds to draw down the federal and state funds. This threatens widening inequities for the CalFresh program.

A CalFresh match waiver provides a pragmatic and budget-neutral solution that allows counties unable to come up with the increased match to continue drawing down their State General Fund allocations and associated federal funding.

Match waivers have been successfully implemented during prior economic downturns and emergencies, including the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, and is a vital tool to help ensure that available CalFresh funding is fully utilized to support Californians experiencing food insecurity. A match waiver is a critical tool to **prevent the worst-case outcome in loss of funding** for CalFresh Administration as a result of H.R. 1.

Hold Counties Harmless from Pre- H.R. 1 Federally-Driven Payment Error Rate Fiscal Sanctions

As counties implement complex federal changes under H.R. 1, they face increased exposure to federal SNAP Payment Error Rate (PER) fiscal sanctions, that pre-date H.R. 1, and which will be exacerbated by federal policy changes and circumstances outside county control.

Long-standing federal rules, separate from H.R. 1, impose financial sanctions on states that exceed 105 percent of the national PER average for two consecutive federal fiscal years. A portion of these penalties are passed through to 19 Performance Measurement Counties in California. Counties are already facing heightened PER risk due to federally-driven changes and operational disruptions. Additional fiscal penalties would divert resources away from client services at precisely the time when counties must invest heavily in implementation of new federal requirements.

As a Performance Measurement County, Kern County faces significant fiscal and operational strain if required to absorb a CalFresh Program Payment Error Rate (PER) fiscal sanction while also implementing major federal policy changes under H.R. 1. Any county share of a PER penalty would have to be paid from limited local administrative resources, potentially forcing difficult trade-offs such as delaying critical technology upgrades, reducing investments in staff training and quality assurance, or limiting the hiring and retention of eligibility workers needed to maintain timely service. These constraints could slow application processing, increase call center wait times, and reduce the County's ability to conduct proactive outreach and case management that help prevent errors and support program integrity. At the same time, staff are preparing for substantial system, policy, and workload changes associated with H.R. 1 implementation, including additional verification and reporting requirements that will further increase

administrative complexity. The combined impact of these pressures could undermine the County's ability to maintain accurate eligibility determinations while ensuring vulnerable residents continue to receive timely access to food assistance.

Statutory and regulatory changes are needed to temporarily hold counties harmless from federally-driven PER increases for the pre- H.R. 1 penalties so counties can focus their limited resources on serving clients and maintaining program integrity. Without these protections, counties may face significant cost pressures that would undermine their ability to implement H.R. 1 effectively.

Conclusion

H.R. 1 represents a significant challenge for low-income Californians in accessing the social safety net and obtaining food and health care. Counties remain committed to implementing these changes responsibly and minimizing harm to the Californians who depend on these programs. However, counties cannot absorb these new requirements and assist clients without adequate State support.

In summary, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges adoption of budget actions that:

- Fund CalFresh ABAWD work requirement implementation
- Strengthen Medi-Cal county administration and restore CPI adjustments
- Authorize a CalFresh match waiver
- Protect counties from federally-driven pre-H.R. 1 PER fiscal sanctions

These investments will help preserve food access and health coverage for vulnerable Californians while protecting the State's interests and maximizing federal funding.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
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
Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
Kern County Department of Human Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 9, 2026

The Honorable Corey Jackson, Chair
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The Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review
Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Concerns with the Governor's 2026-27 Budget Proposal - Child Welfare Services

Dear Senator Menjivar and Assemblymember Jackson,

I am writing on behalf of Kern County Board of Supervisors to respectfully request your support for funding to continue the existing Child Welfare Emergency Response (ER) Enhancement Program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 and for a two-year extension of the existing Flexible Family Supports funding scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2026.

Continuing these investments is critical to stabilizing California's child welfare social work workforce and strengthening child protection and prevention systems that support child safety, stability for foster children/youth in family-based care with priority for kin and kin-like care, and permanent connections to families. These investments are needed in light of H.R. 1 changes that may undermine concrete support to families, increase the risk of child welfare involvement, and impact bridge implementation of the new Tiered Rate Structure.

Emergency Response Stabilization Funding

Emergency Response (ER) is the frontline of California's child protection system, where social workers investigate allegations of abuse and neglect, assess child safety, and intervene during family crises. Although overall caseloads have declined, the acuity and complexity of cases have increased significantly, requiring more intensive engagement and cross-system coordination.

Recent one-time ER Enhancement funds have improved response timeliness and stabilized staffing, while also strengthening early safety planning, Child and Family Team (CFT) engagement, diversion efforts, and kin-first practice to prevent unnecessary foster care entry. However, these funds expire on June 30, 2026.

Without continued support for at least one additional year, counties will face diminished response capacity, renewed workforce instability, and reduced prevention effectiveness as H.R. 1's impacts on food and health programs take effect. **We respectfully urge approval of \$20 million General Fund in FY 2026–27 to sustain ER stabilization efforts** statewide and preserve front-end prevention capacity during implementation of H.R. 1. This funding will enable counties to retain staffing to work with vulnerable families, prevent foster care entry, and connect families to community- and county-based services that meet their basic needs and help reduce unnecessary disproportionate child welfare system-involvement of families and children of color.

To date, ER Enhancement Funds have made a significant difference in our county's ability to meet federal and state mandates while also supporting improved outcomes for children, youth, and families. These funds have allowed the County to hire and retain additional ER social workers and expand our after-hours on-call program, increasing our capacity to respond to child abuse and neglect referrals. As a result, the County has improved investigation timeliness, reduced referral backlogs, and strengthened kin-first diversion efforts, allowing more children to be safely placed with relatives at the earliest opportunity. These investments have also improved workforce stability by reducing burnout among after-hours staff and significantly lowering the ER vacancy rate from 19.7 percent to 5.97 percent. Continued support for ER Enhancement funding is critical to sustaining these gains and ensuring counties can respond effectively to the needs of vulnerable children and families. Continued stabilization of ER is critical to maintaining child safety and prevention capacity.

Flexible Family Supports, Two-Year Extension

Flexible Family Supports funding has provided county child welfare agencies with the ability to address immediate, concrete barriers to promote placement stability and support placements with relatives and other family-based caregivers. The funds are used to deliver concrete supports not typically available through other existing funding sources. This funding is also scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2026.

County child welfare agencies have used this funding to enable children entering foster care to immediately be cared for by kin-based caregivers through the provision of beds, minor home repairs, safety modifications such as pool fencing, and short-term rental or utility payment assistance. Many counties have utilized the funds to provide respite care for family caregivers, including kin, to prevent disruption from their family-based setting and reduce caregiver stress, while some have used the funds to support the costs of travel and enrollment into enrichment and normalcy activities, including helping foster youth maintain their tribal and sibling connections. Positive outcomes included improved well-being for foster children and youth, maintaining family-based care and avoiding need for short-term residential (congregate) care, and reduced burnout and higher retention of family-based caregivers.

In Kern County, Flexible Family Supports funding is primarily used to remove barriers to placement with relatives, maintain and support relative placements, provide respite for caregivers to promote placement stability, and increase visitation opportunities to strengthen and preserve birth family relationships. Through these resources, children have been successfully placed with relatives who otherwise would not have been able to meet placement requirements, while also providing support that stabilize those

placements and help ensure children remain safely connected to family. Flexible Family Supports have also enabled the County to promote and maintain meaningful relationships with birth families even when children are not placed with relatives. If this funding sunsets, Kern County anticipates a reduction in relative placements due to the financial challenges many relatives face in meeting resource family approval standards, such as installing required safety features like pool fencing or securing adequate living space to accommodate a child. Additionally, without these supportive services, placements may become more vulnerable to disruption, increasing the likelihood that children will experience placement instability and potentially enter higher levels of care.

We respectfully request a two-year extension of Flexible Family Supports funding beyond June 30, 2026, to maintain the current momentum of concrete support to foster children, youth, and their caregivers, while the State and counties work to implement the Tiered Rate Structure, which will implement on or after July 1, 2027. This two-year extension will ensure no gap in these critical supports and services.

Together, ER Stabilization and Flexible Family Supports are essential to protecting child safety, preserving placements, and sustaining prevention efforts. We respectfully urge approval of \$20 million General Fund for Emergency Response in FY 2026-27 and a two-year extension of Flexible Family Supports funding. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Members and Staff of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
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March 18, 2026

The Honorable Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
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The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Concerns with the Governor's 2026-27 Budget Proposal - In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

Dear Assemblymember Jackson and Senator Menjivar,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to the proposed reductions to the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program included in the Governor's proposed 2026-27 Budget. The Governor's budget proposes to shift the full nonfederal cost of growth in IHSS hours to counties beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2027-28; eliminate the permanent Backup Provider System (BUPS); and automate the termination of IHSS to align with the discontinuance of Medi-Cal. When taken together, these proposals exacerbate county fiscal pressures by shifting additional safety net costs all at a time when county resources are critical to mitigate the most severe impacts of H.R. 1.

I also respectfully urge the Legislature to adopt statutory changes that preserve the current 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement between the State and counties for IHSS Community First Choice Option (CFCO) penalties. Together, these proposals have significant implications for the ability of IHSS recipients to safely remain in their homes, as these create significant pressures that will necessitate trade-offs in county administration of the IHSS program.

The IHSS program in Kern County enables nearly 18,000 older adults and people with disabilities to avoid institutionalization by receiving essential care in their homes, delivered by over 11,000 providers. IHSS enhances quality of life by making it easier to live at home and reduces the time and financial burdens placed on family and friend caregivers. County social workers serve as the critical gateway to IHSS, conducting in-home assessments, authorizing service hours, and completing required annual reassessments to ensure timely access to the appropriate level of care, based on individualized needs of clients.

Cost Shift for Growth in IHSS Hours to Counties. The Governor's budget proposes to shift significant new costs to counties for growth in IHSS hours at an estimated cost of \$233.6 million beginning FY 2027-28. This creates a substantial new cost burden with no additional revenues to support it and would effectively place a higher burden on 1991 Realignment funding that counties rely upon to support caseload and cost growth in IHSS and other social services and health and human services safety net programs, including child welfare, CalFresh administration, CalWORKs, public health, behavioral/mental health, and other safety-net responsibilities. Moreover, the proposal creates pressure for counties to limit growth in authorized hours for some of our most vulnerable Californians in accessing the at-home care they need, even when those hours reflect legitimate care needs and help avoid more costly institutionalization.

Counties already face severe underfunding in IHSS administration, by at least \$246 million total funds in the Administration's own estimate as of spring 2025. To address this funding shortfall in staffing, some counties contribute higher levels of funding to maintain staffing in order to meet state mandates for the program, totaling approximately \$71.1 million in FY 2024-25, or 18 percent above the state General Fund allocation, across all counties. Shifting additional service-level costs to counties would force difficult trade-offs, including the potential to reduce any additional funding for staffing which could result in delays for intakes, reassessments, and critical emerging needs of clients.

Passing higher service costs to counties also threatens to destabilize the provider workforce. Counties must approve any negotiated wages or benefits and that approval depends on predictable, adequate funding for both administration and service costs. Shifting growth costs to counties reduces the resources available to meet provider needs through collective bargaining, thus undermining recruitment and retention and further weakening the workforce at a time when the program is already facing provider shortages amid rising demand. At a time when California is prioritizing aging in place, caregiver workforce stability, and alternatives to institutional care, shifting service cost responsibilities to counties moves the State backward.

In Kern, departmental goals for the number of cases per worker for IHSS changed significantly due to the focus and prioritization of CFCO cases. CFCO cases represent 50% of the IHSS caseload. The Kern County IHSS program has experienced an increase in applications for services with currently 3,603 applications pending. The department would like to add additional staff in FY 2026-27 to process the growing backlog of applications and reassessments; however, due to limited funding and penalties from the state, the department will not be able to do so at this time.

As the County must shift general funds to cover the increasing costs to the IHSS program we anticipate impacts on other areas of our programs such as our Meals On Wheels and Congregate dining programs that serve seniors 60 and above. The need for these programs has also increased due to growth of people turning 60+ and the County has been providing additional dollars to these programs to offset the demands, but if the County must assign more general fund dollars, we will have to make further reductions to the number of people served for these vital support programs.

For these reasons, the County of Kern strongly opposes the proposed shift of IHSS hour growth costs to counties and urges the Legislature to reject this proposal and its associated trailer bill language (TBL). This proposal will undermine the foundational purpose of IHSS to ensure that older adults and people with disabilities can remain safe in their homes rather than entering costly institutional care.

Minimize harm to IHSS recipients from CFCO Penalties. The Budget Act of 2025 shifted costs of federal penalties to counties for delayed reassessments under the CFCO program, currently at a 50/50 cost split

between State and counties. Effective July 1, 2026, 100% of the liability will shift to counties. Our county is in strong support of the CWDA-proposed TBL that would preserve the current 50 percent State / 50 percent county cost-sharing structure for CFCO reassessment penalties and address several critical implementation challenges faced by counties. The proposed TBL is necessary to ensure that the implementation of CFCO penalties is fair, transparent, and administratively workable for counties that are already under immense operational strain. Without these statutory changes, counties will continue to face escalating fiscal pressures and increasing barriers to timely intakes, ultimately risking service delays for highly vulnerable IHSS applicants.

The penalties come at a time when counties are already struggling with severe IHSS social worker underfunding, as mentioned above. Fifty-one (51) Social workers in Kern County carry caseloads of 350 IHSS clients per worker, making timely intakes and reassessments exceedingly difficult. The penalties have forced our county to prioritize CFCO reassessments to avoid penalties that would further erode our ability to provide timely access to services for IHSS applicants and other recipients and meet existing State requirements. Counties' immediate response to the CFCO law was to shift priority to CFCO cases to avoid federal fiscal penalties. Absent adequate funding for county staffing, this has resulted in applicants waiting longer for intakes, and existing clients with worsening health conditions are experiencing delays in reassessment. These delays jeopardize clients' safety, place families at risk, and increase the likelihood of costly institutional care, outcomes that contradict the State's long-standing commitment to home- and community-based services.

Here in Kern, CFCO penalties have impacted the administration of the IHSS program. The urgent need to prioritize CFCO cases to prevent significant financial penalties has forced the department to divert resources, resulting in substantial delays in processing applications and non-CFCO reassessments.

CWDA's proposal to include CFCO-related trailer bill language in the 2026 Budget Act is a reasonable, targeted, and cost-effective solution. The proposal would:

- Maintain the current 50 percent State/50 percent county cost share, avoiding a full cost shift to counties. Based on current data, this approach would likely limit State General Fund exposure to no more than \$16 million in FY 2026–27.
- Require CDSS to provide counties with the data necessary to reconcile penalty calculations in order to issue penalty payments to the State and avoid audit risks.
- Exclude IHSS cases that moved between counties or returned from leave from penalty calculations for 30 days after notifying the county of the change, as such circumstances are outside county control.
- Include technical cleanup provisions preventing counties from incurring unintended cost shifts unrelated to overdue reassessments.

This proposal is essential to protect IHSS consumers and ensure equitable access to critical services. Without action, Kern County will be forced to continue to redirect scarce staff time away from timely intakes and urgent reassessments, creating further delays that jeopardize health and safety for IHSS applicants and recipients.

Auto-terminating IHSS recipients when Medi-Cal is discontinued. The Governor's budget proposes to automate the termination of IHSS to align with the discontinuance of Medi-Cal (an \$86 million General Fund reduction). Currently, when a Medi-Cal case is discontinued, the IHSS recipient may be placed into the state-only IHSS Residual program and payments to their provider can continue until the county takes

action to reinstate Medi-Cal. Once the individual comes back into Medi-Cal, the IHSS social worker will rescind the discontinuance and reinstate the recipient in IHSS. Auto-termination will disrupt care continuity and create payment lapses for providers. While framed as a cost containment measure, the "savings" would come from denying services to low-income older adults and people with disabilities. Even if Medi-Cal is restored, the lapse in payment for services creates a financial strain for providers, many of whom may choose to continue to deliver services without pay until Medi-Cal can be fully restored. These disruptions are not minor administrative delays; they represent lapses in essential care for individuals who cannot safely be left without assistance, increasing the likelihood of hospitalization or institutional placement.

Collectively, these proposals would significantly weaken the IHSS program at the exact moment when demand for home- and community-based services is rising and California is preparing for unprecedented demographic aging. The combined effects of shifting costs to counties, unworkable penalty structures, elimination of essential backup supports, and automatic termination of services for low-income recipients would increase risk for older adults and people with disabilities, destabilize the IHSS workforce, and strain already overextended county systems.

For these reasons, the County of Kern strongly urges the Legislature to reject the IHSS cost shift to counties, preserve the 50/50 State-county responsibility for CFCO penalties, adopt CWDA's proposed CFCO trailer bill language, maintain the Backup Provider System, and oppose auto-termination policies that sever IHSS recipients from needed care due to temporary Medi-Cal disruptions. Protecting IHSS is essential to safeguarding vulnerable Californians and sustaining their ability to remain safely at home, a value the State has long affirmed and must continue to uphold.

Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership with counties.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
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)
 Kern County Aging and Adult Services
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 26, 2026

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

**RE: AB 1564 (Ahrens), Employer-employee relations and confidential communications -
OPPOSE**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, in lockstep with CSAC and myriad other agencies, to express our strong opposition to AB 1564 (Ahrens), which would limit an employer's ability to conduct internal investigations, undermining employee and public safety while creating new costs and liabilities for public employers. In addition, the bill's substantive provisions impose restrictions that effectively function as a privilege.

Previous Unsuccessful Legislation and Previous Veto

Our concerns with AB 1564 are consistent with the issues raised in response to previously introduced legislation, AB 340 (Ahrens, 2025), AB 1109 (Kalra, 2025), AB 2421 (Low, 2024), AB 418 (Kalra, 2019), AB 3121 (Kalra, 2018), and AB 729 (Hernandez, 2013). The issues are succinctly captured in the AB 729 veto message from Governor Brown, which states: "I don't believe it is appropriate to put communications with a union agent on equal footing with communications with one's spouse, priest, physician or attorney. Moreover, this bill could compromise the ability of employers to conduct investigations into workplace safety, harassment and other allegations."

New Costs and Added Liability for the State and Local Governments

In order to conduct proper investigations that uphold the public's trust, protect against the misuse of public funds, and ensure the safety and well-being of both public employees and the public at large, it is critical that a public employer has the ability to interview all individuals with relevant information to ascertain the facts and understand the matter fully. AB 1564 would increase investigation and litigation costs for the state as well as local governments by creating incomplete investigations, since all appropriate employees with relevant information cannot be questioned. Costs and risks may also increase as conduct challenged as unlawful under the bill's provisions is adjudicated before the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). Even for conduct that is not brought to PERB, AB 1564 could lead to unknown and unbudgeted costs for the state, and costs to local governments, for dispute resolution, attorney fees, arbitration, and other costs. In addition to

legal costs, AB 1564 could force the state and local agencies to review and, in some cases, update collective bargaining agreements and policies regarding workplace investigations and allowable communications between represented employees and their employer.

Expansion of New One-Sided Standard

AB 1564 would create a de facto prohibition on employers requesting a court to compel disclosure of purportedly confidential communications, which is the same outcome as if the communication was privileged in those circumstances. This will have a significant impact on judicial and administrative proceedings.

Endangers Workplace Safety

AB 1564 interferes with the ability to interview witnesses because it would prohibit public agencies from questioning any employee or “representative of a recognized employee organization, or an exclusive representative” about communications made in confidence between an employee and a “representative of a recognized employee organization, or an exclusive representative” in connection with representation relating to any matter within the scope of representation. While AB 1564 includes a narrow exception for criminal investigations and provides that it does not supersede Gov. Code 3303, many necessary investigations are still subject to the bill’s limitations, putting safety at risk.

This bill would also hinder employees who wish to voluntarily report information or testify in front of necessary misconduct investigations since an employer would be prohibited from certain lines of questioning. It would also limit the ability of public employers to carry out the requirements of recently enacted law, Senate Bill 553 (Cortese, 2023), which includes conducting investigations into workplace safety, harassment, and other allegations. As of January 1, 2025, SB 553 allows collective bargaining representatives standing to seek temporary restraining orders (TRO) in connection with workplace violence. AB 1564 will create a problematic scenario wherein a TRO may be obtained but an employer could not fully investigate the underlying facts. AB 1564 lacks guardrails to prevent potential conflicts of interest that could arise during employee safety issues.

Administrative investigations are also critical tools for public agency employers when protecting minors under the supervision and care of their employees. As it relates to preventing childhood sexual assault and misconduct, perpetrators are not often caught in the act but rather discovered through investigations conducted by the employer through either building evidence for what may lead to a criminal investigation or removing an employee before misconduct may occur.

Making matters worse, employers may not even know they are acting contrary to AB 1564’s restrictions by communicating with staff, because only the employee or the representative would know or could decide when a communication was made “in confidence.” This bill prohibits the asking of questions, without regard to an employer’s prior knowledge that a specific question is prohibited by the bill. There is no requirement that a labor union or employee invoke AB 1564 prior to alleging a violation. This could affect day-to-day activities and critical government operations.

For the reasons discussed above, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is respectfully opposed to AB 1564 and urges your committee to **vote NO** on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized, flowing script.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Human Resources Division
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 10, 2026

The Honorable Ash Kalra
Chair, Assembly Committee on Judiciary
1020 N Street, Room 104
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1660 (Schiavo), Strengthening Probate Code Enforcement – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Kalra,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1660 (Schiavo), which will strengthen existing law for Public Guardians (PG), Public Conservators (PC), and Public Administrators (PA) by ensuring timely cooperation from financial institutions and third parties with lawful requests by allowing courts to impose fines when they fail to comply.

Under existing Probate Code, PGs, PCs, and PAs are granted the authority to secure property of conservatees and take control of a deceased's persons personal property, including bank accounts and safe deposit boxes. Unfortunately, it is common that banks – from large multinational institutions to small regional banks – deny or delay these requests. Lack of compliance from financial institutions leads to unnecessary estate and guardianship complications and can worsen existing financial disputes.

AB 1660 does not expand authority, rather, it enforces existing law by allowing courts to impose fines of no less than \$1,000 when financial institutions fail to work with administrators, guardians and conservators as it relates to these requests. AB 1660 would protect vulnerable clients from financial exploitation, reduce institutional resistance and delays, and strengthen enforcement that supports efficient case administration.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports AB 1660 and respectfully requests that your committee advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", is written over a horizontal line.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Judiciary
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Aging and Adult Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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March 25, 2026

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

RE: AB 1852 (Bains), Kern Medical Education Authority - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Fong,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1852 (Bains), which establishes the statutory framework necessary to advance medical education in Kern County by authorizing the creation of the Kern Medical Education Authority. This bill represents an important next step in addressing the longstanding shortage of physicians and healthcare professionals in our county and across the broader San Joaquin Valley.

Kern County continues to experience one of the most severe healthcare access gaps in California, driven by chronic provider shortages and an aging rural physician workforce. Despite ongoing efforts, our region still faces the lowest ratio of licensed medical professionals in the state. This shortage places strain on families, hospitals, and community clinics and has profound impacts on health outcomes, especially in underserved and rural communities.

AB 1852 provides a thoughtful and responsible solution by enabling the California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) and the Kern Community College District (KCCD) to move forward with establishing a medical school should the University of California not take formal steps by July 1, 2027. By authorizing the development of a Kern Medical Education Authority, the bill ensures there is a clear, locally driven governance structure that can take action if necessary to meet the region's healthcare workforce needs.

This governance authority would have the powers and responsibilities needed to plan, launch, and sustain a medical school, from hiring faculty and staff, to establishing fair employment and labor practices, to issuing financing instruments that enable long-term investment in medical education. Importantly, the bill also subjects the authority to the state's open meeting and public records laws, ensuring transparency, accountability, and community involvement throughout the process.

AB 1852 builds on the progress made through earlier legislation, including the establishment of the UC Kern County Medical Education Endowment Fund (AB 2357 - Bains, 2024). Taken together, these

efforts demonstrate the Legislature's recognition that the San Joaquin Valley urgently needs a stable, long-term pipeline of healthcare professionals trained in and committed to serving our communities.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports AB 1852 and urges swift passage by your committee. We appreciate your leadership and partnership in addressing the critical healthcare provider shortages that have impacted our region for far too long and thank you for your continued commitment to improving healthcare access for Kern County and the San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,

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

Phillip Peters, Chairman
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 26, 2026

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

Re: SB 1157 (Archuleta), Secure youth treatment facilities – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Arreguín,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for SB 1157 (Archuleta), which would close critical gaps created by the closure of the state youth facilities. Specifically, SB 1157 authorizes county probation departments to refer youth in a county Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) to the Department of State Hospitals (DSH) for specialized care and establishes a safety framework for specified Less Restrictive Programs (LRPs).

SB 823 (2020) realigned the entirety of California's juvenile justice system to counties. Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTFs) and Less Restrictive Programs (LRPs) were established as part of Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) closure and associated transfer of supervisory and detention authority of DJJ youth and DJJ qualifying youth to counties.

SB 1157 provides similar tools to counties that DJJ previously had for addressing high level mental health referrals to the Department of State Hospitals. While this population is relatively small, the impact to the youth and our facilities is enormous when a youth is in crisis.

This statutory authority is necessary as, while infrequent, there are instances where a youth's behavioral health needs are so significant as to require treatment beyond the scope of what is available in juvenile detention facilities, and which may only be adequately and appropriately provided in a locked behavioral health facility.

Additionally, LRPs are a new statutory creation as part of the DJJ closure and shift of responsibility to counties. While a youth may be stepped down into an LRP, the jurisdiction remains with probation as this is part of the court ordered detention baseline term within the Welfare and Institutions Code Section 875 continuum. As youth progress through their programming and they meet substantial progress, the court may order a less restrictive program that may be in a community setting.

Despite the establishment of LRPs as an option for courts to consider upon progress of a youth, statute does not establish a framework when the program is for a residential setting when that setting is not otherwise governed or regulated by a government or public entity. Because these programs are part of the term of secure detention, and not a part of post jurisdiction or release, it's critical that there is a framework in place to set programming expectations, safety considerations, and liability concerns for programs serving the highest risk and highest need youth and young adults in the state.

Without these most basic criteria, counties, courts, and other stakeholders may not have the confidence necessary to utilize this tool. SB 1157 simply requires the court to determine that specified LRP operators adhere to the young person's case plan and accountability measures, provide training to their staff and perform staff background checks, obtain appropriate insurance, have provided notice to the city and county in which it operates, and meet state and local zoning and land use requirements.

These criteria are necessary as LRPs are serving individuals who are the highest need and who have committed the most serious offenses within the juvenile justice system and, in the instances outlined in SB 1157, have been permitted by the court to serve the remainder of their baseline term in the community.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support SB 1157 to resolve unaddressed issues resulting from the enactment of the closure of the DJJ and to ensure that mental health services and programmatic frameworks are in place to best serve these youth and young adults and the safety of the community, and we strongly encourage your committee to **vote YES** on the bill.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Honorable Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Kern County Probation Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 1, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of the State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1329 (McNerney), Solar valuation coercion and the continued erosion of the rural county tax base

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to convey our serious concerns and strong opposition to SB 1329 (McNerney). This bill continues a troubling pattern established by SB 267 (Hertzberg, 2021) and SB 1340 (Hertzberg, 2022), measures that extended or entrenched preferential tax treatment for large scale commercial solar projects at the direct expense of rural counties. Combined, these policies have deprived Kern County's General Fund of roughly \$20 million every year in foregone property tax revenues, funds that would otherwise support public safety, fire protection, libraries, parks, and essential human services.

SB 1329 would further and permanently deepen these inequities. The bill hard wires artificially low valuation formulas into statute, replacing market-based appraisal practices with a predetermined checklist designed to reduce taxable value regardless of real-world pricing, income generation, or evidence of fair market value. Rather than aligning with longstanding Board of Equalization rules or standard professional appraisal methods, SB 1329 moves California toward a valuation framework that does not reflect how utility scale renewable energy facilities are actually bought and sold.

It is also important to acknowledge your signing message for SB 1340¹. In that message, you recognized that while delayed solar projects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic justified a temporary extension of the tax exclusion, the

¹ <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SB-1340-Signing-Message.pdf?emrc=7a2451>

policy “has a direct impact on property tax revenues that support essential services at the local level,” and you urged the Legislature to consider the impacts to local agencies before bringing forward similar types of policy. You made clear that any continuation of preferential tax treatment must be weighed against the fiscal health of rural counties. Your message also highlighted the inclusion of \$300 million in the 2022 State Budget to create the Local Government Budget Sustainability Fund, but to this day not a single dollar from that fund has ever reached Kern County’s coffers. SB 1329 exacerbates these longstanding grievances and completely disregards your warning. Rather than restoring the revenue stability your office emphasized as necessary, this bill locks in permanently depressed assessments and ensures that rural counties will continue subsidizing the solar industry for decades to come.

Kern County has already shouldered an outsized share of California’s clean energy responsibilities. We host more utility scale solar than any county in the state with over 60,000 acres installed today and tens of thousands more under review. Despite this major contribution to California’s clean energy transition, our communities have absorbed severe fiscal consequences:

- More than \$20 million per year in lost General Fund revenue.
- Hundreds of millions of cumulative dollars in foregone revenue over the past decade.
- A sustained, structural erosion of the rural tax base that disproportionately burdens economically challenged and disadvantaged communities.

This inequity is worsening at the exact moment when large portions of the Central Valley are losing farmland due to groundwater depletion, water shortages, and SGMA driven fallowing. As agricultural land leaves production, renewable energy development will continue to concentrate in Kern and other rural counties. When the only remaining tax base is increasingly tied to renewable energy infrastructure, legislation that undervalues those facilities directly undermines our ability to provide basic public services.

Beyond these fiscal and equity concerns, SB 1329 is fundamentally flawed at the technical level:

1. It mandates the cost approach as the “preferred” valuation method, even though solar facilities are income producing assets whose market value is based on expected cash flows—not construction cost.
2. It requires assessors to subtract federal tax credits, incentives, tariffs, and duties from replacement cost, even though these factors vary widely, are not part of market negotiation, and do not influence what buyers pay for operating facilities.
3. It legislates exclusions for Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), renewable energy credits, environmental commodities, and other real world economic drivers that directly determine market value.

4. It creates "separate appraisal unit" requirements that invite boundary manipulation, administrative burden, and litigation, complicating the work of county assessors statewide.

These are not technical adjustments, they are formulaic devaluations designed to suppress assessed values far below fair market value. If adopted, SB 1329 would not only cement systemic underassessment for solar facilities, but it would also create a dangerous precedent that invites other industries with deep pockets to pursue similar valuation distortions to benefit their own economic interests.

Kern County has been a committed partner in helping California achieve its renewable energy goals. The clean energy generated here powers communities across the state. However, rural counties cannot continue to sacrifice essential public services while private developers receive preferential tax treatment unmatched in any other sector. SB 1329 represents a structural overhaul of valuation practices that would permanently diminish the fiscal capacity of rural counties that host California's renewable energy future.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges your direct intervention to **stop SB 1329 from advancing in the Legislature**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Monique Limon, Senate President Pro Tempore
The Honorable Robert Rivas, Speaker California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Nathan Barankin, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Christine Aurre, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Nani Coloretti, Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
California Assessor's Association (CAA)
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March 11, 2026

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
1020 N Street, Suite 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Laura Richardson
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 5
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Sharon Quirk-Silva
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Stabilizing the Subsequent Injuries Benefit Trust Fund (SIBTF) - SUPPORT

Dear Senate and Assembly Budget Chairs,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for comprehensive reforms to the Subsequent Injuries Benefit Trust Fund (SIBTF) that are currently being advanced through the state budget process. These reforms are critical to protecting local governments, employers, and legitimately injured workers from the mounting fiscal and administrative crisis facing the fund.

Originally established in 1945 to encourage the hiring of workers with pre-existing disabilities, particularly returning World War II veterans, the SIBTF was intended to provide supplemental benefits when a workplace injury combined with a documented prior disability to create significantly greater permanent impairment. However, over the last decade, a series of court decisions, outdated statutory language, and litigation abuses have broadened the program far beyond what the Legislature envisioned.

As a result, SIBTF costs have exploded:

- Applicant volume has nearly tripled, often involving minor or common health conditions rather than the severe disabilities for which the program was designed.
- Average benefits per claim have increased almost sixfold, from approximately \$13,700 to more than \$80,000.
- Assessments on public and private employers have risen by more than 800% since 2011.
- Total liabilities for resolved and pending cases now reach into the billions—potentially as high as \$28 billion.

These rising assessments function as an ever-growing tax on jobs and an increasing strain on state and local agency budgets. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), employers face annual lifetime liabilities of \$2 to \$3 billion per year for each new cohort of claims. In addition, the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) is struggling under severe backlogs, with many SIBTF cases taking five to eight years to resolve, delaying benefits for truly deserving workers and increasing administrative costs for all employers.

Recent analyses from RAND and the LAO reached the same conclusion: the broadened SIBTF program no longer reflects the Legislature's intended benefit structure. Both reports also identify a clear, balanced path forward to restore fiscal stability while preserving protections for workers with severe pre-existing conditions.

The comprehensive budget trailer bill under consideration reflects these expert recommendations and includes the following critical reforms:

- Strengthening eligibility criteria to ensure SIBTF benefits are reserved for workers whose combined disabilities genuinely meet the program's original purpose.
- Requiring documented pre-existing conditions, such as prior medical records, workplace accommodations, or testimony recorded before the industrial injury, to eliminate post-hoc assertions of disability.
- Restoring a rational method for combining disabilities by overturning the 2020 *Todd v. SIBTF* decision, which allowed simple addition of disabilities and drove a surge in maximum awards.
- Applying medical-legal reporting standards to SIBTF to create consistency with other workers' compensation processes and improve the integrity of evaluations.
- Investing in claims administration to reduce severe backlogs, provide timely benefits, and lower administrative costs for all employers.

By contrast, pending legislation such as AB 1576 (Ortega), while containing some helpful provisions, fails to address the core structural problems driving cost escalation and would leave employers and local governments exposed to continuing unsustainable liabilities. Governor Newsom vetoed similar legislation last year, noting that only comprehensive reforms, like those included in the current budget proposal, can stabilize the fund.

Swift legislative action, therefore, is essential. Without immediate reform, state and local governments, private employers, and the injured workers who depend on an efficient and fair system will face worsening delays, ballooning assessments, and growing financial exposure over the next decade.

March 11, 2026

Page 3 of 3

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports enactment of the comprehensive SIBTF reforms included in the proposed budget trailer bill and urges the Legislature to adopt them without delay.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized, flowing script.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
 Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Budget
 Honorable Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 5
 Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5
 Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
 Kern County Counsel – Risk Management Division
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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April 3, 2026

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal
Review Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8720
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

RE: Concerns with the Governor's 2026-27 Budget Proposal - Pretrial, Recovery Support, and Core Public Safety Services

Dear Chairs Laird and Gabriel,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to respectfully urge the Legislature to address significant public safety gaps in the Governor's 2026-27 proposed spending plan. Specifically, the Governor's proposed budget reduces critical pretrial services by \$20 million compared to the historical funding level, fails to fund probation departments for recovery support services in response to Proposition 36 implementation, and neglects to continue providing crucial county funding for lost fee revenue under AB 1869 (2020).

Pretrial Services

The statewide pretrial program supports courts in making safe, data-informed release decisions. The California Supreme Court's decision in *In re Humphrey* held that it is unconstitutional to detain a person before trial solely because they cannot afford bail, requiring courts to consider a defendant's ability to pay and non-monetary alternatives to ensure public safety and court appearance. California's pretrial services program has been historically funded at \$70 million statewide, allowing courts to contract with pretrial service providers to reduce unnecessary jail time for individuals who cannot afford monetary bail while promoting accountability and court appearance rates.

The Governor's proposed budget reduces the program by \$20 million in 2026-27 and ongoing—a 30 percent cut that directly jeopardizes the continued implementation of the *In*

re Humphrey requirements pertaining to the constitutional liberties of justice-involved individuals and the success of Proposition 36 and related diversion/treatment programs that already rely heavily on pretrial services funding.

From 2022-23 to 2024-25, pretrial average quarterly monitoring caseloads grew from 22,000 to 33,000—an increase of 11,000 individuals or 50 percent. Caseloads will only continue to grow as California relies more on pretrial services to support diversion/treatment programs and Prop 36 implementation.

We support Assembly Member Maggy Krell’s budget request, co-signed by 21 additional Assembly Members, calling for the restoration of the \$20 million reduction plus an augmentation of \$45 million ongoing.

Recovery Support Services

The voter-approved Proposition 36 demands a coordinated, treatment-oriented approach that succeeds only if courts and probation departments have the resources to assess, supervise, and support individuals from arrest through treatment completion.

Probation departments must assist courts and assess treatment options on the front-end and manage the increase in supervision caseloads and accountability monitoring. The state has not provided resources for probation departments to implement this voter expectation. Consequently, probation departments currently lack the resources necessary to assist with Proposition 36 implementation and reduce unnecessary incarceration. It is important to note that, regardless of the specific disposition by the court for a Proposition 36 case, all related cases have implications in pretrial on the front end.

Therefore, we support Senator Catherine Blakespear’s and Assembly Member Stephanie Nguyen’s joint calls for \$400 million to provide the statewide system responses needed to fulfill the new law requirements. This investment would build upon previously funded investments in treatment and court services and is necessary to expand service capacity, secure appropriate in-custody treatment, and allow for individualized planning, monitoring, and supervision for those in our communities. A portion of these funds would support probation’s responsibility to assist courts and provide supervision of recovery services.

Extend Criminal Justice Fee Elimination Backfill Funding

Finally, we request that the Administration extend the \$65 million backfill funding provided under AB 1869 (2020) through the 2025–26 fiscal year. These funds were intended to replace lost revenue from the elimination of various criminal justice fees that funded core county programs and services.

When a second round of criminal justice fees were repealed a year later, a \$50 million backfill was provided on an ongoing basis because the state recognized the impacts on counties are not limited-term in nature (AB 177, 2021). The AB 1869 funds were always expected to be revisited for ongoing consideration, not elimination. Allowing these funds to expire would

significantly impact counties' ability to maintain essential public safety and rehabilitative services, some of which were state-mandated programs originally funded through fee revenues. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and we look forward to ongoing dialogue to resolve these budgetary shortfalls.

Respectfully,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Laura Richardson, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review
Subcommittee No. 5
Members and Consultants, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 5
The Honorable James Ramos, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6
Members and Consultants, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, Department of Finance
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Probation Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

ITEM #7

April 13, 2026

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

RE: AB 2022 (Gonzalez), Disabled Veteran Homeowners Exemption

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on AB 2022 (Gonzalez). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

AB 2022 would create a property tax exemption for the principal residence of a veteran, the veteran's spouse, or both jointly, when the veteran is 100% disabled. The bill would also extend an equivalent exemption to an unmarried surviving spouse, subject to specified eligibility requirements.

To qualify, applicants must provide documentation to the county assessor. The bill prohibits a claimant from receiving any other real property tax exemption concurrently. The exemption would apply to lien dates from January 1, 2027, through January 1, 2032.

Although the bill creates a state-mandated local program by adding responsibilities for county assessors, AB 2022 explicitly states that the state will not reimburse local agencies for property tax revenue losses associated with these exemptions.

According to estimates from the Kern County Assessor's Office, the bill's changes could remove an estimated \$361 million from the County's assessment roll, resulting in approximately \$633,000 in lost General Fund revenue per year and \$375,000 in lost Fire Fund revenue per year over the applicable period.

Potential Pros

- **Support for Disabled Veterans** – Expands financial relief to veterans who are fully disabled, helping stabilize housing affordability for individuals facing significant medical and economic hardship.
- **Parallels Existing Policy Goals** – Aligns with long-standing state efforts to assist disabled veterans through property tax exemptions.
- **Predictable Time Frame** – The exemption is limited to a five-year window (2027–2032), allowing counties to plan for a defined fiscal impact.
- **Inclusive of Surviving Spouses** – Provides continuity of support for unmarried surviving spouses who may otherwise face sudden property-tax-related hardship after the veteran's death.

Potential Cons

- **Significant Local Revenue Loss** – Kern County alone may lose approximately \$633,000 in annual General Fund revenue and \$375,000 in Fire Fund revenue with no state backfill. This reduction may affect public safety, social services, and general operations.
- **Administrative Burden** – County assessors will face increased workload processing applications, verifying documentation, and enforcing prohibition on duplicative exemptions.
- **Lack of State Reimbursement** – The bill specifically excludes reimbursement, creating an unfunded mandate for local governments despite the constitutional framework requiring reimbursement for mandated local programs.
- **Equity and Precedent Concerns** – Expanding exemptions for one group could lead to pressure to broaden similar exemptions for other constituencies, affecting long-term tax base stability.

The Board previously supported a similar measure, SB 685 (Grove, 2021), that expanded disabled veteran property tax exemptions and provided a reduced exemption for partially disabled veterans. That bill made it out of the Senate but eventually died in the Assembly.

AB 2022 offers meaningful support to fully disabled veterans and their surviving spouses, but it carries substantial fiscal impacts to counties and creates an unfunded mandate at a time when local revenue pressures remain significant.

As of the date this memo was written to the LPC, the bill has been heard in committee but there is no registered support or opposition to the bill available on the State's Legislative Information website.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,



Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #8

April 13, 2026

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

**RE: AB 2214 (Jackson), Proposed Community Reinvestment Account under the
Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF)**

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on AB 2214 (Jackson). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

For brief context, the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF) is a voluntary investment program run by the California State Treasurer that lets local agencies, including counties, cities, and special districts safely deposit their public funds. The LAIF is analogous to a secure savings account that local agencies use to hold taxpayer dollars until they are needed for things like payroll and other essential services.

LAIF focuses on safety and quick access to money. Local agencies can withdraw their funds at any time, and the program follows strict rules to protect public dollars. Because it is managed conservatively and offers daily liquidity, LAIF is widely considered one of the safest places for local governments to keep short-term funds.

AB 2214 would create a new Community Reinvestment Account within the LAIF. The State Treasurer would be required to allocate between 5% and 10% of LAIF funds into this account, depositing those funds with financial institutions that meet specified performance standards related to community lending, including:

- Small business lending in underserved census tracts
- First-time or first-generation homebuyer lending

The bill also authorizes a modified collateral structure, allowing letters of credit from the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco at 90% collateralization, which is below existing requirements of 100%+. Collateralization at 100%+ ensures the lender can fully recover the loan amount if the borrower defaults. In addition, the bill would require institutions receiving deposits to submit quarterly, non-identifying performance reports, which the Treasurer would publish publicly.

Potential Pros

- **Promotes Community Reinvestment:** Directs funds toward institutions active in underserved markets, potentially expanding economic opportunity.

- **Supports Small Businesses and New Homebuyers:** Establishes measurable lending criteria intended to strengthen access to credit for historically underserved groups.
- **Improves Transparency:** Quarterly performance reporting may enhance visibility into community impacts.
- **Aligns Public Funds with Policy Goals:** Supports statewide objectives related to housing access and equitable economic development.

Potential Cons

- **Shift Away from LAIF's Core Purpose of Safety and Liquidity:** LAIF exists primarily as a conservative investment pool that local agencies use to safeguard public funds and maintain immediate liquidity for essential services. By directing up to 10% of LAIF assets into a program designed to incentivize specific lending outcomes, AB 2214 introduces policy-driven investment criteria that differ from LAIF's traditional focus on principal preservation and prudent cash management.
- **Increased Risk Exposure for Local Governments:** While the bill states that the Community Reinvestment Account must maintain security of principal and daily liquidity, it may allow deposits into institutions engaged in higher-risk lending activities, including small-business lending in underserved markets and first-generation homebuyer financing. These activities may carry greater credit risk than the investment instruments historically used within LAIF.
- **Significant Change in Collateralization Requirements:** The bill permits collateralization at 90%, substantially below current standards of 100%+. This represents a notable departure from existing safeguards and may conflict with the County's investment policy, which is built around strict protection of public funds.
- **Use of Alternative Credit-Enhancement Structures:** The proposal allows for risk-weighted safeguards supported by loan guarantees or credit enhancements, including those funded through the federal State Small Business Credit Initiative. These mechanisms differ from the conservative, state-approved securities LAIF traditionally relies upon.
- **Concerns Regarding Local Control of Public Funds:** Although counties and local agencies contribute significant deposits into LAIF, AB 2214 would grant the State Treasurer broad authority to determine which institutions receive deposits and how funds are allocated. Local jurisdictions would have limited ability to influence investment decisions involving their pooled funds.
- **Operational Complexity and Possible Reductions in LAIF Participation:** Increased risk, coupled with new administrative layers and reporting structures, may prompt some local agencies to reevaluate their participation in LAIF. The Treasurer-Tax Collector notes that many alternative liquidity vehicles are available, and the bill could unintentionally lead to a reduction in LAIF deposits.
- **Potential Precedent for Future Policy-Based Investment Programs:** Using LAIF as a financing mechanism for policy initiatives may open the door to future legislation expanding similar programs, gradually shifting LAIF away from its long-standing role as a conservative and risk-averse investment pool for local governments to one that favors lending for state policy goals.

In summary, although AB 2214 seeks to advance community reinvestment and broaden access to credit in underserved communities, it also introduces notable structural changes to LAIF that raise questions regarding risk exposure, collateral standards, local control, and alignment with long-standing public-fund investment principles. The Treasurer-Tax Collector has advised that the County oppose the measure based on these concerns unless amended to safeguard local government investment funds and preserve LAIF's core principles of safety, liquidity, and preservation of principal.

As of the date this memo was written to the LPC, the bill has not been heard in committee and, therefore, there is no registered support or opposition to the bill available on the State's Legislative Information website.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" being more prominent than the last name "Anderson".

Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #9

April 13, 2026

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

RE: SB 948 (Arreguin), Firearms safety certificates

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on SB 948 (Arreguin). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

SB 948 would expand California's firearm safety framework by requiring personal firearm importers to obtain a valid firearm safety certificate and include that certificate in the report submitted to the Department of Justice. The bill would also make it a misdemeanor to bring a firearm into the state without securing a certificate within 60 days, unless otherwise exempt.

Beginning July 1, 2028, the bill would require *all* firearm safety certificate applicants to complete an in-person training course of at least eight hours, including instruction on firearm safety, handling, and live-fire exercises at a shooting range. The Department of Justice would be authorized to promulgate regulations necessary for implementation. Because SB 948 establishes new misdemeanor offenses, it would create a state-mandated local program.

Potential Pros

- **Improved Public Safety:** More rigorous training and required live-fire practice could improve responsible firearm handling and reduce unintentional injuries.
- **Uniform Safety Standards:** Requiring personal firearm importers to meet the same certification requirements as California purchasers promotes consistency and closes existing safety-education gaps.
- **Enhanced Oversight:** Aligning importation reporting with proof of safety certification may strengthen the state's ability to track firearms entering California.
- **Alignment With National Best Practices:** Structured in-person training reflects methods used in other states and may be viewed as an improvement to California's firearm safety laws.

Potential Cons

- **Increased Local Costs and Workload:** New misdemeanor provisions may impose additional enforcement and prosecution costs for local jurisdictions.
- **Accessibility Constraints:** The eight-hour, in-person, live-fire requirement may pose barriers for residents in rural or underserved areas with limited access to certified instructors or firing ranges.

- **Compliance Delays for Lawful Owners:** Scheduling and completing a mandatory training course could delay lawful firearm importation, particularly for individuals who move into the state, as well as general firearm purchases by Californians.
- **Administrative Impact on DOJ and Training Providers:** Implementation will require regulatory development and oversight of instructors, courses, and certification standards.

In sum, SB 948 expands current firearm safety laws by integrating certification requirements into firearm importation and by mandating more comprehensive training statewide. The bill may offer public-safety benefits, but it also introduces fiscal and operational considerations for local agencies as well as possible Constitutional rights implications for individuals.

Proponents of the bill include: Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund; Giffords; Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America; Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, and Team Enough – UC Berkeley Chapter.

Opponents of the bill include: the California Rifle and Pistol Association; Gun Owners of California, and the National Rifle Association – Institute for Legislative Action.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,



Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #10

April 13, 2026

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

RE: SB 88 – Increased regulations on school transportation

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on SB 88, which was brought before the full Board during public comment on March 10, 2026 for consideration by the Board due to its implications for school transportation regulations.

After reviewing the bill text for SB 88 in the current 2025-26 Legislative Session, it was determined by staff that the bill was authored by Senator Caballero and deals with carbon emissions standards related to biomass products. The bill does not propose changes in the law that would relate to school transportation regulations. SB 88 (Caballero) made it to the Governor's desk in September of 2025 where it was later vetoed by the Governor on October 3, 2025. That veto was upheld by the legislature in March 2026.

After reviewing prior legislative sessions, staff determined that the bill information brought before the Board during public comment may have related to SB 88 (Skinner, 2023) which was eventually signed into law by the Governor in October 2023. That bill (SB 88, Skinner 2023) was intended to strengthen safety and accountability standards for anyone who transports students for compensation by requiring drivers to complete tuberculosis risk assessments, meet certain qualification rules, and use vehicles that have been inspected and equipped with basic safety equipment like first aid kits and fire extinguishers.

There are currently no bills authored in the 2025-26 legislative session as either SB 88 or AB 88 that relate to the policy issue brought forth during public comment.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC receive and file this report.

Sincerely,

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

Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #11

April 13, 2026

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

RE: AB 1421 (Wilson), Road usage charge technical advisory committee

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on AB 1421 (Wilson). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

AB 1421 would require the California Transportation Commission, in consultation with the California State Transportation Agency, to compile existing research from state and academic sources and prepare recommendations on the feasibility and structure of a road user charge or mileage-based fee. The resulting report must be submitted to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2027.

The bill directs the report to address:

- Current and future inequities faced by low-income drivers who often commute longer distances in less fuel-efficient vehicles.
- The potential impacts of a weight-per-mile fee on commercial and electric vehicles, and the broader motor vehicle industry.
- Regional and statewide considerations for implementing a road user charge system, including approaches for capturing out-of-state vehicle usage.

In conducting its analysis, the Commission must consult a wide range of stakeholders, including state agencies, local governments, regional transportation planning agencies, privacy and data-security experts, equity and environmental justice organizations, academic researchers, transportation user groups, and organizations representing zero-emission vehicle owners and manufacturers.

Potential Pros

- **Informed Decision-Making:** The bill consolidates existing research and expert input, enabling legislators to evaluate options for addressing the long-term erosion of gas-tax revenues with more comprehensive and current information.
- **Focus on Equity:** By specifically analyzing disproportionate impacts on low-income drivers, the study may help guide the development of funding mechanisms that are fair and sensitive to household transportation burdens.
- **Industry and Regional Input:** Consultation with vehicle manufacturers, freight operators, and regional transportation agencies may help identify operational or economic obstacles early, improving feasibility and acceptance.

- **Preparation for Future Funding Needs:** California's transition to electric vehicles will reduce fuel-tax revenues; this study may help the state modernize its transportation funding model.

Potential Cons

- **Administrative Workload:** Coordinating research, stakeholder consultation, and report preparation may increase workload for the California Transportation Commission and partner agencies.
- **Uncertainty for Stakeholders:** Analyzing potential weight-per-mile or road-user fees may create concern among commercial carriers, EV owners, and other groups about future cost implications, even though the bill does not implement a fee.
- **Potential for Increased Costs:** Although AB 1421 is limited to research, it may lay the groundwork for future fees that could increase transportation costs for residents and businesses.
- **Complex Policy Environment:** Capturing usage from out-of-state vehicles and addressing privacy protections for mileage tracking present substantial implementation challenges that may require significant future legislative action.

In sum, AB 1421 establishes a research-driven process to evaluate options for replacing deteriorating gas-tax revenue and modernizing transportation funding. The bill outlines both equity considerations and operational analyses, while also presenting potential administrative and political challenges.

Proponents of the bill include: American Council of Engineering Companies, Associated General Contractors of California, Bay Area Council, Cal Chamber, California Advanced Biofuels Alliance, California Alliance for Jobs, California Asphalt Pavement Association, California Association of Councils of Governments, California Cattlemen's Association, California Construction & Industrial Materials Association, California Fresh Fruit Association, California State Association of Counties, California State Council of Laborers, CBIA, Engineering & Utility Contractors Association DbA United Contractors, Granite Construction, International Union of Operating Engineers, League of California Cities, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, Nor Cal Carpenters Union, Rebuild So-Cal Partnership, Rural County Representatives of California, Southern California Contractors Association, Transportation California, Urban Counties of California, Western Regional Association for Pavement Preservation, Western United Dairies.

As of the date this memo was written to the LPC, the bill has passed the Assembly and moved over to the Senate, however there is **no registered opposition** to the bill available on the State's Legislative Information website.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,



Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #12

April 13, 2026

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

RE: AB 2445 (Hoover), State Capitol Annex and other public infrastructure projects

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on AB 2445 (Hoover). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

AB 2445 would modify existing law governing the renovation or reconstruction of the State Capitol Building Annex by requiring that the Capitol visitor center be located within the newly constructed or restored annex. The bill prohibits the entrance to the visitor center from being placed on the west side of the west wing of the Capitol. Additionally, any project undertaken under the authority of the Act would be prohibited from making significant changes to the west plaza and west steps of the State Capitol's west wing.

The bill further provides that any nondisclosure agreement (NDA) related to the State Capitol Building Annex project is void and unenforceable.

Beyond Capitol-specific provisions, AB 2445 would also prohibit any person, beginning January 1, 2027, from entering into an NDA related to a public infrastructure project, as defined. Any NDA of this type executed on or after that date would be rendered null and unenforceable.

Potential Pros

- **Increased Transparency:** By prohibiting nondisclosure agreements for both the Capitol Annex and future public infrastructure projects, the bill promotes public access to information and strengthens transparency in government decision-making.
- **Preservation of Historic Spaces:** Restrictions on altering the west steps and west plaza protect the historic and symbolic features of the Capitol grounds.
- **Clearer Public Access Requirements:** Mandating the siting and entrance location of the visitor center may reduce disputes over project design and maintain predictable public access patterns around the building.
- **Standardized Public Disclosure Practices:** Statewide NDA restrictions could establish uniform rules across all public infrastructure projects, simplifying compliance for agencies and contractors.

Potential Cons

- **Reduced Flexibility in Capitol Renovation:** Limiting visitor center design choices and barring modifications to the west plaza and steps may impact project efficiency, cost, or safety upgrades.
- **Operational Challenges for Counties and Local Agencies:** A blanket statewide prohibition on NDAs for public infrastructure projects could complicate negotiations involving sensitive engineering, security, or proprietary information.
- **Possible Increased Litigation Risk:** Without the option to protect confidential data through NDAs, public entities may face challenges managing intellectual property claims or safeguarding critical infrastructure details.
- **Unintended Scope:** “Public infrastructure project” is defined in the bill as “the construction of buildings, structures, or other facilities that are paid for with public funds”. That definition may have broader-than-intended implications for local procurement, contracting, or public-private partnerships.

In summary, AB 2445 combines Capitol-specific project requirements with a broader statewide policy prohibiting nondisclosure agreements in public infrastructure projects. While the bill advances transparency objectives and preserves historic Capitol elements, it may also introduce operational, contractual, and legal considerations for local governments and contractors.

As of the date this memo was written to the LPC, the bill has not been heard in committee and, therefore, there is no registered support or opposition to the bill available on the State’s Legislative Information website.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,



Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

ITEM #13

April 13, 2026

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

RE: AB 2342 (Hoover), Gubernatorial authority to reverse parole decisions

This memorandum is meant to provide a focused framework for LPC discussion and direction on AB 2342 (Hoover). Staff have deemed that this bill would benefit from more robust vetting before an official county position can be taken.

Under current law, the Governor may affirm, modify, or reverse a decision of the Board of Parole Hearings when the individual was sentenced to an indeterminate term following a conviction for murder. Separately, state law classifies certain offenses as violent felonies for purposes of sentencing and parole eligibility.

AB 2342 would broaden the Governor's review authority to include decisions to grant parole to individuals convicted of a violent felony, whether sentenced to an indeterminate or determinate term, *if* parole was granted through the Elderly Parole Program or the youth offender parole program. In such cases, the Governor would be authorized to reverse or modify the Board's decision.

These provisions would take effect only if a corresponding Assembly Constitutional Amendment adopted during the 2025–26 Regular Session is approved by voters in the November 3, 2026 statewide election.

Potential Pros

- **Enhanced Executive Oversight:** The bill expands the Governor's authority to review parole decisions involving individuals convicted of violent felonies, which may reassure the public regarding accountability and consistency in high-impact parole cases.
- **Alignment With Voter-Approved Constitutional Changes:** Implementation would depend on passage of the accompanying constitutional amendment, ensuring that statutory changes reflect voter intent.
- **Additional Review for Specialized Parole Programs:** Applying gubernatorial oversight to Elderly Parole and youth offender parole programs may provide a secondary check on decisions involving individuals whose release is evaluated under special criteria.

Potential Cons

- **Increased State and Local Workload:** Expanding the Governor's scope of review could increase administrative and legal workloads for the Board of Parole Hearings and related agencies.

- **Legal and Constitutional Complexity:** The effectiveness of AB 2342 is contingent on passage of a separate constitutional amendment, creating uncertainty about timing, implementation, and operational readiness.
- **Potential Delays in Parole Finalization:** Extended timelines for reviewing parole grants could increase detention costs and delay transition planning for individuals deemed suitable for parole by the Board.

In summary, AB 2342 expands gubernatorial oversight to parole decisions involving violent felony convictions when parole is granted under the Elderly Parole or youth offender parole programs. While the bill may strengthen accountability and align with public-safety concerns, it may also introduce administrative burdens and procedural delays. Because AB 2342 becomes operative only upon voter approval of a related constitutional amendment, its full impact depends on outcomes of the November 2026 statewide election.

As of the date this memo was written to the LPC, the bill has not been heard in committee and, therefore, there is no registered support or opposition to the bill available on the State's Legislative Information website.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that the LPC discuss the proposed legislation and, if so desired, make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a position on the measure at a future BOS meeting.

Sincerely,



Nancy Anderson
County Administrative Officer

NA:TB AB 2342 Gubernatorial authority to reverse parole decisions (LPC)