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.

July 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: 224 943 214 091 33
Passcode: vA2Ja2L3

Or join by Phone:
+1 831-296-3421
Phone conference ID: 598 628 500#

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 April 13, 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. **Direction for new committee business at future meetings –** DISCUSS; PROVIDE DIRECTION

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Americans with Disabilities Act
(Government Code Section 54954.2)

Disabled individuals who need special assistance to attend or participate in a meeting of the Board of Supervisors Standing Committee 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.

Item #4

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

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: PHILLIP PETERS AND JEFF FLORES PRESENT**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
   This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address Committee Members on any matter not on this agenda, but under the jurisdiction of the Committee. Committee Members may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed. They may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff for factual information or request staff to report back to the Committee at a later meeting. Also, the Committee may take action to direct staff to place a matter of business on a future agenda. SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO TWO MINUTES. PLEASE STATE AND SPELL YOUR NAME BEFORE MAKING YOUR PRESENTATION: **NO PUBLIC COMMENT MADE**

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

5. **Update on Federal issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary** – RECEIVED AND FILED; SPENCER STREET REPRESENTING TOWNSEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS; SUPERVISOR FLORES GAVE DIRECTION ON VETERAN CLINIC IN BAKERSFIELD

6. **Update on State issues of interest to the County; direct staff to act as necessary –** RECEIVED AND FILED; PAUL YODER REPRESENTING SYASL GAVE PRESENTATION ON CURRENT EVENTS; NO DIRECTION PROVIDED

7. **AB 2022 (Gonzalez), Disabled veteran homeowners exemption –** RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO SUPORT IF AMENDED – SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND – CHARLES SCHINN HEARD

8. **AB 2214 (Jackson), Proposed Community Reinvestment Account under the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF) –** RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO OPPOSE – SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND – JORDAN KAUFMAN REPRESENTING KERN COUNTY TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR HEARD

9. **SB 948 (Arreguin), Firearms safety certificates** – RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO MONITOR – SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND – DENNIS MCLAIN AND CHARLES SCHINN HEARD

10. **SB 88, Increased regulations on school transportation –** RECEIVED AND FILED; NO DIRECTION PROVIDED **–** DENNIS MCLAIN AND CHARLES SCHINN HEARD

11. **AB 1421 (Wilson), Road usage charge technical advisory committee –** RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO OPPOSE – SUPERVISOR PETERS FIRST; SUPERVISOR FLORES SECOND – DENNIS MCLAIN AND CHARLES SCHINN HEARD

12. **AB 2445 (Hoover), State Capitol Annex and other public infrastructure projects –** RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO SUPPORT IF AMENDED – SUPERVISOR PETERS FIRST; SUPERVISOR FLORES SECOND – CHARLES SCHINN AND DENNIS MCLAIN HEARD

13. **AB 2342 (Hoover), Gubernatorial authority to reverse parole decisions –** RECEIVED AND FILED; MEMBERS MOVED TO MONITOR – SUPERVISOR FLORES FIRST; SUPERVISOR PETERS SECOND – CHARLES SCHINN HEARD

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

15. ADJOURNMENT – ADJOURNED TO NEXT MEETING 7/13/2026 – 2:00 PM

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.

TOWNSEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
WWW.TOWNSENDPA.COM

Item #5

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: July 13, 2026

Subject: Legislative Program Committee Federal Affairs Report

This report provides an overview of key federal developments affecting Kern County, including updates on the County's Fiscal Year 2027 Community Project Funding requests, congressional activity on major legislation, federal agency actions, and emerging policy issues under consideration in Washington.

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. Following consideration by the delegation three projects were selected totaling $11.1 million in projects. These three projects have all been included in House appropriations bills and await further consideration. A summary of the selected projects and their status is in the table below:

Project	Delegation Member	Dollar Amount of Request	Status/Notes
Panama Road Rehabilitation Project	Rep. Valadao	$4,900,000	Included in H.R. 9170, the House Transportation-HUD appropriations bill.
California City Boulevard Extension Project	Rep. Obernolte, Rep. Fong, Sen. Schiff	$3,000,000	Included in H.R. 9170, the House Transportation-HUD appropriations bill.
Kern County Emergency Communications Project	Rep. Valadao	$3,200,000	Included in H.R. 8845, the House Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill.

H.R. 8845, the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Bill was reported out of the House Appropriations Committee on May 13, 2026 by a vote of 32-28 and awaits consideration by the

Full House of Representatives, likely during the month of July. Similarly, H.R. 9170, the House Transportation-HUD Appropriations Bill was reported out of the House Appropriations Committee on June 3, 2026 by a vote of 34-27 and awaits consideration by the full House.

Federal Legislative Update

USDA Releases California SNAP Payment Error Rate, Triggering 15% Benefits Cost Share Under HR 1

On June 24, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) released the Fiscal Year 2025 Payment Error Rates for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh). California's Payment Error Rate for the year was 10.93%. Under HR 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), states with an error rate of 6% or below will have no cost share; 6-8% will be 5%; 8-10% will be 10%; and 10% and above, like California, will be responsible for 15% of the total benefit allotments.

A February report from the California Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that beginning in October 2027, the 15% cost-share will create $2 billion in new annual expenditures to support SNAP. More immediately, the OBBBA's changes to the administrative cost-share arrangement currently split 50% federal, 35% state, 15% county. Beginning in October of this year, the new cost-share will be 25% federal, 52.5% state, and 22.5% county. This is expected to result in $480 million and $190 million in new annual expenditures for the state and counties, respectively.

OMB Proposes Rewrite of Uniform Grants Guidance

On May 29, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in coordination with federal grantmaking agencies, published a proposed rule to rewrite 2 CFR Part 200, commonly known as the Uniform Guidance, which governs federal grants, cooperative agreements, and pass-through awards received by state and local governments. The proposal would be the largest revision to federal grant rules since the Uniform Guidance was first established in 2013, and OMB has proposed an October 1, 2026, effective date, with public comments due July 13, 2026. The rule would reclassify portions of the Uniform Guidance from administrative guidance to binding federal regulation, establish new pre-award review requirements tied to federal agency and Administration priorities, expand agency authority to terminate or suspend awards, integrate grants administration with the Treasury Do Not Pay system, and revise requirements related to cost principles, audits, and pass-through entity oversight.

For counties like Kern County, the proposed rule could have significant operational and fiscal implications because the Uniform Guidance applies across nearly every major federal funding stream counties rely on, including public safety, transportation, housing, public health, workforce development, child welfare, emergency management, and environmental protection programs. The most immediate concerns include the potential for greater uncertainty in award approvals, additional compliance burdens for County departments administering federal funds, heightened monitoring responsibilities for subrecipients, and increased risk that awards could be delayed, modified, or terminated after approval based on evolving federal priorities.

EPA Transmits Additional Emissions Waivers to Congress for Review

On June 12, the Environmental Protect Agency (EPA) announced the transmission of four Clean Air Act (CAA) preemptive waivers for the State of California to Congress for review under the Congressional Review Act (CRA), which allows Congress to reject an agency regulation. The

California Department of Justice (CalDOJ) has been in litigation with the EPA and Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding the EPA and Congress' ability to deny these waivers, which allow California to impose higher air quality standards than the CAA, without changing the underlying law.

Last year, the Supreme Court allowed the litigation to proceed, and the CRA disapprovals from Congress to stand, leaving the status of the preemptive waivers unclear. The four rules would allow California to impose vehicle emissions standards higher than the federal level, including small offroad engines (SORE) such as lawn and garden equipment, and overall Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for vehicle manufacturers.

It is likely Congress will consider the CRA disapprovals, and ultimately pass them for the President's signature. Litigation is expected to resolve before the end of the calendar year.

Senate Continues to Delay Appropriations Markups, Proposes to Move Forward Without Bipartisan Support

With Senate Appropriator Mitch McConnell hospitalized this week, the Senate Appropriations Committee again postponed scheduled markups of their Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) appropriations bills. Without McConnell's vote, Republicans do not have a majority on the Committee. This leaves them almost a month behind schedule, and far behind the House, which was scheduled to consider the Energy and Water Development; National Security, Department of State, and Related Agencies bills this week on the floor.

The compounding delays threaten passage of final bills by the September 30 end of the fiscal year and has led some Republican Senators to propose pushing ahead with the FY27 bills without Democratic support, which will only let the bills pass out of committee but not meet the 60-vote threshold required to pass off the Senate floor. Disagreements on topline spending numbers remain, as the White House is advocating for significant increases to military spending and cuts to social programs.

Typically, Appropriators in both chambers work to pass all 12 appropriations bills of their respective floors before the August recess, allowing staff to work over August and members through September to reconcile the two versions of each bill and come to a bipartisan agreement. Any movement away from bipartisanship in the Senate and the continued delays threaten Congress's ability to complete the appropriations process on time, and increase the chances of a government shutdown or continuing resolution at the end of September.

Congress Passes Major Housing Policy Package, the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, Awaits Presidential Action

On June 23, the House passed a compromise version of HR 6644, the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, sending it to the President for signature. The bill represents the largest set of housing policy reforms in over three decades.

The bill would allow Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to be used for affordable housing development, reauthorize the HOME Investment Partnership Program, create waivers for caps on Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding, allow community banks to assume higher amounts of Federal Housing Authority (FHA) backed mortgage debt, exempt certain projects from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews and labor standards, and enact a prohibition on institutional investors owning large numbers of single family homes.

While the bill would create new programs, it contains no advance appropriations and would need to be funded via the appropriations process. The bill maintains much of the Senate's original ROAD to Housing Act released in July of last year, preserves the bipartisan housing program changes from the Housing for the 21st Century Act, nine of the 11 House community banking bills, and language to ban large institutional investors from buying single-family homes.

After final action by the President, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Council on Environmental Quality will need to follow the rulemaking process to implement the new statute.

Senate Agriculture Committee Releases Farm Bill

On June 23, the Senate Committee on Agriculture released text of a new Farm Bill. The Farm Bill sets federal agriculture, conservation, and nutrition assistance policy for a five-year period following its enactment, though a complete package has not been passed since 2018.

As with most legislation in the Senate, passage of a Farm Bill generally requires 60 votes. The version released on June 23 excludes several Democratic priorities, including a demand that the draft reverses the implementation of a benefit cost-share between the state and federal government for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) created in HR 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently published California's payment error rate of 10.93%, used to determine a benefits cost-share of 15% under the legislation.

The 15% cost share will create $2 billion in new annual costs for the state, alongside $480 million for the administrative cost-share increases and $190 million for counties. Democrats oppose these changes on the basis some states could opt to withdraw from SNAP or reduce benefit amounts. Disagreements also remain regarding animal welfare and pesticide mitigation provisions included in the House draft, passed as HR 7567.

The lack of agreement increases the likelihood of extensions throughout the remainder of the year, as various programs under the Farm Bill extended by HR 1 or other stand-alone measures begin to expire in October.

With the Second Reconciliation Bill Complete, Congressional Republicans Look Towards a Third Tax and Spending Package

With the passage of S 2, the Secure America Act, providing funding for immigration enforcement agencies for the remainder of the President's term in office, Congressional leaders are looking towards passage of another reconciliation package before the midterm elections in the fall. Republican Leaders are hoping a third tax and spending package could deliver more of their priorities before they potentially lose control of the House.

Budget reconciliation is a special process allowing tax and spending measures to be passed without the usual 60-vote threshold in the Senate. In exchange for bypassing that requirement, they require extra procedural votes to ensure agreement amongst the majority party in both chambers pushing the bill forward. Due to House Speaker Mike Johnson's narrow majority in the House, alongside several Senate Republicans the President helped defeat in primary elections, questions remain about whether or not the political willpower exists to pass another bill.

During a budget hearing on June 9, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Susan Collins and Defense Subcommittee Chair Mitch McConnel both expressed skepticism about

passage of a third reconciliation bill, while Republican Study Committee Chair Pfluger remains committed to a third package. The Iranian conflict could push a third reconciliation bill forward, as the Department of Defense (DoD) could need the funding to cover the costs and restore weapons stockpiles, with an estimated cost of $80 to $100 billion. Republican Leaders would hope to attach some of their domestic priorities to any defense supplemental.

House Financial Services Committee Looks to Reform CDBG-DR Funds

On June 10, the House Financial Service Committee's Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing titled Examining Local Needs in Disaster Recovery. The hearing focused on the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) administration of the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery Program (CBDG-DR).

Both sides of the aisle expressed significant concern regarding the slow expenditure of CDBG-DR funds, of which only 59% of the Congressionally-appropriated funding has been spent since the program's inception. Unlike regular CDBG, CDBG-DR is funded through supplemental appropriations made following a natural disaster and is usually accompanied by support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As such, while CDBG-DR generally follows the regulatory framework of regular CDBG grants, certain exceptions can be made for each disaster, such as reducing the amount of funding dedicated to low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities. HUD is also generally provided with additional flexibility in administering the funding.

Testimony from an analyst with the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a nonpartisan research and analysis center within the Library of Congress, identified a variety of causes ranging from HUD delays to poor grant management by recipients. Chairman Mike Floor also noted that the program's authorization, the statute setting policy and allowing appropriators to fund the account, has long expired. HR 8291, the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act, would permanently authorize the program, but has not yet received consideration by the Committee.

HUD to Propose New Definition of Manufactured Home

On June 12, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking announced a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to revise the definition of "manufactured home." Manufactured homes generally trigger additional federal regulations to site under 42 USC 5401, including the requirement to have a permanent chassis for transportation of the home once constructed.

Under the NPRM, a manufactured home would only be required to have a permanent chassis in the "lowest transportable section" of the home, allowing a second story and eligibility for certain Federal Housing Authority (FHA) loans that are confined by statute.

Additionally, HR 6644, the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, due for consideration in the Senate on June 18, would revise the definition of manufactured home to eliminate the requirement for a permanent chassis. The goal of both provisions is to allow manufactured housing to comply with local building codes in place of HUD regulations, and allow for greater variation in manufactured home building and siting, as the majority of manufactured homes are not moved once installed.

EPA Proposes Updated State Implementation Plane Guidance for Ozone

On June 9, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a proposed rule revising the prior Administration's January 2025 final rule requiring states to keep certain State Implementation Plan (SIP) requirements based on an area's prior failure to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone established in the Clean Air Act (CAA).

Under the prior rule, states were still required to continue with certain planning requirements of a SIP associated with the previous noncompliance determination by EPA. Forcing states to continue meeting the legacy requirements even if air quality in the region had improved.

According to the EPA's fact sheet, under the proposed rule only an area's latest classification would be used to govern the requirements for SIPs going forward, this will negate a 2025 rule from the prior Administration and all previous requirements under the 2008 and 2015 NAAQS standards for ozone pollution.

HUD Releases FY26 Continuum of Care NOFO with Significant Modifications

On June 1, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Continuum of Care (CoC) program. The FY26 CoC NOFO provides a little over $4 billion in funding for permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and youth homelessness demonstration grants nationwide.

In November 2025, HUD attempted to significantly alter the FY25 NOFO, reducing the percentage of the funding to be used for annual renewal demand (ARD/automatic renewals), to continue housing Permanent Supportive Housing recipients, from 90% to 30%. This change, along with others in the FY25 NOFO, led to several delays and lawsuits.

Congress effectively resolved the lawsuits through the FY26 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill HR 7148, which required the FY25 NOFO to follow previous NOFOs and allocate 90% of the funding to ARD. In a compromise, it also allowed future NOFOs, including the FY26 version, to reduce the amount of funding for ARD to 60%, and allowed HUD Secretary Scott Turner to make other discretionary programmatic changes.

The FY26 NOFO makes significant changes beyond reducing the amount of funding for permanent supportive housing, including allowing faith-based organizations to access the funding, and prioritizing projects that require sobriety and work, only provide supportive services, and provide time-limited transitional housing or rapid rehousing. Historically, the program has provided close to 90% of its funding to permanent supportive housing recipients.

EPA Launches New Superfund Cleanup Initiative

On June 3, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a new Superfund Solutions Initiative to accelerate the cleanup of contaminated sites nationwide. The initiative applies to more than 1,340 sites on the National Priorities List (NPL) and, according to EPA, is intended to expedite remediation efforts through streamlined decision-making, updated management practices, expanded use of scientific tools, and increased coordination with local governments.

Per the press release, the initiative will focus on three areas: enhancing project management, deploying cleanup tools and authorities earlier in the process, and applying updated scientific approaches to site assessments and remediation decisions. Planned actions include expediting investigations at more than 500 sites, increasing environmental sampling and inspections,

accelerating cleanup planning and decision documents, expanding state participation in cleanups, and standardizing approaches across jurisdictions.

EPA stated that since January 2025, more than 290 Superfund cleanups have been completed, over 59 million cubic yards of contaminated soil and water have been remediated, and $864 million has been recovered from responsible parties. The Agency said it will track and publicly report progress on the initiative through its website and quarterly Superfund Accomplishments Reports.

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
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 yea-nay 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

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
S. 4603	Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026	Sen. Schiff	Support	A bill to amend the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 to establish a demonstration program with respect to the golden mussel.	Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works. 5/20/2026
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 Fisal Year 2026.	Became law (P.L. 119-37) as part of H.R. 5371 11/12/2025 Amended in the Senate, passed the Seante by Yea-Nay vote 81-15 8/1/2025 On passage passed the House by the Yeas and Nays: 218 – 206 6/25/2025
H.R. 3132	CHOICE for Veterans Act of 2025	Rep. Jack Bergman	Oppose	To amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for certain fee agreements for services rendered in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of initial claims and supplemental claims for benefits under laws	Ordered to be Reported by the House Committee on Veterans Affairs by the Yeas and Nays: 12 - 11. 5/6/2025

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
				administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.	
H.R. 2499	To Codify Executive Order 14248	Rep. Abraham Hamadeh	Support	The bill would codify Executive Order 14248 entitled “Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections,” giving it the full effect of law.	Introduced and referred to the Committees on House Administration, Judiciary, and Ways and Means. 3/31/2025
S. 1240	Defending America’s Future Elections Act	Sen. Alex Padilla	Oppose	S. 1240 seeks to repeal Executive Order 14248, entitled "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections", and prohibit federal coordination and use of certain data sources to verify voter eligibility.	Introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration 4/1/2025
H.R. 22/S. 128	SAVE Act	Rep. Chip Roy/Sen. Mike Lee	Support	A bill to require documentary proof of US citizenship when registering to vote in federal elections.	H.R. 22 Received in the Senate 4/10/2025 House. On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 220 - 208

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Position	Summary	Latest Major Action
					(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

June 15, 2026

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building #112
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building #331
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S. 4603 (Schiff), Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026 - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Schiff and Senator Padilla,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for S. 4603, the Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026. This legislation represents a critical and urgently needed step toward combating the threat posed by the invasive golden mussel to California's water systems, infrastructure, environment, and communities.

Although the bill's primary implementation area is the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta, Kern County relies heavily on water resources, conveyance infrastructure, and ecological stability connected to statewide water systems. The rapid spread of the golden mussel threatens water quality, agricultural operations, public infrastructure, hydropower and conveyance systems, and the overall reliability of the water supply, issues of central importance to our residents, farms, and local economy.

We are particularly supportive of the bill's provisions to:

- Establish a comprehensive demonstration program focused on prevention, monitoring, eradication, research, public education, and early-warning systems to track the mussel's spread.
- Develop and evaluate innovative control and eradication technologies, including those applicable to water intakes, conveyance structures, fish screens, vessels, and other critical infrastructure.
- Provide technical assistance and ensure that information, research, and best-practice guidelines are shared with state and local agencies that must prepare for and respond to this invasive species.
- Create a competitive grant program enabling local governments, research institutions, and industry partners to contribute directly to solutions and accelerate technology deployment.
- Authorize sustained federal funding necessary to ensure long-term success in containment and eradication efforts.

As a region deeply dependent on reliable, clean, and efficiently delivered water, Kern County recognizes the profound risks that invasive species like the golden mussel pose to local communities statewide. Federal leadership and coordination, as envisioned in S. 4603, will significantly strengthen California's capacity to prevent an ecological and infrastructure crisis.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is pleased to offer its full support for S. 4603 and respectfully urges Congress to advance and enact this vital legislation. Thank you for your leadership in addressing this urgent issue.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern House Delegation
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
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

April 27, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for the City of Delano's 2026 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan Development Project

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for the City of Delano's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's SS4A Competitive Grant Program to develop and update a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan focused on reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.

Roadway safety is a shared priority for local and county governments throughout Kern County. Fatal and serious injury crashes have far reaching impacts on residents, families, emergency responders, and public resources. Developing a comprehensive, data driven Safety Action Plan will allow the City of Delano to better understand local safety challenges and identify effective strategies to reduce preventable crashes and improve outcomes for all roadway users.

The proposed Action Plan aligns with broader county and regional goals related to public safety, mobility, and quality of life. Through a structured planning process, the City will be able to evaluate crash trends, identify high risk locations, and prioritize evidence-based strategies that address factors such as speed management, visibility, and the safety of vulnerable roadway users, consistent with the Safe System Approach.

The Kern County Board of Supervisors supports the City's commitment to collaboration, community engagement, and coordination with partner agencies throughout the planning process. A well-developed SS4A Action Plan will also position the City to pursue future implementation funding for projects that complement county and regional transportation and safety objectives.

We commend the City of Delano for its proactive approach to improving roadway safety and respectfully encourage favorable consideration of this SS4A Planning Grant application. We look

forward to continued collaboration in support of safer streets and roadways for residents of Delano and the surrounding region.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: City of Delano
Kern Council of Governments
Kern County Public Works Department
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
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

June 3, 2026

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

RE: Local Workforce Investment in Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties and the FY2027 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill

Dear Representative Valadao,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to share information about the federally funded workforce system in Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties and how decisions in the FY2027 appropriations process would affect the people and employers we serve. The Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee is scheduled to mark up the FY2027 bill on June 5, with full Committee consideration to follow on June 9. This letter is intended to inform your understanding of conditions on the ground in your district. We are not asking you to take a position on any specific amendment; we want you to have accurate local information as the Committee does its work.

The Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board oversees the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I system, operating the America's Job Centers of California that connect residents to employment, skills training, and support services, and that help local employers in agriculture, energy, healthcare, and logistics find and develop the workers they need. We serve job seekers who face real barriers to stable employment, including dislocated workers, low-income adults, veterans, people re-entering the workforce, and young people making the transition from school to work.

For the current program year (PY2025-26), Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties received roughly $18.9 million in WIOA Title I formula funds: $6.8 million for the Adult program, $5.3 million for the Dislocated Worker program, and $6.8 million for the Youth program. The funds pay for the career staff, training contracts, and one-stop centers that residents and businesses in your district rely on every week.

At the same time, federal law has substantially increased the demand on this system. H.R. 1 expanded SNAP work requirements, effective November 1, 2025, to adults through age 64 and to parents of school-age children, and it established Medicaid community-engagement requirements that take effect January 1, 2027. Nationally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that roughly 8.8 million people are newly subject to the SNAP requirements and 18.5 million Medicaid enrollees will be subject to the new

community-engagement rules. Most of these individuals are already working. The available evidence indicates that about 74% of work-age SNAP participants work over the course of a year and roughly 64% of Medicaid adults are employed. The practical challenge for our constituents is documentation, verification, and connection to qualifying activities.

These mandates land directly in your district. District-level estimates compiled from U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) data (and calibrated to the CBO national totals) indicate that in CA-22, approximately 32,000 residents are now subject to the expanded SNAP work requirements and roughly 90,000 Medicaid expansion enrollees will be subject to the community-engagement requirements that begin in January. The district's poverty rate is just under 23%, and an estimated 28,000 workers are employed in occupations highly exposed to AI and automation. The local workforce development system is positioned to help these residents document compliance, keep their health and food assistance, and connect to employment, while supplying local employers with the workers they need. That demand is arriving in Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties now, without any additional WIOA funding to meet it.

It is worth placing this moment in a longer context. The WIOA Adult appropriation has been essentially flat in nominal terms for a decade, rising only from about $817 million in FY2016 to $875 million in FY2026, a level that has not kept pace with inflation. The decline is starker over the longer run. Federal investment in workforce development peaked in 1979 and has fallen by more than three-quarters in real terms since. This decline comes even as the national labor force has grown by roughly 61%. Measured per worker, federal workforce spending has fallen from around $210 in 1979 to roughly $30 today in constant dollars. The system has been asked to do more with steadily less for many years.

The funding levels the House most recently advanced show what is at stake, and the way WIOA is funded makes the proposal more severe than a single percentage suggests. WIOA Adult grants reach a local area in two installments each year: a smaller base installment available July 1 and a larger installment available the following October 1. In its FY2026 Labor-HHS bill (H.R. 5304), the House Appropriations Committee proposed:

- Elimination of the WIOA Youth Activities formula program (the roughly $948 million stream the Senate bill preserved);
- To fund the Adult program at $712 million and provide only the October installment, eliminating the July base installment;
- To rescind an additional $712 million from WIOA funds already made available on October 1, 2025 under the current continuing resolution (Public Law 119-4), an amount equal to a full year's national Adult advance.
- Dislocated Worker funding was held essentially level.

Those FY2026 levels were not ultimately enacted, but they are the most recent expression of the House's funding intentions for this system and could reappear in the FY2027 bill now before the Committee.

For Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties, the stakes are concrete. Eliminating the Youth program would remove the entire $6.8 million Youth allocation. The Adult program reaches the area in two installments this year, about $1.3 million in the July base and $5.4 million in the October advance. Eliminating the base installment going forward, together with a rescission equal to the advance, would place nearly the entire $6.8 million Adult allocation at risk across the transition. With Dislocated Worker funding left essentially level, the proposal puts roughly $13.6 million of the area's total $18.9 million in WIOA Title I funding in jeopardy.

These dollars are people. In PY2024-25, Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties served about 894 adults and 553 young people through these programs. Eliminating the Youth program would end services for all 553 of those young people. Cutting the Adult program would sharply curtail the area's capacity to serve the 894 adults who rely on it. Eliminating the base installment alone removes the capacity to serve roughly 174 adults each year, and a rescission of the advance installment would disrupt services for far more, at the very moment the new SNAP and Medicaid work requirements are driving local demand higher.

As you and your colleagues consider the FY2027 Labor-HHS bill, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully asks that you keep these local impacts in mind and continue to support sustained federal investment in the WIOA Title I programs that serve Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties. We would welcome the chance to host you or a member of your staff at one of our America's Job Centers to see this work firsthand, and we are glad to provide any additional district-level data that would be useful to you.

Thank you for your attention and for your service to the people of Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties.

Respectfully,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Kern Congressional Delegation
Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board
California Workforce Association
Townsend Public Affairs

Shaw
Yoder
Antwih
Schmelzer
& Lange

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:	July 13, 2026
Subject:	Legislative Program Committee State Affairs Report

There's A Budget.

On June 15, the Legislature met their constitutional deadline of passing a budget by sending the Governor their two-house agreement, officially setting in motion the negotiations that culminated in a three-party agreement reflected in AB 111 and a few other Budget Trailer bills. While the Legislative Agreement included a streamlined set of funding for counties to address indigent care needs, those dollars were not reflected in the final deal. However, we fully anticipate that budget negotiations will carry into the end of session, and this conversation is far from over. There was some funding, $420 million specifically, for counties to implement the changes resulting from H.R. 1:

- $223 million for CalFresh county eligibility, available for expenditure until June 30, 2029. The actual net increase for 2026-27 is closer to $180 million due to underlying base decreases.
- $197 million for Medi-Cal county eligibility.
- The human services trailer bill (AB 152/SB 152) includes a three-year CalFresh Match Waiver through 2028-29 that allows counties to draw down the full amount of federal and state funds when reaching 2024-25 county contribution levels.

Of high importance for Kern County, the Budget includes $250 million for public hospitals to respond to the growing fiscal challenges they are facing. In addition, the Budget includes $900 million for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant Program (a $400 million increase from previous discussions), $50 million for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), and a rejection of the Administration's proposal to shift costs of growth in IHSS assessed hours to counties, which would have increased county costs by an estimated $360.6 million starting in 2027-28 and growing each year.

In looking ahead to August, advocacy around funding for indigent care and increases to the funding provided for Proposition 36 implementation will remain at the top of the list for counties to receive in any budget change actions the Legislature and Governor take.

Deal or No Deal? The November Ballot Is Set.

With the June 25 deadline to withdraw initiatives now behind us, California's November ballot is largely set following months of negotiations among legislative leaders, business organizations, labor groups, local governments, taxpayer advocates, and initiative proponents. Several of the state's most closely watched ballot fights were ultimately resolved through negotiated legislative agreements rather than statewide campaigns. The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association-backed Local Taxpayer Protection Act was withdrawn as part of a broader local tax agreement that resulted in ACA 22, which would place the California Supreme Court's Upland decision into the California Constitution, while ACA 21 removed ACA 13 from the November ballot. Similarly, negotiations between the California Hospital Association and SEIU United Healthcare Workers West resulted in the withdrawal of two competing healthcare initiatives, avoiding what was expected to be a costly statewide campaign. Uber and the Consumer Attorneys of California likewise reached a legislative compromise through SB 623, resulting in the withdrawal of competing initiatives addressing rideshare liability and automobile accident litigation. At the same time, the Legislature placed several additional measures before voters, including the Save for California's Future Act (ACA 20) and the Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act (SB 417).

Not every initiative resulted in negotiations or a compromise, and several major citizen initiatives remain on the November ballot, including proposals addressing voter identification requirements, CEQA reform, a permanent extension of the existing high-income tax, a one-time billionaire wealth tax, middle-income homeownership assistance, immunology research bonds, state tax accountability, and limitations on future personal property and retroactive taxes. In particular, negotiations surrounding the billionaire wealth tax continued until the withdrawal deadline but ultimately failed to produce an agreement. Overall, California voters will consider 14 statewide ballot measures this November spanning taxation, housing, elections, environmental review, healthcare, and state fiscal policy. For more information, see here. You may also view a SYASL staff slideshow presentation linked here.

As a quick note with reference back to the enacted State Budget, it includes $34 million for counties to administer the November 2026 General Election.

Legislation

Thursday July 2nd marked the deadline for policy committees to hear bills and send them to the Floor or relevant fiscal committees, meaning that any bill not heard – baring a few exceptions for specific rules – is effectively dead for the year. As is often the case, most bills moved through the policy process, though some with notable amendments. It is now largely a waiting game through Summer Recess as things are worked on behind the scenes prior to the Suspense File Hearings in August. A truncated list of the legislation of note to Kern County and its current status can be viewed here.

Perhaps of highest note with respect to legislation, last week, SB 1329 (McNerney) was significantly amended in the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee on Monday, June 29. The amendments are not yet in print, but we believe that when they are the County will see a significant improvement in terms of potential lost revenue.

Also of note, SB 661 (Hurtado) is out of the Assembly policy committee and will next be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee in early August.

We will provide more context on these bills as well as several others in our oral report to the LPC on July 13.

Kern County Farm Bureau

President – *Todd Snider*
1st Vice President – *Alex Dominguez*
2nd Vice President – *Aaron Flores*
Treasurer – *Lucas Espericueta*
Executive Director – *Rachel Nettleton*

July 1, 2026

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

RE: Request for State of Emergency Declaration and Funding Support for Golden Mussel Infestation

Dear Governor Newsom,

The undersigned agricultural, water, business, and community organizations respectfully request that the State of California declare a State of Emergency related to the rapid spread of invasive golden mussels (*Limnoperna fortunei*) and provide immediate permitting assistance and financial assistance to support prevention, monitoring, mitigation, eradication, and infrastructure protection efforts throughout California.

Golden mussels pose a significant and growing threat to California's water delivery systems, agricultural economy, public infrastructure, and environmental resources. Recent confirmations by state and federal agencies have established the presence of golden mussels within California's water conveyance infrastructure, including facilities associated with the State Water Project and United States Bureau of Reclamation Central Valley Project. This is no longer a potential threat, but an active infestation affecting critical systems relied upon by communities, farms, businesses, and water agencies across the state.

Kern County was among the first counties in California to formally declare a local emergency in response to this threat. Additional local governments, water agencies, and stakeholders have also begun taking action, underscoring the need for coordinated statewide leadership and resources.

Golden mussels have the potential to restrict pumps, screens, gates, pipelines, and other critical infrastructure, resulting in operational disruptions, reduced water delivery efficiency, and significant costs for agricultural producers, water districts, municipalities, businesses, and taxpayers.

As of June 22, 2026, local water districts and agencies in Kern County have reported more than $6 million in expenditures related to remediation efforts, monitoring, technical assistance, and response activities.

1800 30th St, Ste 390, Bakersfield, CA 93301
kcfb@kerncfb.com • 661-397-9635 • kerncfb.com

Additional Kern County response costs are projected to total approximately $23.8 million over the next six months and an estimated $36.4 million annually for ongoing management and infrastructure protection. As infestations spread throughout California's interconnected water systems, similar costs are expected across the state.

Because much of California's water conveyance infrastructure is owned, operated, or regulated by state and federal agencies, including facilities associated with the State Water Project and Central Valley Project, addressing golden mussel infestations requires coordinated statewide leadership and investment beyond the capabilities of individual local agencies.

A statewide emergency declaration would:

- Recognize the urgency and severity of the threat facing California's water infrastructure.
- Facilitate coordination among state, federal, and local agencies.
- Expedite access to resources, technical assistance, and regulatory flexibility.
- Support funding needed for monitoring, prevention, treatment, eradication, and infrastructure protection.

In addition to a State of Emergency declaration, we respectfully request that the State identify, allocate, and expedite emergency funding to assist local agencies, water districts, agricultural stakeholders, and infrastructure operators in responding to this emerging threat.

California's water infrastructure is essential to the health, safety, and economic well-being of our state. Proactive action today can help prevent significantly greater costs and disruptions in the future.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this critical issue. We stand ready to work collaboratively with your Administration and state agencies to address this growing threat.

Sincerely,



Todd Snider, President
Kern County Farm Bureau

CC: Sandy Uribe, Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Brian Ferguson, Deputy Cabinet Secretary / Senior Advisor for Emergency Management

Agricultural Associations & Organizations



ALLIED POTATO

Almond Alliance

ANTHONY VINEYARDS

BOLTHOUSE FRESH FOODS

BLOEMHOF FARM MANAGEMENT

CCGGA California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association

FB California Farm Bureau

GRIMMWAY PRODUCE GROUP



Kern County Farm Bureau



NFL NISEI FARMERS LEAGUE
Growers Looking Out for Growers and Farm Workers

SUNVIEW EST. 1948

SUPREME ALMONDS of California

California Association of Winegrape Growers

western crop insurance services

WTNA WESTERN TREE NUT ASSOCIATION

Wonderful orchards

Water Agencies & Districts





BERRENDA MESA WATER DISTRICT



CAWELO WATER DISTRICT

DUDLEY RIDGE WATER DISTRICT

KERN DELTA WATER DISTRICT

KERN WATER BANK AUTHORITY

Lost Hills WATER DISTRICT

NORTH KERN WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

ROSEDALE-RIO BRAVO WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

SWID Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District

SSJMUD

WESTSIDE WATER AUTHORITY

Government & Economic Organizations



KERN EDC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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

June 23, 2026

The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 28 (Schiavo), Landfill subsurface temperature penalties – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Blakespear,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 28 (Schiavo), which imposes sweeping new mandates, extraordinary financial liabilities, and unclear enforcement mechanisms upon counties and landfill operators at a time when counties are already confronting unprecedented fiscal and operational pressures.

Kern County remains committed to protecting public health, environmental quality, and the communities we serve. We recognize the seriousness of subsurface elevated temperature (SET) events. However, as amended, AB 28 introduces broad, punitive, and unworkable requirements that disregard existing regulatory frameworks, duplicate or conflict with state and federal responsibilities, and place uncompensated mandates on county governments.

The bill defines a “subsurface elevated temperature event” as temperatures persistently exceeding 131°F over a “substantial area,” yet leaves determination of both “persistently” and “substantial area” wholly to the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). Without clear, objective criteria, operators and enforcement agencies face significant uncertainty. Undefined terms invite inconsistent application, legal disputes, and unpredictable compliance burdens, particularly for large and complex landfill environments.

AB 28 requires operators to notify CalRecycle of an SET event and submit extensive data to multiple state and local agencies, including the State and Regional Water Boards, State and local air districts, State and local health departments, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA). This multilayered reporting structure is unnecessarily duplicative and risks creating confusion among agencies with overlapping responsibilities. Initial notification to CalRecycle and the appropriate local agencies should be sufficient, with local agencies coordinating with their state counterparts as needed.

Compounding these concerns, the bill implies (but does not specify) that landfill waste temperatures must be monitored as part of these obligations. It provides no information regarding methodology, instrumentation, frequency, or applicability. It is unclear whether new monitoring requirements would apply to all landfills, only to certain sites, or also to closed facilities. Without this clarity, implementation costs could be enormous, particularly for counties managing large waste systems. Additionally, the bill appears not to have been evaluated alongside the California Air Resources Board's forthcoming updates to the Landfill Methane Regulation, where monitoring and reporting protocols may overlap or conflict, creating further uncertainty.

AB 28 authorizes CalRecycle to mandate corrective action plans, including full cost assessments, and empowers CalRecycle or LEAs to impose administrative civil penalties of $100,000 per day for noncompliance. This level of penalty is extraordinary, punitive, and disproportionate, especially given the complex science required to diagnose, monitor, and respond to SET events. The bill also authorizes CalRecycle to assume enforcement authority for landfills experiencing an SET event, displacing existing LEA oversight and creating potentially conflicting command structures during emergency response.

While AB 28 creates a new Landfill Subsurface Fire Mitigation Community Fund, it offers no assurance of equitable distribution. Counties most burdened by compliance, mitigation, or community impacts have no certainty that funds generated from their region will return to support local needs. At the same time, counties and landfill operators face potentially severe penalties and extensive reimbursement obligations.

The bill further authorizes the Secretary for Environmental Protection to convene a multiagency coordination group to investigate and recommend resolutions for SET events. However, the bill provides no clarity regarding the required qualifications of group members, the scope of their investigative authority, their liability, or their access to landfill property. These elements must be specified to avoid operational, safety, and legal conflicts. The bill also allows the multiagency group, or the local air district, to grant written extensions for air monitoring and sampling plan implementation. This equivalence of authority is unclear and raises questions regarding chain of command, jurisdiction, and decision-making hierarchy. These ambiguities should be resolved.

Section 43031.2(f) further requires landfill operators to reimburse the multiagency coordination group for "reasonable and necessary expenses," yet includes no mechanism for oversight or cost control. Language is needed to ensure that cost recovery is subject to clear standards and oversight by CalRecycle, consistent with Section 43031(e)(3), so that reimbursement obligations remain fair, reasonable, and predictable.

Finally, AB 28 requires CalRecycle to adopt emergency regulations to implement its provisions. Implementing new, highly technical requirements through emergency rulemaking without sufficient public input, scientific consultation, or alignment with existing federal NSPS and NESHAP frameworks will expose counties to penalties before regulatory expectations are clear.

In this climate, when counties are already carrying extraordinary fiscal burdens and absorbing ongoing state and federal cost shifts, AB 28 represents yet another instance of the state creating complex, high-stakes obligations and leaving counties to "figure it out" without resources, clarity, or meaningful partnership. Kern County supports thoughtful, effective, and science-based measures to address SET events. However, AB 28, as drafted, imposes unfunded mandates, unclear standards, disproportionate penalties, open-ended fiscal liabilities, and operational risks on counties and landfill operators.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **NO on AB 28**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

June 17, 2026

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

RE: AB 109 (Gabriel), Kern County FY 2026-27 State Budget Priorities

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our availability to work with your Administration to enact a budget that supports counties in delivering the services California's communities rely on. There is no bigger priority for Kern County than to address the fiscal challenges the state and counties face and meet our shared responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of Californians.

The Legislative Budget Plan, as passed by AB 109 (Gabriel) on June 15, 2026, funds a number of priorities that are essential to maintaining quality of life services for Californians, including funding to implement H.R. 1, address homelessness, reduce crime, and maintain the current fiscal requirements for the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. These are not optional programs; they are core to the state's long-term health, safety, and stability.

While building reserves and addressing budget deficits are necessary, Kern County continues to stress that the budget must also mitigate impacts on California's communities, particularly those associated with H.R. 1. Counties deliver a number of health and human services (HHS) on behalf of the state and without additional state support, Kern County will be forced to mitigate these impacts at the expense of other essential public services, including public safety, fire response, elections and more, leaving counties facing significant challenges in delivering the services California communities need and deserve.

As you consider AB 109, which is pending before you, and you negotiate a final budget agreement, Kern County respectfully requests the following to be included in the final 2026-27 State Budget.

County HHS H.R. 1 Impacts

As passed on June 15, 2026, via AB 109, the Legislature's budget plan provides additional funding above the May Revision to support counties in protecting safety net services for vulnerable Californians, including funding for the county eligibility workforce, indigent care and public hospital systems. Without these investments, we will be unable to provide critical medical care and nutrition assistance on behalf of the state and millions of Californians will suffer.

(1) County Indigent Care Programs: Adopt the Legislature's Action that Provides $125 million General Fund for an Indigent Care/Emergency Only Medi-Cal Program

AB 109 provides $125 million General Fund in 2026-27 for the creation of an emergency only program for the indigent care population that will lose full-scope Medi-Cal due to H.R. 1 community engagement requirements. This funding will help ensure continued access to health care services for hundreds of thousands of Californians while the state develops a long-term approach to meeting the health care needs of medically indigent individuals.

(2) Public Hospital Systems: Adopt the Legislature's Action that Provides $250 million General Fund for Public Hospital Systems

Regarding the fiscal challenges that public hospitals will face under H.R. 1, AB 109 provides $250 million in 2026-27 for public hospital system support. This funding will enable public hospitals to continue to provide quality services to all members of their communities, regardless if they receive state or federal health care. H.R. 1 will significantly disrupt Kern County's healthcare system, placing Kern Medical, the county's primary safety-net hospital, under severe financial strain by increasing uncompensated care, cutting vital reimbursements, and imposing new administrative burdens. Up to 50,000 residents in Kern may lose Medi-Cal coverage due to stricter eligibility rules, work requirements, and red tape, driving more uninsured patients to seek expensive emergency care at Kern Medical. As federal Medicaid funding drops and state-directed payments shrink, Kern County faces unfunded costs while the hospital simultaneously grapples with heavier eligibility processing demands and a shift from preventive care to higher-acuity emergency services.

(3) County Eligibility Workforce: Adopt the Legislature's Action that Provides $459 million General Fund for County Eligibility Work

AB 109 increases investments beyond what was included in the May Revision to help people maintain their Medi-Cal coverage and CalFresh benefits. Taken together, the Legislature is providing $459 million General Fund for county eligibility workload and administration related to H.R. 1 implementation in 2026-27, with multi-year expenditure authority.

Funding for Distressed Hospitals

Adopt the Legislature's Action to Fund up to $190 million General Fund, Upon Approval of the Department of Finance, for Additional Loans Through the Existing Distressed Hospital Loan Program

Hospitals in California, particularly those in rural areas, are facing significant financial pressures, due to the impacts of H.R. 1, which will reduce health care coverage and increase uncompensated care, limit bargaining power with health plans, and challenge maintaining their workforce.

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

Adopt the Legislature's Action to Reject the IHSS Cost Shift Proposal

AB 109 rejects the Administration's proposal that would shift costs to counties for hours per case growth within the IHSS program. This cost shift is estimated to result in increased county costs of $360.6 million starting in 2027-28 and growing each year. Kern County opposes this proposal because it would undermine the existing IHSS fiscal structure, misdiagnose the cause of hours growth, and negatively impact IHSS recipients and providers.

Medi-Cal Mobile Crisis Benefit

Adopt the Legislature's Action to Reject the Administration's Proposal to Make Mobile Crisis a County-Optional Medi-Cal Benefit and Instead Provide $125 million from the 988 Special Fund and $53 million in Proposition 35 (MCO Tax) Funding for Mobile Crisis Services

Medi-Cal mobile crisis is currently a statewide benefit, preventing hospitalizations and law enforcement encounters with people who need behavioral health services in the community. The Administration's proposal to make it a county-optional benefit would shift the costs to counties, which are already struggling with flat realignment funding and the impacts to county finances from H.R. 1.

Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) Program

Build Upon the Legislature's Action to Fund HHAP at $900 million General Fund in 2026-27 by Reinstating Intent Language to Fund an Additional $1 billion General Fund for HHAP in 2027-28, and Pass Trailer Bill Language (TBL) to Streamline Distribution of Funding by September 1, 2026

AB 109 provides an additional $400 million General Fund for Round 7 of HHAP, in addition to the $500 million already appropriated. The $900 million General Fund in total funding is almost the full amount counties advocated for in 2026-27. The Legislature's budget plan also includes placeholder TBL to implement the funding. Kern County looks forward to working with you and the Legislature to ensure that there is streamlined distribution of Round 7 funding by September 1, 2026, and that new funding requirements are appropriate, realistic, and not administratively burdensome.

Proposition 36

Build Upon the Legislature's Action on Proposition 36 Funding

AB 109 allocates $50 million one-time General Fund to support the implementation of Proposition 36 and language that indicates the allocation will be determined in future legislation.

The inclusion of funding for local implementation of Proposition 36 in the Legislative Plan is a strong first step in recognizing the will of the voters in passing the initiative and the ongoing challenges counties face in delivering necessary services. However, Kern County must continue to reinforce the dire need for ongoing funding across multiple impacted county departments, with a particular demand for recovery support services and building out treatment capacity.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

Adopt the Legislature's Action to Provide $50 million for VOCA Funding

AB 109 includes $50 million one-time General Fund to supplement funding for VOCA, an increase of the $25 million General Fund proposed in the May Revision, to support counties and other service providers in maintaining critical victim services for thousands of survivors statewide.

Indigent Defense

Adopt the Legislature's Action to Provide $5 million one-time General Fund for an Indigent Defense Pilot Program

AB 109 provides $5 million one-time General Fund for an indigent defense pilot program, geared towards supporting counties in disproportionately impacted areas of the state, who have demonstrated a willingness to improve their systems of indigent defense.

Workers' Compensation – Subsequent Injuries Benefits Trust Fund (SIBTF)

Adopt the SIBTF TBL as Introduced by the Administration in January

The Legislature's budget plan adopts the Administration's SIBTF proposal as placeholder TBL. Kern County is in support of the SIBTF TBL and believes it is critical to adopt the language as it read when it was introduced in January.

Thank you for considering Kern County's position on the above budget issues. We urge the state to meet this moment and stand with counties to protect the essential services millions of Californians rely on every single day.

Respectfully,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc : Nathan Barankin, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Jamie Callahan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Christine Aurre, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Nani Coloretti, Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance
Erika Li, Chief Deputy Director of Budgets, California Department of Finance
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 225 (Bonta), Prohibition on health care facility fees – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Weber Pierson,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 225 (Bonta), as amended on June 23, which would prohibit hospitals and health systems from charging facility fees for a wide range of outpatient, preventive, and telehealth services. While the bill seeks to reduce health care costs, its approach would have severe unintended consequences for Kern County's most vulnerable residents and for our county's designated public safety net hospital, Kern Medical, which serves as a critical safety-net provider for the region.

Kern Medical operates under the stringent regulatory and structural requirements applied to hospital-based outpatient departments and is responsible for providing essential services not available elsewhere in our community at both the hospital and outpatient clinics such as trauma care, specialty care such as GYN Oncology, hand surgery, head and neck surgery, sickle cell services, acute behavioral health and many other high-demand primary and specialty services. Kern Medical primarily services Medi-Cal patients, with over 67% of all revenue coming through this payor source. Facility fees help offset the substantial cost of meeting these obligations: staffing, interpreter services, compliance, electronic health record systems, emergency preparedness, infection control, and the extensive Title 22 and HCAI building standards that apply only to licensed hospital settings, including licensed clinics. Eliminating the ability to collect facility fees for most outpatient encounters would significantly undermine Kern Medical's ability to maintain these services and remain financially stable.

Kern County is already experiencing a strained health care environment, marked by workforce shortages, rising labor and supply costs, impending H.R. 1 reimbursement cuts and growing patient needs, particularly in maternal health, behavioral health, as well as primary and specialty care. AB 225 would dramatically reduce the resources that make it possible for Kern Medical to provide care in lower-cost outpatient settings, forcing more patients into emergency departments or requiring them to delay care entirely. These burdens fall disproportionately on Medi-Cal beneficiaries, low-income families, rural communities, and residents who already face barriers to accessing care. For Kern County, which has some

of the state's highest poverty and chronic disease rates, further erosion of safety-net capacity is simply not sustainable.

Moreover, the bill's prohibition on health plans reimbursing prohibited facility fees compounds the financial threat to Kern Medical. This would strip away millions of dollars currently used to operate outpatient clinics that are not financially viable on professional fees alone. Reduced outpatient access would increase uncompensated care, strain emergency services, and ultimately elevate health care costs for the entire region.

The bill, as amended, does not recognize the critical differences between independent physician offices and hospital-licensed outpatient departments, nor does it acknowledge the unique role of county designated public safety net hospitals like Kern Medical. Without meaningful amendments that protect essential county-based and safety-net providers, AB 225 will destabilize health access for the residents who can least afford it.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **NO on AB 225**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

June 23, 2026

The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon
Chair, Senate Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection Committee
1020 N Street, Room 568
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1337 (Ward), Expansion of Information Practices Act of 1977 – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cabaldon,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 1337 (Ward), which would dramatically expand the Information Practices Act of 1977 and impose its requirements on all local governments beginning in 2028. While we strongly support protecting the privacy of residents, this bill's approach is unworkable for counties and would have serious consequences for our ability to deliver essential public services.

AB 1337 would upend long-standing and effective data-sharing practices that make it possible for counties to operate critical safety-net programs. By restricting the use, transfer, and disclosure of personal information far beyond current law, including limiting data use only to the purpose for which it was originally collected, requiring that any data transfer "further the purpose" of initial collection, and prohibiting disclosures if information merely could be linked back to an individual, this bill introduces uncertainty that would stall integrated service models, complicate reporting, and weaken accountability efforts. These restrictions would result in repeated collection of the same information from residents, slowing down benefit determinations and creating real barriers for vulnerable individuals seeking help with healthcare, food assistance, housing, and other vital programs.

The bill creates additional risks by eliminating key exceptions that currently allow agencies to share information in response to search warrants and to support investigations into unlawful activity. This change could hinder law enforcement, expose children and families to avoidable danger, and place frontline staff in legally untenable positions. Counties would also face expanded liability as AB 1337 broadens the definition of prohibited disclosures, imposes discipline for negligent violations, and removes the requirement that wrongful disclosure of medical information result in economic harm or injury before criminal penalties apply. These changes would inevitably impact workforce recruitment and retention at a time when counties are already struggling to maintain staffing levels.

AB 1337 also threatens federal funding streams by prohibiting data sharing with federal agencies unless explicitly authorized in state law, a requirement that could jeopardize grants for homelessness response, public health, victim services, and human trafficking task forces. At the same time, counties would be expected to undertake massive and immediate changes to technology systems, forms, training, governance rules, and reporting structures. This unfunded mandate would require millions of dollars in new spending despite no demonstrated need for replacing the robust privacy protections counties already operate under.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **NO on AB 1337** to prevent unintended harm to local government, the public workforce, and, above all, the residents who rely on essential county services.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 405
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Senator Cortese,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our serious concerns with AB 1421 (Wilson), which would require the California Transportation Commission, in consultation with the California State Transportation Agency, to compile research and prepare recommendations related to the feasibility of a statewide road-user charge or vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) fee. The bill directs the resulting report to be submitted to the Legislature by January 1, 2027.

While AB 1421 does not directly impose a new tax, its formation of a state-level advisory body to study weight-per-mile and VMT-based fees clearly signals the State's intent to move toward revenue-generating mechanisms that will increase transportation costs for residents, commercial carriers, electric-vehicle owners, and local businesses. Once the State invests in a detailed research and stakeholder engagement process, the likelihood of adopting such a fee becomes not only plausible but highly probable. Even the act of initiating this analysis has created substantial uncertainty and concern among Kern County residents and businesses.

The bill further anticipates significant administrative and policy complexities like data collection, privacy safeguards, mileage-tracking systems, out-of-state vehicle considerations, and equitable cost modeling, all of which foreshadow future legislation that would require new fees to fund implementation and regulatory schemes. This represents a material burden on state agencies, local governments, and ultimately the taxpayers who would shoulder increased transportation costs and feel additional impacts as the overall cost of living in California continues to soar. Such a statewide fiscal shift would especially harm rural counties like Kern, where residents must regularly travel long distances for work, school, and essential services.

Kern County has firsthand experience with the unintended consequences of state-driven VMT policy shifts. Under SB 743 (Steinberg, 2013), CEQA's transition to VMT-based transportation analysis fundamentally increased the cost and complexity of approving new housing, commercial development, and

infrastructure. Despite our prior opposition and a formal request to delay implementation, SB 743 has contributed to higher development costs, reduced affordability, and increased barriers to economic growth. At the time, the California Building Industry Association estimated that each $1,000 added to project costs priced 10,000 Californians out of homeownership, an impact that has only grown worse due to inflation and continued statewide housing shortages.

For rural communities across the Central Valley, these cost burdens are not theoretical; they are deeply felt realities. VMT-based mandates disproportionately affect areas where residents commute long distances and where economic opportunity depends on reliable, affordable mobility. A future weight-per-mile or road-user charge system would compound these challenges, raising the cost of living and undermining efforts to attract jobs, build housing, and sustain infrastructure.

Given this history, the creation of yet another state committee to evaluate road-user fees is a troubling indication that the State may once again pursue policies that disproportionately impact rural counties, increase costs for working families, and place additional pressure on local governments. Kern County steadfastly opposes AB 1421 because it initiates a process that will predictably lead to higher transportation costs and reduced economic competitiveness for our region.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges your Committee to **vote NO on AB 1421**.

Sincerely,

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Transportation Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 25, 2026

The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1436 (Ávila Farías), Private fleet exclusion under the Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Blakespear,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for AB 1436 (Ávila Farías), which would bring much needed clarity and fairness to how the state regulates vehicle fleets.

AB 1436 clarifies that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) may regulate private trucking fleets only after obtaining the necessary approval from the federal government. Federal law establishes this requirement. Because CARB has not yet received this authorization, the agency does not currently have the legal basis to apply these regulatory provisions to private fleet operators.

Recently, CARB has proposed changes to the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) regulation that would place new responsibilities on cities and counties by making them enforce these rules through their contracts with private companies, for example, waste haulers, recycling services, and heavy-equipment providers. These proposals would force local governments to monitor and police private fleets, adding major administrative burdens while also exposing both counties and contractors to legal risk.

This approach creates serious problems for communities like ours because:

- Many of our essential service providers, especially waste and recycling companies, operate under long-term contracts that were negotiated years ago. Changing the rules in the middle of those contracts would require costly renegotiations or could even disrupt services our residents rely on.

- Smaller local businesses may not be able to absorb these sudden new costs, potentially pushing them out of the market and leaving counties with fewer, more expensive options.

- Ultimately, these added expenses would be passed down to the public through higher rates for basic services.

AB 1436 offers a clear and practical solution by confirming what federal law already requires, prevents legally questionable mandates from taking effect, and gives counties and private operators the certainty they need to plan responsibly.

Kern County supports clean-air progress, but regulations must be workable, lawful, and fair to the communities that must carry them out. AB 1436 ensures that California moves forward in a way that protects both our residents and our essential public-service partnerships.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **YES on AB 1436**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Public Works
Kern County General Services Division
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Chair, Senate Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1534 (Irwin), Workforce development modernization for participant training – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Smallwood-Cuevas,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for AB 1534 (Irwin), which would update local workforce development performance requirements by replacing the current expenditure-based training mandate with a requirement that at least 50% of participants in Adult and Dislocated Worker programs receive workforce training services.

This proposed transition to a participant-based performance model aligns with how Kern County successfully operates its Employers' Training Resource (ETR) Department. ETR maintains strong partnerships with local employers, leverages high-value work-based training, and consistently exceeds state and federal program performance expectations. Moving away from rigid expenditure-percentage rules toward a clearer and more equitable measure of participant access to training will:

- Increase flexibility in meeting the workforce needs of rapidly changing industries
- Better support reskilling efforts in regions undergoing economic transition
- Provide a more accurate reflection of local program effectiveness
- Reduce unnecessary administrative burdens on local workforce boards

Counties like Kern, home to industries undergoing major transformation, including energy, agriculture, logistics, and advanced manufacturing, require responsive workforce policies that prioritize results rather than arbitrary spending thresholds. This bill does exactly that.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **YES on AB 1534**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California Workforce Association
Kern County Employers' Training Resource
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 3, 2026

The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

RE: AB 1607 (Gonzalez), Maddy EMS Funding - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pierson and Senator Arreguín,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1607 (Gonzalez) which would extend the sunset on the "Maddy" Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Funds to January 1st, 2037, ensuring access to critical, life-saving emergency health care.

The Maddy Fund is a county-by-county opt-in program, funded through a $2 fee for every $10 of a fine on all crimes, penalties, or forfeitures imposed by the courts. The Maddy EMS Fund is used to reimburse physicians and hospitals who treat uninsured patients in the emergency departments (EDs), as well as provide funds for EMS purposes. In addition, 15% of the funds collected are allocated to the "Richie's Fund," which supports pediatric trauma centers.

Under state and federal law, EDs care for patients regardless of their health care coverage status and patients are still responsible for paying for their care. In 2024, 5.9% of Californians were uninsured, but the proportion of uninsured patients who seek care is much higher. Reports estimate that 18% of the population served in CA EDs are uninsured.

If an uninsured patient is unable to pay for their care, a hospital or physician may submit for reimbursement to their respective county's "Maddy" fund. While this funding is not equal to the overall cost of care, it allows EDs to continue to remain open and offer services.

The demand on EDs is already high and will continue to increase as millions of vulnerable Californians lose access to health insurance due to H.R. 1, which is estimated at roughly 50,000 residents with satisfactory immigration status here in Kern. This massive loss in coverage would raise the proportion of uninsured ED visits to 18% statewide, with a volume of up to 32% uninsured at the most impacted facilities. With the Maddy Fund sunsetting in 2027, this will lead to a reduction in emergency physicians' staffing. Fewer emergency physicians per shift are a significant contributor

to longer waiting times, worse outcomes, and poorer access to care for all patients with emergencies.

AB 1607 will help alleviate some of these fiscal concerns by extending the existing sunset on the Maddy Fund, ensuring financial assistance is available for our essential health care providers. For these reasons, we strongly support this measure and respectfully ask each of your committees to vote **YES on AB 1607**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Health Committee
Honorable Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Public Health Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 22, 2026

The Honorable Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O St, Suite 3240
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1821 (Pacheco), California Public Records Act agency response time - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Umberg,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1821 (Pacheco), which would provide an important and practical clarification to the California Public Records Act (CPRA) response timelines.

The CPRA is a vital tool that enables the public to hold government accountable. Local agencies take these responsibilities seriously and devote substantial resources to responding thoroughly and promptly to public records requests. Our members are committed to transparency and accountability.

The bill's shift from "calendar days" to "business days" for initial determinations and extensions is a common-sense update that reflects the operational realities of local agencies. Public agencies generally do not have staff available on weekends or holidays, yet current law continues to toll CPRA deadlines during these periods. A business-day standard ensures agencies have the full, intended number of working days to conduct thorough and accurate searches for disclosable records.

Under existing law, agencies must determine within 10 days whether a request seeks disclosable records, with a possible 14-day extension in unusual circumstances. Neither timeframe accounts for weekends or holidays when staff are unavailable. AB 1821 corrects this discrepancy by converting these periods to business days, helping agencies comply with the law more effectively and consistently.

Local agencies across California have seen a sharp rise in both the volume and complexity of CPRA requests, reporting a 73% increase over five years and noting that more than 90% of agencies have had to divert staff time away from core services to meet these demands.

Modern government operations now generate far more disclosable records, including emails, texts, and internal messages, which require extensive searching, review, and redaction of sensitive information such as attorney-client communications, personal identifiers, and medical or criminal data. At the same time,

agencies have lost key revenue sources that once offset these costs: Proposition 42 eliminated state reimbursement for CPRA compliance, and a 2020 California Supreme Court ruling restricted agencies from recovering staff time or technical costs associated with producing records. As a result, local governments must absorb the full cost of increasingly time-intensive requests.

We appreciate the Legislature's efforts on this issue and remain committed to continued conversations about broader CPRA reform. The business-day clarification in the bill is a narrow but meaningful improvement that will help agencies comply with the law more effectively and consistently.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support this measure and respectfully requests that your committee votes **YES on AB 1821**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Judiciary Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Counsel
Kern County Clerk of the Board
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 16, 2026

The Honorable Josh Becker
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 521
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1846 (Stefani), Relative placement options for children who are under the court's protection – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Becker,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for AB 1846 (Stefani), which provides important clarification to the relative placement preference in juvenile court proceedings.

When a child is placed into foster care due to allegations of abuse or neglect by their parents or guardian, federal and state law require that a relative seeking to provide a loving home be given first consideration for placement above all other settings. Relative preference does not guarantee placement; rather, it ensures that any relative requesting placement is assessed and given preferential consideration based on a number of factors, including the best interest of the child, the wishes of the parent, and the ability of the relative to provide a safe, secure and stable environment.

The relative preference aligns with long-standing research that demonstrates better outcomes in such areas as placement stability, academic achievement, and emotional well-being for children placed with relatives. The data also shows that these children are far more likely to remain with their siblings and have more frequent contact with their parents.

AB 1846 resolves an ambiguity in the law that has led to different interpretations for when social workers have discretion to place a child with a relative. By clarifying this portion of the law, it further aligns significant state and county efforts to promote a kin-first culture by clarifying that the relative preference applies until family reunification services have been terminated.

This bill also grants the social worker or the court discretion to assess a relative if they request placement after family reunification services have been terminated. In its totality, AB 1846

recognizes the critical nature and positive impacts of kinship care and will bolster California's commitment to honor and prioritize keeping families together.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **YES on AB 1846**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Human Services Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Kern County Department of Human Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Chair, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
1020 N Street, Room 162
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1883 (Bryan), Workplace surveillance tools – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 1883 (Bryan). As drafted, this bill would significantly complicate the day-to-day operations of counties, jeopardize our ability to provide essential public services, hinder our capacity to manage and respond to workplace-violence threats, and expose public agencies to unnecessary risks involving waste, fraud, and misuse of public resources.

Kern County shares the concerns raised by statewide organizations such as CSAC, Cal Cities, and CSDA (among many others) regarding legislation that restricts the use of "workplace surveillance tools." For counties, these tools are not optional conveniences, they are integral to keeping our employees, the public, and our facilities safe, and to ensuring we meet our operational, fiscal, and legal responsibilities.

Our primary concerns include:

- **Threats to employee and public safety.** Kern County cannot support legislation that compromises the tools we rely on to protect our workers, residents, and elected officials.
- **Limitations on fraud, waste, and abuse investigations.** Many of the tools implicated by AB 1883 are foundational for conducting internal investigations, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding public resources.
- **Inappropriately broad regulation of routine county functions.** The bill applies restrictions intended to address private-sector employment disputes to public agencies that are already governed by robust labor-relations statutes, collective-bargaining frameworks, and other due-process requirements.

AB 1883 defines "workplace surveillance tools" so broadly that it could encompass nearly every routine security and operational system counties use, such as security cameras, access badges, key

fobs, digital communication platforms like Microsoft Teams, GPS on county vehicles, and other basic technologies. These tools often collect passive data incidental to normal operations; however, under the bill's vague prohibitions, even unintended or irrelevant data collection could expose counties to liability.

Kern County supports strong civil and labor protections for public employees. Our concern is that an overbroad interpretation of terms such as "identify" or "infer" could effectively prohibit technologies that are not designed to infringe on employee rights but are essential to workplace safety, public-service delivery, emergency response, and fiscal integrity.

Furthermore, the bill does not account for the extensive protections already embedded in California law. Public employers are legally barred from deterring or discouraging union activity, and employee organizations have statutory authority to enforce those protections. Imposing an additional, vague regulatory scheme, accompanied by punitive damages and penalties of $500 per employee per violation, creates severe litigation exposure for counties and could divert millions of taxpayer dollars away from essential services.

Simply put, AB 1883 risks prohibiting fundamental tools that allow Kern County to function safely and effectively. Existing law already safeguards public-sector workers; this bill threatens to undermine county operations without providing meaningful additional protection.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to **vote NO on AB 1883**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Human Resources Division
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Chair, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
1020 N Street, Room 162
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1898 (Schultz), Workplace AI tools – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, in lockstep with CSAC, Cal Cities, and many other public agencies, to express our strong opposition to AB 1898 (Schultz). This bill would vastly complicate the routine work of local governments, endanger our ability to perform essential public services, impede our ability to manage and respond to workplace violence threats, and make local governments vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse of public resources.

Kern is fundamentally concerned with this bill, and others like it, that aim to restrict how public agencies can use technology that is essential and routinely used in day-to-day government operations. Specifically, AB 1898 would impose several rules on how public agencies may implement surveillance tools that use artificial intelligence. Although recent amendments narrow some of the bill's applications, Kern has significant concerns that it could compromise the security and operations of public agencies.

We understand concerns about the slow creep of surveillance tools into every aspect of daily life, particularly as new technologies emerge. However, this bill and others aimed at limiting employers' use of critical technology are too broad, too expensive, and too dangerous for public agencies and those we serve.

Workplace surveillance tools that use artificial intelligence

Recent amendments narrow the bill's applications from a broad definition of a "workplace surveillance tool," to a "workplace surveillance tool that uses artificial intelligence." Counties, schools, and other public agencies already use routine security tools that incorporate artificial intelligence, including ID badge systems and security cameras. Work cell phones, public fleets, mobile applications, and GPS trackers already incorporate AI. These tools are not used by public agencies to undermine bargaining or intrude on the lives of public employees. They are an

increasingly ubiquitous aspect of tools used to provide essential public services, to keep public facilities safe, and to make government more efficient in addressing the needs of our communities.

Burdensome and unclear notice requirements

The March 20, 2026, amendments create a confusing and onerous requirement for employee notices. Section 1601(c) mandates employers to "…require a worker to sign and confirm they received and understand…" the notice regarding use of workplace AI tools. While the amendments include deletion of language that would have provided a clear single worker veto of these tools, it is unclear what is intended by the remaining language. It is unclear if employers are compelled to discipline employees that do not sign the notice or if the employer allowed to use the tool without signatures from all affected workers.

Kern remains concerned about any pre-use notice standard. AB 1898 requires employers to provide at least 90 days of notice before introducing a workplace AI tool. If agencies are prevented from deploying a tool used for security or operations by an arbitrary deadline, they would be faced with the choice of either operating without those benefits or delaying services. As an example, under this proposed law, the opening of a new homeless shelter could be significantly delayed because the city or county would have to meet the bill's three month notice timeframe.

Undermines tools used to investigate fraud and abuse

The notice required by this bill must contain, among other things, a description of the general locations and the categories of activities, communications, and job roles that will be surveilled and the technologies that will be used. Many of these requirements will frustrate routine uses of technology and undercut public agencies' efforts to secure their facilities, public data, finances, and protect employees and the public alike.

Public agencies are responsible for delivering essential public services and protecting against fraud, waste, and abuse of public resources. Imagine a public agency is concerned that an employee is committing fraud by creating a shell company and signing false invoices used to pay for lavish gifts and cash. Under section 1601(f)(6), the agency would be required to inform the employee about what tools they are using to investigate them, inform them about job roles they are monitoring, which technologies will be used, and why they are using them. Put simply, AB 1898 could make the fraudster aware that they are being investigated, how they are being investigated, and why they are being investigated.

These same concerns apply to necessary efforts by public agencies to investigate claims of abuse of minors, excessive force, workplace violence, stalking, harassment, threats to public officials, or corruption.

Exposes government agencies to physical and cybersecurity risks

Section 1601(f)(7) would require public agencies to include the specific make and model of each AI/ADS and workplace surveillance tool. Disclosure of this information, along with the requirements to report the locations, could provide a material advantage to bad actors seeking to exploit vulnerabilities or gaps in security coverage.

Due to the unique aspects of public sector service delivery, public employers may use a variety of surveillance tools to protect employees, students, or the public at large, including emergency alarms for teachers, body cameras for law enforcement, or tools used for public vehicle fleets, including dash cameras, speed monitors, or GPS tracking. Local governments are responsible for securing and

operating critical infrastructure, jails, hospitals, police and fire departments, and providing behavioral health services and shelters for the unhoused.

Further, we have seen rising hostility and threats against government entities and their workforces. That includes violence and threats of violence against government employees whose job requires them to serve the public like library staff, teachers, firefighters, and benefits officers, among myriad other examples. Reporting and publication of the detailed information required by AB 1898 could set back public employers' efforts to protect employees and the public.

Inappropriately applies to public agencies

The sponsors are advancing this bill, in part, to address activities by employers that undermine efforts to organize a union, influence union elections, or retaliate against union leaders. Existing law already provides significant protections for public employee union organizing and bargaining activities. For example, Government Code § 3550 provides that a public employer shall not deter or discourage public employees, or applicants to be public employees, from becoming or remaining members of an employee organization. Section 3551.5 imposes significant penalties for violations of § 3550 and grants employee organizations standing to bring the claims.

Exposes public agencies to severe litigation risk and steep penalties

AB 1898 would allow employees or employee representatives to bring civil actions against public agencies for violating a law that is vague, sweeping, and littered with unintended consequences. While we acknowledge the amendments reduce the statutory fine in § 1602(e), the bill would subject public agencies to civil actions, making them liable for punitive damages and attorney fees.

Put simply, public agencies use the tools restricted by this bill to protect public resources, not to influence employee organization activities. We urge the author to amend the bill to remove public agencies entirely from its provisions.

For these reasons, and unless amended, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to **vote NO on AB 1898**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Human Resources Division
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Jeff Gonzalez
California State Assembly, 36th District
1021 O Street, Suite 4230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2022 (Gonzalez), Disabled veteran homeowners exemption – Support if amended

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express support for AB 2022, but only if amended to ensure that counties are held harmless from the significant property tax revenue losses the bill would create.

Kern County deeply values the service and sacrifices of disabled veterans and their families. The intent of AB 2022, to provide meaningful property tax relief to fully disabled veterans and qualifying surviving spouses, is aligned with longstanding statewide efforts to support those who have borne the greatest burdens of military service. The Board previously supported similar legislative efforts, including SB 685 (Grove, 2021), which also sought to expand disabled veteran exemptions.

However, as currently written, AB 2022 presents serious fiscal challenges for counties. The bill explicitly excludes state reimbursement for property tax revenue losses despite creating a state-mandated local program. Based on analysis from the Kern County Assessor's Office, the proposed exemption would remove an estimated $361 million from our assessment roll, resulting in approximately $633,000 in annual General Fund losses and $375,000 in annual Fire Fund losses over the five-year period of the bill. These reductions directly impact essential public services, including public safety and emergency response.

Kern County fully recognizes the importance of assisting disabled veterans, but such support cannot come at the expense of local governments' ability to maintain critical operations. Counties should not be forced to absorb unfunded mandates created by statewide policy decisions.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors will support AB 2022 only if it is amended to require that the State General Fund fully backfill all county property tax revenue losses resulting from the proposed exemptions. This amendment would ensure that the bill's intended benefits reach disabled veterans without undermining the financial stability of the communities in which they live.

We appreciate your commitment to California veterans and look forward to continued collaboration to achieve a balanced and sustainable solution.

Sincerely,

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Assessor-Recorder
Kern County Veterans Service
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 21, 2026

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Chair, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
1020 N Street, Room 162
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2027 (Ward), Prohibitions on workplace AI tools – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 2027 (Ward), which sows uncertainty into how public agencies can use artificial intelligence (AI) tools and creates new restrictions for the use of third-party systems that includes a wide array of technology.

We understand the reasonable concerns about the rapid integration of new technologies into daily life. However, the scope of this bill is vast and would leave significant questions about whether agencies can use AI systems or how they could train them to perform tasks.

Local agency employers are incorporating AI and automated decision system (ADS) technology to improve service delivery, address risks, and empower employees to focus on more meaningful work through streamlining some rote aspects of job duties. State law has protected the right of public employees to bargain, and most public employees have a property interest in their position that is protected by due process. Public agencies and their workforce have long bargained over the conditions of their workplace and, more frequently, there have been MOUs that include agreements on the use of AI or ADS.

Creates uncertainty for how AI systems can be trained

The provisions of the bill create uncertainty regarding what restrictions remain for public agencies and other employers using AI. AI systems rely on data inputs to train them to work effectively. It is hard to fathom how they could function effectively without the input of the public employees and officials with firsthand knowledge and experience on how to deliver a service or manage risks.

Under the current bill language, it is not clear how the prohibition on the use of "personal information" could apply to tools already used by public agencies or that could be adopted in the future. The bill refers to the definition of "personal information" in Civil Code § 1798.140. That

definition includes information that "…relates to…" or "…is reasonably capable of being associated with…" an individual. It is not clear where a boundary may exist for public agencies and their employees to train an AI system. Due to the bill's significant penalties, this could impose an unnecessary chilling effect on the adoption of new technologies.

Additionally, public agencies are not governed by the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA). This law would compel agencies to navigate a law designed for private sector activities. Public agencies are not a business and they serve the public, not consumers. Public agencies have, instead, been subject to many data privacy and confidentiality laws for decades. We believe it is more appropriate to rely on existing frameworks for data privacy and confidentiality to protect sensitive data for the public workforce.

Restrictions on replication or automation could limit tools that supplement the workforce
Collectively, the terms replication, automation, and replacement, coupled with the bill's defined terms, may extend this bill's application to vast swaths of AI technology uses, including for efficiency and safety, as well as innocuous uses and legacy automated technologies.

Public agencies are not interested in replacing the public workforce with machines. Public agencies do, however, believe in using new technology to better serve residents and improve conditions for the public workforce. Public agencies are already using these tools in ways that improve delivery of services, mitigate disaster risk, strengthen the social safety net, and empower the public workforce to grow, develop, and replace rote tasks with more meaningful work. These include use of AI systems to:

- Detect water contamination.
- Performing road maintenance triage, detection of road hazards, and identification of potholes.
- Detecting wildfires and earthquakes.
- Dam safety monitoring.
- Leak detection for water pipelines.
- Improve efficiency for public benefit enrollment and pupil attendance.
- Accelerate permitting following disasters, including the Los Angeles wildfires.

Each of these tools are used not to replace public employees with machines, but to supplement their work. Each tool could meet the definition of replicating or automating a worker's job.

These new tools represent a new era of service delivery. As the public sector workforce adopts new technologies, we ask that legislation not hinder the use or potential use of innovations that are already proving to support critical public sector operations.

As currently drafted, there are too many unresolved questions about how the bill will work in practice. For public agencies, the costs are steep. The bill subjects public agencies to civil actions, opening them up to liability for punitive damages and attorney's fees. At a time when local agencies are facing mounting fiscal uncertainty, we have significant concerns for any new legislation that subjects local agency budgets to additional legal liability.

Finally, we believe the inclusion of independent contractors in the definition of "worker" blurs the roles of employer and workers, while increasing compliance complications as well as increasing litigation risk.

While we recognize the concerns surrounding the adoption of new workplace technologies that have motivated this bill and other recent legislation, we feel AB 2027 could have vast unintended consequences that prohibit innovation and tools that can assist employees and ensure better service delivery for the public.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to **vote NO on AB 2027**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Human Resources Division
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 15, 2026

The Honorable Josh Becker
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2032 (Ransom), Golden Mussel Emergency Response - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Becker,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 2032 (Ransom), which establishes an urgent, statewide response framework to the rapidly expanding infestation of invasive golden mussels. Multiple water agencies in Kern County have already experienced direct impacts from this species and the legislative actions proposed in this measure are both timely and essential.

Golden mussels pose a severe and escalating threat to California's water infrastructure, water delivery systems, and ecological health. Their presence in the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta and the southern State Water Project has created an emergency that now demands coordinated, statewide intervention. Locally, Kern County water agencies have reported significant and rising treatment and maintenance costs, including multimillion-dollar expenditures within just weeks of infestation response efforts. For example, Arvin-Edison Water Storage District incurred $3 million for its initial 30-day treatment program, while additional districts in Kern County have reported costs ranging from $300,000 to more than $8 million depending on the scale of treatment and system demands.

This bill's provisions directly address the challenges counties and water districts face by correctly identifying the biological characteristics that make golden mussels exceptionally destructive and acknowledging the urgent need for rapid, science-based mitigation.

The permit streamlining measures included in the bill will allow water agencies to remove mussels from pipes, screens, filters, and other infrastructure without delays that worsen system damage and increase cost burdens. Providing essential guidance and flexibility for developing effective control plans will facilitate scientific research by appropriately exempting certain research activities from permit requirements. In addition, the bill will strengthen interagency coordination and require state

departments and regional boards to identify rapid-response tools and streamline administrative processes.

The accelerating spread of golden mussels constitutes an immediate threat to public health, safety, and critical water infrastructure, warranting this urgency statute. Locally, the Kern County Board of Supervisors has officially proclaimed a state of local emergency and strongly recommends that the Legislature put pressure on the Governor to declare a statewide emergency as well due to the scope and severity of this emerging crisis.

Kern County appreciates the Legislature's efforts to establish a comprehensive, statewide structure to support on-the-ground agencies working to protect California's water systems. We strongly support this measure and urge your committee to vote **YES on AB 2032** and thank you for your commitment to safeguarding California's precious water resources.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

April 27, 2026

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

RE: AB 2157 (Connolly & Bryan), Displaced Oil and Gas Worker Program extension – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 2157 (Connolly & Bryan), which would indefinitely extend the Displaced Oil and Gas Worker Pilot Program and require an independent assessment and recommended design for transitioning the pilot into a permanent statewide workforce program.

Kern County has been a leading participant in the program and has seen tangible, data-driven results that demonstrate both the need for and the effectiveness of continued state investment. As of March 31, 2026 Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) has reported the following outcomes:

- 494 participants enrolled, surpassing the program's enrollment goal by 103%.
- 155 workers placed into unsubsidized employment, providing stable and reliable income for local families.
- 39 participants earned industry-recognized certificates, strengthening long-term employability.
- 52 individuals received work-based learning or training, supporting skill development in high-demand sectors.
- Program expenditures total just over $6 million, representing 86% of the planned budget, with funds directed to training, staffing, work-based learning, and participant supports—all aligned with program goals.

The program's success has also been supported by strong partnerships with education providers and employers, including collaborations with training institutions and local businesses. These partnerships have benefited from on-the-job training (OJT) wage reimbursements, which help reduce hiring barriers and create sustainable career pathways for displaced workers. The County has also invested heavily in outreach and community engagement, including informational sessions, targeted

media promotions, and a job fair featuring 18 employers, to ensure workers understand and can access available services. These outcomes make clear that the pilot is working as intended.

AB 2157's requirement for the Employment Development Department to partner with the UC Berkeley Labor Center to evaluate the program and recommend a permanent statewide model is a prudent, data-driven step toward ensuring that California is prepared to support workers impacted by the State's renewable energy mandates. Kern County is on the front lines of this shift, and a permanent program will help prevent unemployment, safeguard family stability, and keep skilled workers contributing to the regional and state economy.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on AB 2157**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Employers' Training Resource
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 17, 2026

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

RE: AB 2203 (Tangipa), Priority registration for veterans and dependents using the California Veterans Fee Waiver – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 2203 (Tangipa), which would ensure that students receiving the California Veterans Fee Waiver are granted priority registration at California State University campuses and California Community Colleges, beginning with the 2028–29 academic year.

The California Veterans Fee Waiver serves some of our state's most deserving residents, including the dependents of veterans who have a disability due to their military service, were killed while serving, or passed away from duty related causes. These students often carry unique responsibilities, financial constraints, and family obligations tied directly to the sacrifices of their loved ones.

However, despite the importance of this benefit, many eligible students still face barriers to completing their education in a timely manner. Course availability and delayed registration can force students to extend their time in school, increase living costs, or delay entering the workforce. Priority registration is a simple, low-cost solution that ensures Fee Waiver recipients can enroll in the courses they need to progress efficiently toward their degrees.

AB 2203 appropriately aligns educational access with the original intent of the Veterans Fee Waiver which was to remove barriers and create a fair pathway for these students to succeed. By granting priority registration, the bill helps prevent bottlenecks, supports timely graduation, and honors the sacrifices of California's veteran families.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on AB 2203**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Veterans Service Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Avelino Valencia
Chair, Assembly Committee on Banking and Finance
1021 O Street, Suite 5510
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Assembly Member Valencia,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our serious concerns with AB 2214 (Jackson), which would establish a Community Reinvestment Account within the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF) and require the State Treasurer to allocate between five and ten percent of LAIF funds toward deposits with financial institutions engaged in specified community lending activities.

Kern County appreciates the intent of the bill to expand access to capital for small businesses and first-time homebuyers, particularly in underserved communities. Increasing access to credit and supporting economic development are important public policy goals, and programs that strengthen community lending can benefit local economies across California, including rural regions such as Kern County.

However, the County must respectfully raise significant concerns regarding the potential impact this proposal may have on local government investment funds.

LAIF exists primarily to provide local governments with a safe, highly liquid, and conservative investment vehicle for public funds. LAIF is an important cash management tool for counties, cities, and special districts because it functions much like a secure savings pool for public funds, allowing jurisdictions to temporarily invest taxpayer dollars that are set aside for payroll, public safety operations, infrastructure maintenance, and other essential services while those funds are awaiting use. Because LAIF investments are designed to be extremely safe and accessible, jurisdictions can quickly withdraw funds when needed to meet operational expenses or respond to emergencies without risking the loss of public dollars. By directing up to ten percent of LAIF funds into a program designed to incentivize specific lending outcomes, this bill fundamentally alters the traditional purpose of the fund.

Although the bill states that the Community Reinvestment Account must maintain the security of principal and daily liquidity, the proposal introduces a number of structural changes that may increase risk exposure

for participating local governments. Deposits could be placed with institutions engaged in higher-risk lending activities, including small business lending in underserved markets and first-generation homebuyer financing. Additionally, the bill allows for alternative collateralization structures and risk-weighted safeguards supported by loan guarantees or credit enhancements, including those funded through the State Small Business Credit Initiative. These mechanisms differ from the traditional conservative investment standards that have historically governed LAIF.

Local governments deposit billions of dollars into LAIF with the expectation that those funds will be invested according to strict risk management principles focused on preservation of capital and immediate liquidity. Redirecting a portion of these pooled funds toward policy-driven lending initiatives could introduce additional credit exposure and operational complexity into a program that local governments depend upon for stability.

The bill also raises concerns regarding local control of public funds. While counties contribute significant deposits into LAIF, the proposed program would grant the State Treasurer broad authority to determine which institutions qualify for deposits and how funds within the Community Reinvestment Account are allocated. Local agencies would have limited ability to influence how their deposited funds are used once placed into the account.

Kern County is also concerned about the precedent this proposal may establish. If LAIF is used as a financing mechanism to support policy initiatives, future legislation could expand similar programs, gradually shifting the fund away from its long-standing role as a conservative investment pool for local governments.

For these reasons, Kern County must respectfully oppose this measure and urges you to **vote NO on AB 2214** to ensure local government investment funds remain protected and that the core principles of LAIF (safety, liquidity, and preservation of principal) remain the program's primary focus.

Sincerely,

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Banking and Finance
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California
Urban Counties Caucus
California Association of County Treasurers and Tax Collectors
Kern County Treasurer-Tax Collector
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 15, 2026

The Honorable Josh Becker
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 521
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2278 (Ávila Farías), Unsustainable IHSS Cost Escalation and Impacts on Counties – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Becker,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 2278 (Ávila Farías). While we deeply value the IHSS program and the essential support it provides to older adults and individuals with disabilities, this bill would place counties under substantial new fiscal and administrative strain without the revenue, safeguards, or structural balance needed to keep the program sustainable.

AB 2278 creates several new mechanisms that would trigger upward MOE adjustments, including wage and benefit increases, contract-driven rate changes, wage supplements, and annualized mid-year adjustments. Counties are already grappling with significant state-driven IHSS cost pressures, such as the proposed trailer bill language that would allow the state to withhold critical realignment revenues during IHSS bargaining impasses.

The bill compounds these challenges by requiring counties to shoulder 100% of the cost when enhanced federal matching funds are lost in certain circumstances, including those tied to reassessment timeliness, an area influenced by factors beyond full county control. This shifts substantial financial risk to counties without corresponding state partnership or support.

Additionally, AB 2278 preserves the permanent 4% annual MOE inflator, compounding year after year even in the absence of local action. Without additional revenue or flexibility, this automatic escalation will continue to crowd out funding for core county responsibilities, including public safety, health, and essential government services.

Expanding wage supplements and broadening MOE adjustments tied to contract rates creates long-term local obligations at a time when counties across the state (through CSAC, CAPA, and other organizations) have consistently raised alarms about the widening gap between IHSS program costs

and available realignment revenues. Counties have repeatedly cautioned against measures that shift IHSS costs to the local level without commensurate state investment or protections.

In short, AB 2278 introduces new fiscal obligations and risks while offering no corresponding revenue backfill, stability provisions, or structural changes that would allow counties to administer IHSS responsibly and sustainably.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes this measure, and we respectfully urge your committee to vote **NO on AB 2278**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Human Services Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
California Association of Public Authorities for In-Home Supportive Services (CAPA)
Kern County Aging and Adult Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Josh Hoover
California State Assembly, 7th District
1021 O Street, Suite 4540
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2445 (Hoover), State Capitol annex project and other public infrastructure projects – Support if amended

Dear Assembly Member Hoover,

On behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, thank you for your work on AB 2445 and for your ongoing efforts to promote transparency and accountability in state government. The Board appreciates the bill's focus on ensuring the public has clear insight into the costs and scope of the State Capitol Annex renovation, including the provisions related to the Capitol visitor center and the invalidation of nondisclosure agreements associated with the project.

However, the Board has concerns regarding AB 2445's expansion of nondisclosure restrictions beyond the State Capitol project. As currently drafted, the bill would prohibit the use of nondisclosure agreements for any public infrastructure project statewide beginning January 1, 2027. While Kern County supports transparency as a core principle of public service, a blanket statewide prohibition could create operational, contractual, and security challenges for local jurisdictions.

Certain public infrastructure projects such as jails, public safety facilities, and critical communications systems may legitimately require enhanced confidentiality to prevent the release of sensitive information that could compromise public safety or security. For these reasons, the Board believes the bill's broader application extends beyond the author's stated goal of enhancing transparency specifically for the Capitol Annex project.

To address these concerns while preserving the transparency objectives you intend for the Capitol renovation, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests an amendment to narrow the bill's scope. Specifically, the Board would be pleased to support AB 2445 if amended to apply the nondisclosure restrictions exclusively to the State Capitol Annex project, rather than to all public infrastructure projects statewide.

We appreciate your attention to this request and welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively as the bill moves forward. Thank you again for your leadership and for your commitment to open and accountable government.

Sincerely,

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

June 8, 2026

The Honorable Jerry McNerney
Chair, Senate Committee on Revenue and Taxation
State Capitol, 410
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2705 (Dixon), Statewide Standards and Consumer Protections for Excess Proceeds Claims – SUPPORT

Dear Senator McNerney,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for AB 2705 (Dixon), which would strengthen consumer protections and streamline how interested parties claim excess proceeds from tax-defaulted property sales.

Under current law, any party of interest may file a claim for excess proceeds over $150 within one year of the tax collector's deed being recorded. However, private "asset finder" companies often act as intermediaries and charge substantial fees for a process that consumers can complete directly with the county at no cost. Because there are no consistent statewide rules governing these practices, consumers remain vulnerable to misleading solicitations and excessive charges.

AB 2705 would establish uniform statewide standards for excess proceeds recovery services, including clear disclosures that consumers can file claims with the county for free and instructions on how to do so. It would require written agreements, prohibit advance fees, and cap fees at 10% of awarded proceeds when a claimant chooses to use a third party, which is in alignment with the fee cap for assets recovered through the State Controller. These protections mirror proven safeguards in existing unclaimed property law.

Counties statewide conduct tax-defaulted property sales, making this a broad and recurring issue. Kern has seen its share of ongoing problems with asset-finder companies, including misleading claims of authority, aggressive outreach, and attempts to improperly position themselves as parties of interest. Without statewide standards, these practices can undermine the process and reduce the funds returned to rightful claimants.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on AB 2705**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Revenue and Taxation
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Treasurer-Tax Collector
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 30, 2026

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

RE: AB 2711 (Ellis), Oil and gas well permit review – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 2711 (Ellis), which makes critical improvements to the state's oil and gas well permitting process administered by the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM).

Kern County is home to the majority of California's energy production, and our regulatory environment must support both environmental protection and operational efficiency. AB 2711 provides needed clarity, transparency, and predictability for operators while preserving CalGEM's oversight responsibilities.

Specifically, AB 2711 strengthens the permitting process by:

- Clearly identifying that the response period for CalGEM to approve or deny a Notice of Intention (NOI) to commence drilling is 30 working days, allowing the Division adequate time for review.
- Requiring that, if CalGEM denies an NOI, the agency must provide a rational explanation for the denial within 30 working days.
- Clarifying that the 24-month cancellation window begins upon approval of the NOI, rather than upon receipt of the request by CalGEM, ensuring operators have a clear and reasonable timeline for commencing operations.

These reforms promote transparency and accountability within the regulatory process while reducing unnecessary delays that can affect both public agencies and private operators. Kern County supports efforts that maintain strong environmental safeguards while also ensuring that local industries can operate efficiently.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on AB 2711**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 30, 2026

The Honorable Isaac Bryan
Chair, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2712 (Ellis), Advancing practical energy regulation in California – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Bryan,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for AB 2712 (Ellis), which makes targeted and practical adjustments to California's regulatory framework governing oil and gas operations within health protection zones.

Kern County is home to one of the nation's most significant energy-producing regions. As the state continues to transition its energy portfolio, it remains critical that local governments have a clear, workable regulatory structure that maintains environmental protections while ensuring operational continuity for existing assets. AB 2712 accomplishes this balance.

AB 2712 narrows current restrictions so that they apply specifically to new wells, rather than to all well-related activities. This clarification ensures that essential maintenance, safety work, and responsible lifecycle management of existing wells can continue without unnecessary regulatory delay. The bill also updates related requirements, such as sensitive receptor mapping and bonding obligations, so that they align appropriately with the more limited scope of approvals for new wells.

Additionally, by repealing the prohibition on constructing or operating existing production facilities within health protection zones, the measure eliminates a blanket restriction that could otherwise impede local economic activity and prevent operators from implementing modernized, lower-impact production technologies.

Kern County shares the state's commitment to safeguarding public health and environmental quality. We believe AB 2712 provides a more balanced and implementable regulatory approach without diminishing these priorities. The bill gives counties and regulators the clarity they need to oversee ongoing production responsibly while focusing on heightened review where it is most relevant.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on AB 2712**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

May 7, 2026

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

RE: AB 2716 (Ávila Farías), Oil and gas bonding requirements – SUPPORT IF AMENDED

Dear Assembly Member Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 2716 (Ávila Farías) if the bill is amended to include critical clarifications on the assessment standards for oil and gas bonding requirements. This bill is urgently needed to correct serious and increasingly harmful problems created by AB 1167 (Carrillo, 2023) and makes targeted, responsible adjustments to restore a workable regulatory framework—one that continues to protect taxpayers and the environment while preventing the severe unintended fiscal and operational consequences California is now experiencing.

AB 1167 Has Stalled the Transfer Market and Increased Risk
AB 1167 imposed a rigid, full-cost upfront bonding requirement before any transfer of an oil or gas property may occur. In practice, this has completely frozen the lawful transfer of assets that require CalGEM approval. CalGEM confirmed that zero qualifying operational well transfers occurred in 2024 and 2025. The only transactions during this period were full corporate acquisitions by a single large operator—transactions that do not trigger AB 1167.

As a result, marginal wells and mature assets have been stranded and recapitalization has been blocked. Operators who are capable of maintaining production and responsibly retiring wells cannot acquire properties and the risk of well desertion has increased, exactly as Governor Newsom warned in his AB 1167 signing message. In short, the law has not created a viable compliance pathway. It has simply halted the transfer market for the operators subject to it.

The State Board of Equalization Has Warned of Severe Assessment Impacts
The consequences now extend far beyond industry transactions. The State Board of Equalization (BOE) issued a Letter to Assessors[1] in 2025 explaining that AB 1167's bonding mandate must be

[1] https://boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/lta25017.pdf

treated as a required "Year Zero" acquisition cost when valuing petroleum properties because the statute requires the acquiring party to post bonding equal to the full estimated abandonment and restoration cost.

As a result, the BOE has advised county assessors that the bonding mandate must be built into income-approach valuations, even for properties that have not changed hands. Because few bonds are commercially available, operators are being required to post full-cost Certificates of Deposit, functioning as capital that cannot be deployed elsewhere. This dramatically increases acquisition-related costs and correspondingly reduces the appraised value of petroleum properties.

Here in Kern County, preliminary models suggest that these valuation effects could reduce our oil & gas assessed roll by approximately 45%, even using conservative abandonment-cost assumptions. Actual CalGEM abandonment estimates are often higher. For many small operators already assessed at minimum value, this new mandate could completely wipe out those assessed values from the tax roll altogether, thus eliminating property tax revenue that flows into Kern's General Fund.

These reductions will directly impact revenue for local school districts as well and have severe repercussions for our public safety services, roads, libraries, and other vital county services. The quality-of-life impacts will be staggering to our community, which is already economically disadvantaged. Likewise, the BOE interpretation of AB 1167 comes at a time when the County was hopeful it could regain some of its lost economic viability through the passage of SB 237 (Grayson, 2025), which has expedited the permitting of oil and gas wells in Kern. Instead, the two measures have left Kern in an unenviable and contradictory position of gaining and losing at the same time.

AB 2716 Is the Necessary Fix

AB 2716 takes a balanced approach to restoring functionality while retaining strong financial responsibility standards. The bill aligns AB 1167 with the risk-based financial assurance framework enacted by AB 1057 (Limón, 2019), recognizes existing CalGEM-approved security, and avoids duplicative requirements. The bill also allows a broader set of financial assurance mechanisms in place of a single, rigid full-cost cash bond, creating an efficient pathway for transactions undertaken solely to plug, abandon, and restore well sites. In addition, AB 2716 maintains seller liability and preserves full CalGEM enforcement authority.

These proposed reforms, therefore, do not reduce accountability. They enable compliance, restore orderly market function, and reduce the risk of orphan wells, which is now heightened by AB 1167's unintended consequences.

A Necessary Amendment: Restoring Fair and Accurate Property Assessments

Lastly, to prevent permanent erosion of county revenues and ensure that AB 1167's acquisition requirements are not misapplied, we respectfully request that AB 2716 incorporate clarifying language to restore traditional assessment practices.

The proposed amendment clarifies that the AB 1167 bonding requirement is an acquisition-related obligation only. Accordingly, assessors should not impute a "Year Zero" bonding cost into valuations (as suggested by the BOE) unless a qualifying ownership transfer has actually occurred. If the acquiring party has been required to post a bond or other security, that cost should be prorated over the expected useful life of the property as an annual operating expense.

This proposed amendment will prevent unnecessary and artificial reductions in assessed values, protect local government revenues without altering abandonment-cost scheduling in appraisal models, and ensure consistent statewide assessment practice.

Draft statutory language accomplishing this clarification accompanies this letter and is available for the Committee's review.

As currently drafted, AB 2716 is a responsible, urgently needed correction to an unworkable statutory framework. It preserves strong protections for taxpayers and the environment while preventing continued economic harm to the state's energy sector.

The Kern County Board of Supervisors is encouraged by the direction AB 2716 lays out and will gladly support the bill if the amendments to address assessment standards described above are included in the bill language. We strongly believe the proposed amendments will ensure this legislation provides an even more robust and equitable policy tool for industry stakeholders, taxpayers, local government, and the environment. Thank you for your leadership on this critical matter, we look forward to discussing Kern's concerns with the author and committee staff as necessary.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

Enclosure: Draft Statutory Amendment Language – Assessment Standards for Oil and Gas Bonding Requirements

cc: The Honorable Anamarie Ávila Farías, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

AB 2716: Draft Statutory Amendment Language - Assessment Standards for Oil and Gas Bonding Requirements

Existing law, the Public Resources Code, requires that when an oil or gas property is transferred, the acquiring party must post a bond or provide other financial assurance sufficient to cover the full cost of plugging, abandonment, decommissioning, and site restoration. These requirements were established by Assembly Bill 1167 (Stats. 2023, ch. 359).

Existing property tax law generally requires county assessors to determine the fair market value of petroleum properties using an income approach, valuing the property "as if acquired by the next owner." This practice has led to uncertainty as to whether the bonding requirement— referred to as a "Year Zero" investment cost by the Board of Equalization in LTA No. 2025-017—should be included in appraisal models for properties that have not changed ownership.

This amendment language clarifies that the bonding requirement is an acquisition-related obligation only. The "Year Zero" bonding cost shall not be included in the appraisal of an oil or gas property unless there has been an actual transfer of ownership that triggered the requirement under the Public Resources Code, and if the acquiring party has been required to post a bond or other security, that cost shall be prorated equally over the expected useful life of the property as an annual operating expense.

Draft Legislative Language

SECTION 1. Section 3017 of the Public Resources Code is amended to add subdivision (c):
(c) For purposes of property tax assessment, the bonding requirement imposed by this section or by Section 3205.8 shall be recognized as an acquisition-related obligation only. The estimated cost of such bond or other financial assurance shall not be included in the valuation of an oil or gas property for property tax purposes unless the property has been transferred and the acquiring party is required to post a bond pursuant to this section. If the acquiring party has been required to post a bond or other security, that cost shall be prorated equally over the expected useful life of the property as an annual operating expense.

Effect of This Fix

- Clarifies that the bonding requirement is only an acquisition cost.
- Prevents counties from artificially depressing appraised values for properties that haven't changed hands.
- Still requires that future abandonment/remediation costs be scheduled in the appraisal cash flows (as before).

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

June 4, 2026

The Honorable Ben Allen, Chair
Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 7610
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: ACA 9 (Boerner), Public Utilities Commission restructuring and implications on COLR obligations – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Allen,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to ACA 9 (Boerner), which proposes a significant restructuring of California's utility regulatory framework by removing telecommunications from the California Constitution's definition of a public utility and eliminating the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) constitutional authority to initiate investigations, hearings, policies, and procedures.

The County is concerned that ACA 9 would substantially weaken oversight of telecommunications providers without establishing a clear replacement regulatory framework. Telecommunications services are critical public safety infrastructure that support emergency response, evacuation notifications, disaster recovery, healthcare access, education, economic development, and access to government services. Removing longstanding constitutional authority without clearly identifying how these responsibilities will be administered in the future creates significant uncertainty for local governments, residents, and businesses.

Of particular concern is the potential impact on Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) obligations. COLR requirements currently exist through CPUC rules and proceedings and help ensure that residents can obtain basic telephone service regardless of where they live. These protections remain especially important in rural, mountain, Tribal, and high fire threat communities where reliable communications infrastructure can be essential during emergencies, power outages, wildfires, and other natural disasters.

The County is also concerned that ACA 9 would remove the CPUC's constitutional authority to investigate problems, establish proceedings, and adopt policies necessary to address emerging issues affecting utility customers. This authority has historically been used to address consumer complaints, service outages, affordability concerns, broadband deployment, and other issues

affecting California residents. Without this authority, it is unclear how telecommunications-related issues would be addressed in a timely manner or what entity would be responsible for protecting consumers and ensuring service reliability.

Further, ACA 9 does not provide any meaningful or measurable relief from rising utility and telecommunications costs. While affordability has been cited as a justification for the measure, ACA 9 primarily restructures regulatory authority and removes existing constitutional powers from the CPUC. The measure does not lower rates, establish new affordability programs, provide financial assistance to consumers, expand broadband access, or create new consumer protections. Instead, it creates uncertainty regarding the future oversight of telecommunications services and programs that currently benefit California residents.

ACA 9 also raises significant questions regarding the future administration and oversight of telecommunications programs and consumer protections currently administered by the CPUC, including:

- Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) obligations;
- California Lifeline services for low-income households;
- Broadband deployment programs serving rural, Tribal, and underserved communities;
- Consumer complaint investigations and service quality enforcement;
- Communications resiliency, backup power, and disaster preparedness requirements; and
- Telecommunications merger review and public-interest oversight.

The County believes that any proposal to fundamentally alter California's constitutional framework for utility regulation should clearly demonstrate how consumers, ratepayers, and local communities will benefit. ACA 9 does not provide that clarity and leaves significant unanswered questions regarding public safety, consumer protection, universal service obligations, and regulatory accountability.

Given the importance of reliable communications services to public safety, emergency preparedness, economic opportunity, and rural communities, we respectfully urge your committee to vote **NO on ACA 9**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Honorable Members, Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

May 27, 2026

Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
1021 O Street, Ste. 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator John Laird
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6720
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee
1021 O Street, Suite 8130
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: IHSS Cuts and Medi-Cal Asset Limit in the 2026–27 May Revise – Oppose

Honorable Members of the State Legislature,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to several proposals impacting In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program in the Governor's May Revise and January Budget. The IHSS program provides vital services to older adults and individuals with disabilities, covering over 18,000 consumers and nearly 12,000 providers in Kern County; services that allow people to remain safe in their own homes rather than rely on institutional care or urgent care, which is more expensive.

While we recognize the challenges posed by federal policy changes, economic uncertainty, and multi-year state deficit projections, we strongly believe that budget decisions must protect the health, stability, and independence of older adults and people with disabilities. We. Therefore, respectfully oppose the following proposals included in the Governor's proposed budget:

Shifting State IHSS Costs to Counties – OPPOSE
Kern County is strongly opposed to the proposal to remove the state's share of costs for IHSS hours per case growth based on a statewide baseline average. Counties are unable to absorb the additional cost to fund the authorized IHSS hours per case that are greater than the baseline statewide average without

negatively impacting other critical social services programs. This would ultimately result in the loss of hours for IHSS consumers that are vitally needed.

Elimination of the IHSS Residual Program – OPPOSE
This program is a critical safety net that allows recipients to continue receiving services while reestablishing their Medi-Cal eligibility. Consumers may be disenrolled from Medi-Cal due to paperwork errors, missed deadlines, or administrative issues – not because they are ineligible for support. People facing automatic termination from IHSS when they lose their Medi-Cal eligibility puts older adults and people with disabilities at serious risk of losing essential care and their ability to remain safe in their homes.

Rollback of Medi-Cal Asset Limit to $2000 individual/$3,000 couple – OPPOSE
Reinstating the asset limit to $2,000 forces people into deep poverty and likely the loss of essential health and long-term care coverage. It punishes couples by limiting their combined assets to only $3,000. This will result in the loss of IHSS for thousands of people who will have no alternative for care. As a result of losing access to care, the costs to the state when they regain eligibility will likely increase because their condition will have worsened and they may no longer be able to live at home, thus requiring full-time nursing facility care.

This proposal reverses one of the most important disability and aging policy reforms California has implemented in recent years. Currently individuals may retain up to $130,000 in nonexempt property, allowing people to save modest emergency funds and maintain basic reserves for housing and disability-related expenses. This penalizes people for responsible planning and having somewhat limited financial stability.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the Legislature to protect IHSS, support our most vulnerable constituents, and oppose the Governor's budget proposals and work with stakeholders to find reasonable budget solutions that don't adversely impact IHSS consumers.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Chris Woods, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
Mareva Brown, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
Jason Sisney, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
Kelsy Castillo, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
Elizabeth Freeman, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
Nicole Vazquez, Assembly Committee on Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Fiscal
Joseph Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
Megan DeSousa, Senate Republican Fiscal Office
Eric Dietz, Assembly Republican Fiscal Office
Richard Figueroa, Office of the Governor

Paula Villescaz, Office of the Governor
Kim Johnson, Health and Human Services Agency
Corrin Buchanan, Health and Human Services Agency
Jennifer Troia, California Department of Social Services
Kris Cook, Human Services, Department of Finance
Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office
Juwan Trotter, Legislative Analyst's Office
Kim Rothschild, Executive Director, California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

May 27, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: IHSS Fiscal Penalty Trailer Bill Language - OPPOSE

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to the new IHSS trailer bill provisions that would impose a 10% withholding of 1991 Realignment funds on counties that do not reach an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) collective bargaining agreement within the timelines established in the bill. While we remain fully committed to the IHSS program and deeply value the critical care it provides to seniors and individuals with disabilities, these new penalty provisions disregard the substantial progress counties have made in good-faith bargaining and would significantly undermine funding for other essential Realignment programs.

Kern County recognizes IHSS as a vital program that keeps vulnerable residents safely in their homes and reduces the need for far more expensive institutional care. Our county social workers, Public Authority staff, and IHSS providers work tirelessly to support this mission. However, the proposed 10% Realignment withholding, which is an even more punitive approach than prior proposals, would redirect millions of dollars away from other locally delivered services. These reductions would jeopardize core Realignment programs, including child welfare, adult protective services, behavioral health, and public health. Such an outcome would harm the very individuals and families the State and counties jointly strive to protect.

Under the trailer bill, a county could fully comply with all bargaining laws, negotiate in good faith, and offer wage increases aligned with what is fiscally responsible. Yet if the provider union declines those proposals, regardless of the county's efforts, a county could still be penalized with a substantial realignment withholding once the factfinding process concludes. This structure would give one bargaining party disproportionate leverage and effectively coerce specific outcomes in local labor negotiations. It replaces true collective bargaining with a state-directed result and erodes local control that counties have long been responsible for exercising.

If the state intends to mandate outcomes in IHSS wage negotiations or establish higher statewide compensation standards, then the appropriate approach would be to assume responsibility for IHSS collective bargaining and provide dedicated state funding to support mandated increases. Penalizing

counties that are already struggling with significant fiscal pressures is not an appropriate mechanism for advancing this policy goal.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the removal of the IHSS fiscal penalty provisions from the trailer bill.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

May 27, 2026

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

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

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 Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: May Revision Reductions to Critical Services Supporting Older Adults and Adult Victims of Abuse and Neglect – OPPOSE

Honorable Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge the Legislature to reject the proposed permanent $70 million reduction to the Adult Protective Services (APS) program in FY 2026-27 and ongoing, as proposed in the May Revision. The County also strongly opposes the FY 2026-27 Governor's Budget reductions to the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. These proposals include shifting the full nonfederal cost of growth in IHSS hours to counties beginning in FY 2027-28, eliminating the Backup Provider System (BUPS), changes related to CFCO penalties, and automating termination of IHSS to align with the discontinuance of Medi-Cal. Maintaining funding for these programs is essential to ensure older adults and people with disabilities who are at risk of abuse and neglect remain safe, and that IHSS recipients continue to have reliable access to in-home care that prevents far costlier institutionalization. Both APS and IHSS programs are critical components of California's long-term services and supports system.

Reversion of APS Expansion: Urge Legislature to Reject

The reversion of the APS expansion included in the May Revision would raise eligibility from age 60 to 65 and significantly reduce our county's capacity to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The proposal would trigger reductions in APS staffing and spikes to workloads, putting abused and neglected older and dependent adults at significant risk of further harm. The proposal would severely curtail or eliminate access to critical housing supports available through the Home Safe Program that prevents homelessness among older adults. Ultimately, this proposal will place older and dependent adults at risk of adverse outcomes, including homelessness, institutionalization, and premature death.

Eliminating the APS expansion program would roll back progress on elder justice and equity practices and undermines efforts to prepare for the significant increase in our state's aging population, in alignment

with California's Master Plan on Aging. It would also hinder the county's ability to meet new federal APS regulations that all APS agencies must comply with by May 2028.

The impact of this cut in our county would be significant. The 2021 APS expansion has been critical in our county to meet growing demand. Kern County receives approximately two million dollars annually from this funding source which has contributed to APS being able to keep up with nearly 7,000 reports of abuse and neglect. These funds came at critical juncture when our staffing was not keeping up with the increase in referrals. Cutting this funding will cause the Kern to reduce staffing in half and be able to respond timely to our most vulnerable populations. Meanwhile, reports to our APS hotline continue to increase year over year, increasing, by 29% since the aps expansion funding was approved by the legislature in 2021.

Our county APS Program is a gateway to the Home Safe Program, a proven housing and homelessness assistance and prevention program essential for stabilizing housing and preventing further harm. Rolling back APS eligibility would cut off services for at-risk adults ages 60–64, reducing the county's ability to prevent homelessness and coordinate care at a time when older adults are the fastest growing segment of the unhoused population.

California's aging population continues to grow, and our county is already struggling to keep pace with demand. These cuts would reverse critical progress and leave our APS program without the resources needed to fulfill its statutory responsibility.

IHSS Reductions – Urge Legislature to Continue to Reject All Proposals

The IHSS program in our county enables over 18,000 older adults and people with disabilities to avoid institutionalization by receiving essential care in their homes, delivered by approximately 12,000 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 gateway to this program, conducting in-home assessments, authorizing service hours, and completing required annual reassessments to ensure services match individual needs.

The May Revision maintains the following reductions to IHSS:

- A significant cost shift ($360.6 million General Fund statewide) to counties for growth in IHSS hours, beginning in 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 our county relies upon to support caseload and cost growth in IHSS and other social services and health and human services safety net programs.

- A shift of 100% of the Community First Choice Option (CFCO) penalties to counties for delayed reassessments. Our county is in strong support of the CWDA-proposed trailer bill language (TBL) that would preserve the current 50% State/50% 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. Counties are already facing a statewide administrative shortfall of at least $246 million total funds and have had 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.

- A reduction of $3.2 million General Fund to eliminate the permanent Backup Provider System (BUPS). BUPS prevents gaps in care when a regular IHSS provider is unavailable by matching IHSS recipients with short-term providers. Eliminating BUPS would leave recipients with no safety net, creating service gaps for consumers who rely on backup providers in emergency situations. Consumers with the most complex needs, especially those relying on backup providers, will face increased health risks and potential institutionalization. This modest investment in BUPS yields significant cost savings from avoidance in hospitalizations or other institutional settings.

- A reduction of $56.2 million General Fund to automate the termination of IHSS recipients when their Medi-Cal is discontinued due to not completing their Medi-Cal redetermination. 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, the APS and IHSS reductions would weaken critical protections for vulnerable Californians; increase the risk of abuse, neglect, homelessness, and institutionalization; destabilize the IHSS workforce, and shift unsustainable fiscal burdens onto counties. 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.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the Legislature to reject the proposed cuts and maintain the APS expansion and IHSS program integrity.

Sincerely,

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members and Staff of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Honorable Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 3, 2026

The Honorable Monique Limón
Senate President pro Tempore
1021 O Street, Suite 8518 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker of the Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8330 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230 Sacramento, CA 95814

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

The Honorable Akila Weber Pierson
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 7310 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Mia Bonta
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
1020 N Street, Suite 390 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Subcommittee 3 on Health – Human Services
1021 O Street, Suite 6630 Sacramento, CA 95814

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

RE: Proposed Service Shift from Medi-Cal Managed Care to Fee-For-Service (May Revise) - OPPOSE

Dear Assembly and Senate Leadership,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to the Governor's proposal in the May Revise that would shift Medi-Cal beneficiaries with unsatisfactory immigration status (UIS), including qualified non-citizens, from managed care into the fee-for-service (FFS) delivery system. The Governor's proposed change effectively shifts responsibility from the State onto counties and local jurisdictions, placing additional strain on our local systems that are obligated under Section 17000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code to provide indigent care. This policy change would have severe and far-reaching implications for the residents of Kern County and would undermine years of progress made in strengthening access,

care coordination, and community health outcomes, and further compromise the financial viability of our public hospital.

This proposal does more than alter administrative structure, it disrupts the very foundation of comprehensive care currently available through managed care. Managed care provides critical services including community supports, enhanced care management, and integrated care coordination, that are essential to the well-being of our most vulnerable residents. By contrast, the FFS system lacks the robust consumer protections and quality standards that are embedded in managed care, such as timely access to care, coordinated language assistance services, independent Medical Review processes, and a reliable network of high-quality providers.

The scale of the proposed transfer raises additional concerns. Kern County alone stands to see approximately 50,000 residents with satisfactory immigration status lose Medi-Cal coverage, along with an additional 40,000 people residing in Kern with unsatisfactory immigration status, under the policy direction reflected in H.R. 1. These losses would have profound repercussions for our local healthcare safety net, hospitals, community clinics, and providers across the continuum of care.

More broadly, the proposal fails to acknowledge that the FFS system is not currently prepared to absorb millions of additional members across the state. Lower reimbursement rates already challenge provider participation; adding substantial new volume without structural improvements will create significant barriers to care and exacerbate unmet health needs. Any superficial appearance of cost savings proposed in the Governor's May Revise would stem not from increased efficiency but from individuals forgoing necessary medical care, for which the cost would ultimately be borne by local providers as untreated conditions escalate into our local urgent care and emergency rooms leading to costlier services and higher rates of uncompensated care.

We recognize the state's responsibility to align programs with federal requirements. However, compliance does not mandate moving forward with policy choices that weaken care access, destabilize local healthcare systems, and place vulnerable residents at risk. Kern County urges the Legislature to reject this proposal and instead pursue approaches that preserve comprehensive, coordinated care for all Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

The Kern County Board of Supervisors remains committed to working with the Legislature toward solutions that protect access to care, uphold program integrity, and reflect responsible stewardship. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your continued partnership in serving the people of California.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee
Honorable Members, Senate Health Committee

Honorable Members, Senate Subcommittee 3 on Health – Human Services
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Committee
Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Public Health Department
Kern County Department of Human Services
Kern Health Systems
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

June 4, 2026

The Honorable Shannon Grove
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7150
Sacramento, 95814

The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6510
Sacramento, CA

RE: Request to Preserve Assembly Action Restoring Local Child Support Agency Administration Funding

Dear Senator Grove and Senator Hurtado,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to respectfully request that the final budget agreement includes the Assembly's action to restore Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) administration funding. By contrast, the Senate's proposal would extend a prior reduction to this vital funding for an additional two years.

For Kern County, extending the funding cuts would result in approximately a $1.5 million impact each year, directly affecting our ability to maintain timely, effective services for families who depend on us.

We recognize the extraordinarily difficult fiscal environment facing the Legislature. The State continues to manage significant General Fund pressures, uncertainty related to H.R. 1, and competing demands across the Health and Human Services spectrum. We also appreciate the necessity of making difficult decisions within a constrained budget framework. However, child support services are essential to family stability, economic security, and the long-term well-being of children across California, including thousands of families in Kern County.

LCSA's help parents establish and maintain orders, distribute more than $2 billion in support annually to nearly one million families, make timely modifications when circumstances change, and connect families to broader services that promote stability. When LCSA capacity is reduced, the consequences fall directly on the children and parents who wait longer for orders, payments, case actions, and assistance navigating an already complex system. Preserving administrative funding is therefore essential to maintaining an effective, accessible, and equitable program statewide.

The current reduction represents $6 million General Fund annually, or approximately $17.6 million in total program impact when federal matching funds are included. Extending this reduction would create significant operational challenges and unavoidable service impacts for families. Counties would likely need to impose hiring freezes, leave vacancies unfilled, absorb attrition, reduce service capacity, and at worst, implement layoffs.

The impact would not fall evenly. Twenty LCSAs statewide, including Kern, are among the most underfunded agencies in California. These counties are funded at roughly 20% below the state's allocation methodology, compared to an average 6% underfunding among the remaining 27 LCSAs. The proposed $17.6 million ($6 million GF) restoration was designed—through consultation with CalCSA and LCSA directors—to move these 20 counties toward greater funding equity, decreasing their average underfunding from 20% to approximately 16.6%. Withholding this restoration does not merely delay an enhancement; it perpetuates structurally insufficient funding for the counties already least resourced to absorb further reductions.

The CA Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) estimates that staffing costs for LCSAs will increase by approximately $40 million total funds in 2026–27, with $18 million of that increase attributable to these 20 underfunded LCSAs alone. Achieving the necessary savings without restored funding could impact as many as 287 positions statewide, 131 of them within the 20 most underfunded counties. Similar pressures in 2027–28 could result in another 250 positions impacted, 136 of which would again fall within these same counties. Even with continued caseload decline, only about 25% of these cost pressures would be offset, leaving staffing reductions as the only feasible path to absorb the shortfall.

Most LCSAs expend approximately 85% of their budgets on staffing, leaving little flexibility to reduce operating expenses. As a result, agencies would be forced to freeze hiring immediately, hold vacant positions open indefinitely, and, in some cases, conduct layoffs. Case-to-staff ratios, currently averaging 202:1 across these counties, would increase to 223 in 2026–27 and 233 the following year, essentially undoing six years of State-supported progress in improving timely service delivery.

While statewide caseload has declined, workload has not. In fact, recent legislative and policy changes have increased expectations for individualized engagement, more frequent modification reviews, enhanced coordination with courts and partner agencies, and sustained adherence to federal performance standards. Reductions in staffing without corresponding reductions in workload would require LCSAs to prioritize only statutorily mandated actions, delaying or limiting services such as negotiated stipulated orders (which are more reliable for families), ability-to-pay analyses, case follow-up, and consistent parent engagement.

These service reductions would also have downstream fiscal consequences. Child support collections reduce reliance on CalWORKs, CalFresh, and other safety-net programs. For families currently receiving aid, each dollar of child support avoids roughly 57.4 cents in costs to other social programs; for former or never-aided families, each dollar avoids approximately 17.9 cents. Undermining LCSA capacity, particularly in a program that is 66% federally funded, creates added pressure on other state-funded programs.

For these reasons, we strongly urge adoption of the Assembly's action restoring LCSA administrative funding and preservation of the resources necessary for counties, especially those most

underfunded under the State's allocation methodology, like Kern, to meet their obligations to families.

Thank you for your consideration and for your ongoing work on behalf of California's children and families. Kern County Child Support Services and our Board stand ready to provide any additional local information that may assist as the Legislature works toward a final budget agreement.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California Child Support Association (Cal CSA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Kern County Child Support Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 16, 2026

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

RE: SB 926 (Strickland), Funding for Proposition 36 Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Arreguín,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for SB 926 (Strickland), an urgency measure, which would establish the California Public Safety Services Support Fund.

Upon appropriation of funds from the Legislature, this measure would provide $400 million in funding for implementation of Proposition 36 in fiscal year 2026-27, to be administered via an equitable grant program by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). Additionally, the bill proposes an annual allocation from the state General Fund to the California Public Safety Services Support Fund, to be included in the Governor's January budget proposal at an amount sufficient to fully fund the continued implementation of the proposition.

As political subdivisions of the state, counties are responsible for the delivery of an expansive range of essential services in all communities across California. Critically, this responsibility extends to the provision of services, programs, and treatment required under Proposition 36. Broadly speaking, the initiative increased penalties for certain drug and theft offenses by repealing aspects of Proposition 47 (2014), and it established a new treatment-mandated felony, affording individuals faced with specified drug offenses the opportunity to enter treatment in lieu of incarceration.

To be clear, county entities are the primary implementers of Proposition 36. From county sheriff deputies making arrests and overseeing individuals in local detention facilities, behavioral health departments conducting court-ordered evaluations and delivering individualized treatment for those dealing with substance use disorder or a serious mental illness, county probation officers providing assessments, pretrial services, and supervision, and other criminal justice personnel such as public defender and district attorney staff tasked with delivering necessary services. SB 926 supports this critical workforce by requiring a minimum level of funding for counties to meet the intent of Proposition 36 and the will of California voters who overwhelmingly approved the ballot initiative.

The Judicial Council of California's annual implementation report concluded that filings for Proposition 36 charges have significantly impacted the courts and the broader criminal justice system, totaling nearly 20,000 felony drug cases and roughly 15,500 felony theft cases in the first year alone. This expanded population and increased demand for services adds to the strain on already overloaded county departments, presenting substantial concerns across the larger county eco system.

Most notably, the lack of state funding for Proposition 36 implementation at a time when H.R. 1 is anticipated to shift federal safety net costs to states and counties, amassing up to $9.5 billion per year for counties alone, will have a devastating effect on Californians statewide. If forced to absorb costs from H.R. 1, every county service will face crippling cuts, including those provided by public safety and behavioral health departments, further impeding the effective implementation of Proposition 36.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports SB 926 and respectfully urges the Senate Public Safety Committee to advance this important legislation without delay.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County District Attorney's Office
Kern County Public Defender's Office
Kern County Sheriff's Office
Kern County Probation Department
Kern County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 30, 2026

The Honorable Sabrina Cervantes
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 940 (Grove), New Technology Program for geothermal wells – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Cervantes,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for SB 940 (Grove), which establishes a long-overdue regulatory framework enabling the evaluation and potential repurposing of existing oil, gas, and geothermal wells for renewable energy generation and energy-storage purposes.

Kern County is home to some of the nation's most significant energy infrastructure, both traditional and renewable. As California seeks to secure more renewable energy sources, SB 940 provides a practical, science-driven pathway to leverage existing well infrastructure for emerging technologies such as thermal energy storage, synthetic geothermal systems, and other renewable energy innovations. This forward-looking approach aligns with Kern County's commitment to supporting a resilient, affordable, and reliable energy system for all Californians.

We are particularly supportive of the bill's establishment of the New Technology Program within CalGEM, which provides a structured and transparent process for evaluating repurposed-well projects under appropriate regulatory oversight. By allowing up to 250 experimental wells statewide, the bill creates a meaningful opportunity for innovation while maintaining necessary safeguards. We also appreciate the bill's requirement for close coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board and relevant federal agencies, ensuring that water quality and environmental protections remain at the forefront of program development.

Additionally, SB 940 wisely assigns regulatory-cost responsibility to project operators, ensuring that state oversight is fully funded without shifting costs to local taxpayers. Finally, by directing CalGEM to develop clear public guidelines for transitioning wells between geothermal and oil or gas classifications, the bill provides much-needed regulatory clarity for both industry and regulators as these projects advance.

We believe this bill represents an important opportunity to modernize outdated statutes, encourage innovation, and lower long-term energy costs, all while maintaining environmental protections and ensuring responsible stewardship of our underground resources.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on SB 940**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 16, 2026

The Honorable Henry Stern
Chair, Senate Emergency Management Committee
1020 N Street, Room 549
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 973 (Becker & Stern), Wildfire County Coordinator Program – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Stern,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for your co-authored bill SB 973 (Becker & Stern), which enhances California's wildfire resilience by strengthening county-level coordination, improving risk assessment tools, and formalizing the Wildfire County Coordinator Program.

Kern County is one of California's most wildfire-prone regions. Our communities, particularly in the Kern River Valley, Tehachapi region, and the wildland-urban interface areas, face increasing threats due to repeated drought events, fuel accumulation, and the growing number of residents living in high-risk zones. Effective wildfire mitigation requires consistent, well-supported local planning coupled with strong alignment across state, regional, and federal partners. SB 973 provides exactly that structure.

The bill offers several critical benefits by establishing statewide standards and tools for wildfire risk modeling, ensuring counties have access to reliable, data-driven information to guide planning and investments. It supports the development of county-level wildfire risk assessments, addressing a significant need for rural and resource-constrained jurisdictions, and provides clear guidance and templates for resilience prioritization and implementation plans that allow for consistency while accommodating local conditions.

Additionally, SB 973 codifies and expands the Wildfire County Coordinator Program to build sustained capacity for mitigation, prevention, preparedness, and recovery; strengthens coordination with CAL FIRE, Fire Safe Councils, local governments, and community partners; and requires the collection of data on mitigation activities, costs, and outcomes to help refine strategies and justify future funding needs.

Kern County has long emphasized the importance of home hardening, defensible space, community education, and interagency coordination. SB 973 supports and scales these efforts, allowing counties to better protect lives, homes, infrastructure, and natural resources.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the Senate Emergency Management Committee to advance SB 973 without delay. Thank you for your consideration and for your ongoing commitment to wildfire resilience across California.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Emergency Management Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Kern County Fire Department
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 22, 2026

The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1075 (Reyes), Community Emissions Reduction Programs and overreach into local land use authority – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Blakespear,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 1075 (Reyes), which would implement a sweeping expansion of state authority into local planning, dismantle existing environmental review frameworks, and create significant legal and administrative burdens for counties.

Expands CARB Authority and Subordinates Local Land Use Planning to State Oversight
SB 1075 would shift core land-use decision-making away from counties and toward the California Air Resources Board (CARB). By requiring community emissions reduction plans (CERPs) and local CERPs to achieve CARB approval and federal Clean Air Act attainment, the bill effectively conditions local planning on CARB's regulatory interpretations and enforcement priorities.

This structure places CARB, not locally elected governing bodies, in the position of determining whether any new or expanded land use "contributes to poor air quality," a vague and subjective standard that threatens to override general plans, zoning ordinances, and locally adopted environmental justice elements.

Additionally, shortening statewide strategy updates from five years to three creates a perpetual cycle of mandatory local plan revisions, forcing counties to repeatedly amend general plan components to maintain compliance with evolving statewide requirements.

Undermines CEQA by Elevating a Single Environmental Factor Above All Others
SB 1075 departs from decades of balanced environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires transparent review of nearly 20 categories of environmental impact including air quality, transportation, biological resources, water supply, and

land use, ensuring that decision makers assess environmental trade-offs holistically. SB 1075 dismantles this balanced approach by requiring air quality considerations to supersede all others, regardless of the broader environmental, economic, housing, or infrastructure needs of a community.

This creates a dangerous precedent by placing local governments in a position where they must disregard CEQA's comprehensive framework any time a project is deemed to "contribute to poor air quality," even if CEQA analysis suggests a different path that better serves the community.

Creates New Litigation Exposure and an Unprecedented Attorney General Enforcement Role
The bill authorizes any resident in a CERP community to petition the Attorney General to challenge, stay, or void a land-use decision that allegedly conflicts with a CERP or local CERP. This mechanism invites significant litigation risk, even when local agencies have followed CEQA, general plans, and established public processes in good faith.

Further, the Attorney General would be empowered to enforce violations with injunctive, declaratory, and equitable remedies, with costs borne entirely by the county whenever the AG prevails. This structure exposes counties to unpredictable and expensive litigation and allows for the overturning of duly noticed and lawfully adopted local decisions.

Impacts on Housing, Infrastructure, Economic Development, and Public Services
The bill's restrictions on new, modified, or expanded land uses that "contribute to poor air quality" would impede essential county priorities, including:

- Housing construction—including affordable and workforce housing
- Critical infrastructure (roads, utilities, emergency facilities)
- Economic development
- Industrial and agricultural operations that sustain local employment

The vague and all-encompassing standards in SB 1075 will have far-reaching, unintended consequences, delaying or preventing projects unrelated to emissions.

Imposes Unfunded Mandates Without Providing Local Capacity to Comply
SB 1075 places significant new obligations on counties to revise plans, conduct additional public processes, manage state-imposed consistency determinations, and respond to enforcement actions, yet it provides no resources to meet these obligations. Frequent mandatory updates, complex alignment requirements, and the potential for litigation create an unsustainable administrative burden.

Kern County remains committed to improving air quality through collaborative, community-driven approaches. However, SB 1075 goes too far as it will centralize land-use authority at the state level, undermine CEQA, increase litigation exposure, and impose costly and impractical burdens on local governments.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **NO on SB 1075**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

June 16, 2026

The Honorable Stan Ellis
32nd District, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5350
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

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

RE: SB 1143 (Caballero), Coordinating child abuse investigations and services – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Delegates,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our support for SB 1143 (Caballero), which makes statutory changes to Penal Code 11166.4 to allow Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) to release recordings of child forensic interviews to child welfare agencies authorized to investigate child abuse and neglect, upon request.

California established the framework for coordinated child abuse investigations through AB 2741 (2020), which authorized counties to utilize CACs to coordinate multidisciplinary responses to cases involving child abuse, exploitation, or maltreatment. These centers bring together professionals from law enforcement, child protective services, prosecutors, medical providers, mental health professionals, and victim advocates to ensure investigations are conducted in a trauma-informed, child-focused environment. Later, legislation, including AB 477 (2021) and SB 603 (2023), further strengthened the role of CACs and established detailed protocols governing the release and protection of forensic interview recordings.

Under existing law, child welfare agencies are not explicitly listed among the entities authorized to receive recordings of child forensic interviews. In practice, this omission means that county social workers responsible for investigating allegations of abuse or neglect may have access only to written

summaries or notes rather than the recordings themselves. In Kern County, our social workers investigating abuse allegations often rely on secondary summaries rather than the actual recordings. This limitation can reduce investigators' ability to fully assess a child's statements, including tone, emotional cues, and other non-verbal indicators that are often critical to understanding the context of abuse.

This statutory gap directly affects the effectiveness of child welfare investigations and the ability of agencies to protect children. Social workers play a central role in assessing risk, determining whether intervention is necessary, and coordinating services for affected families. Without direct access to recorded interviews, investigators lack important context that informs safety decisions or case outcomes. In some cases, this constraint can prolong investigations or require additional follow-up interviews, potentially increasing trauma for the child involved.

SB 1143 would address this issue by explicitly allowing CACs or other designated custodians to release forensic interview recordings to child welfare agencies authorized to investigate child abuse and neglect. The bill preserves all existing confidentiality safeguards, including protective order requirements and prohibitions against public release or duplication.

By clarifying that child welfare agencies can access these recordings, SB 1143 advances the collaborative, multidisciplinary approach California has built to respond to child abuse. This bill ensures that all appropriate investigative partners have the tools necessary to fully evaluate allegations while maintaining strong privacy protections for child victims. This change will support more informed investigations, improve coordination among agencies, and reduce the likelihood that children must repeat traumatic experiences during the investigative process.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors supports this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **YES on SB 1143** when it comes to the Assembly floor.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Kern County Department of Human Services
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

May 5, 2026

The Honorable Sabrina Cervantes
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1203 (Smallwood-Cuevas), Private security training mandates - OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cervantes,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 1203 (Smallwood-Cuevas), which would impose substantial new mandates on private security firms and the public agencies that rely on them. Kern County contracts with outside security guard companies to protect numerous county facilities including health centers, libraries, parks, administrative buildings, and justice-related offices. The requirements in SB 1203 would significantly increase the cost and complexity of providing this essential public safety function.

Specifically, SB 1203 increases required security officer training hours, mandates in-person instruction, adds new bias-related and de-escalation coursework, and requires ongoing paid training each year. Although well-intended, these mandates dramatically raise operational and labor costs for contracted security providers. By imposing state-controlled labor and training requirements on private security firms, the resulting higher contract rates would be passed directly to counties, adding new financial burdens at a time when Kern County already faces persistent fiscal pressures and must stretch limited resources across an expansive region.

The bill also imposes administrative fines of up to $10,000 per violation, heightened reporting obligations after altercations or firearm-related incidents, and expanded record-keeping requirements. These changes create substantial compliance risk for private security partners and add administrative burdens for county departments that coordinate and oversee these contracts. SB 1203 effectively becomes an unfunded mandate on counties that depend on outside security services to ensure public safety at government buildings.

We agree that security training and accountability are important. However, the extensive new costs, rigid training requirements, and significant administrative penalties in SB 1203 will reduce flexibility, strain public budgets, and may even discourage firms from bidding on public security contracts, particularly in rural counties like ours.

Furthermore, SB 1203 reflects the State's ongoing pattern of inserting itself into local labor structures in ways that consistently advantage unionized public-sector workforces at the expense of local flexibility. Just as we have seen in the IHSS program, where the State has repeatedly intervened in local bargaining and positioned counties to absorb the financial consequences, SB 1203 appears to advance similar goals by imposing burdensome, state-crafted standards on private security firms. These increasingly rigid and costly mandates risk making contracted security services financially impractical, effectively steering counties toward public-sector staffing models and weakening our ability to choose the most efficient and cost-effective method of providing security at county facilities.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors is strongly opposed to this measure and urges your committee to vote **NO on SB 1203**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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

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

April 29, 2026

The Honorable Sabrina Cervantes
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1327 (Reyes), Electric vehicle supply equipment regulation – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cervantes,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 1327 (Reyes), which would significantly alter the regulatory framework governing the accuracy and oversight of electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) in California.

While the goal of ensuring consumer protection in EV charging is important, SB 1327 creates several concerns regarding regulatory fragmentation, loss of clarity for local enforcement, and potential disruption to existing county responsibilities under California's weights and measures laws.

First, the bill shifts statewide regulatory authority over EVSE accuracy from the Secretary of Food and Agriculture, long charged with setting uniform standards for commercial weighing and measuring devices, to the California Energy Commission (CEC). This transfer could create inconsistent standards, duplicative oversight, and uncertainty for consumers, operators, and local jurisdictions alike. The existing statutory framework for weights and measures has a proven enforcement structure, and removing EVSE from that system may weaken the consistency and accountability currently provided.

Second, while SB 1327 authorizes county sealers to continue testing and certifying EVSE accuracy, it requires local enforcement to comply with future regulations adopted by the CEC. This creates a bifurcated and potentially confusing system in which county sealers must adjust longstanding protocols once new CEC regulations take effect. Counties may be compelled to retrain staff, update procedures, and adapt to new regulatory standards without clarity on the associated fiscal or operational impacts.

Third, the bill prematurely renders existing regulations inoperative and repeals provisions related to EVSE testing and retesting requirements on timelines tied not to demonstrated readiness, but to the completion of CEC rulemaking. This risks creating gaps in enforceability and oversight during the transition period, with consequences for consumer protection and local program continuity.

Given the rapid growth of electric vehicle infrastructure across California, it is essential that the State maintain coherent, stable, and clearly delegated authority for ensuring accuracy and fairness in commercial transactions. SB 1327, as currently drafted, would undermine those objectives by shifting regulatory responsibility away from established systems without sufficient justification or safeguards for local implementation.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **NO on SB 1327**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Department of Agriculture and Measurement Standards
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange

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

April 22, 2026

The Honorable Sabrina Cervantes
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1359 (Stern), Gas Transition Responsibility and Electrification Act – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cervantes,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to SB 1359 (Stern), which would significantly alter the state's natural gas distribution system and impose new restrictions that, in practice, reduce consumer choice for millions of Californians, including the hardworking families of the Central Valley.

SB 1359 goes far beyond reasonable regulatory alignment. By limiting new natural gas connections and authorizing the retirement of existing gas infrastructure, this bill effectively accelerates a forced transition away from natural gas. For our residents, that means fewer options, not more, when it comes to choosing the appliances and energy systems that best meet their household needs and budget. The long-term effect is clear: as natural gas infrastructure is phased out or becomes cost-prohibitive, consumers will be left with no practical alternative but to rely entirely on electric appliances, regardless of their preference.

The fact remains that the vast majority of Californians currently use natural gas as their preferred energy source for cooking, space and water heating. Most families here in the Central Valley already struggle to shoulder the financial burden of cooling their homes in the summer due to exorbitantly high electric bills. These incessant legislative and regulatory efforts that only focus on achieving the end goal of zero emission buildings have completely lost sight of the real-world impacts on the state's overall affordability. This particular bill effectively limits consumer choice and essentially compels residential and commercial property owners to use electricity, regardless of what people want or the increased cost to consumers.

As our county continues to grapple with high levels of poverty and a low supply of new homes, now is not the time for the Legislature to pile on by promoting policies that will inevitably add to the cost of monthly utility bills and simultaneously stifle a sluggish construction market with more unnecessary regulations.

SB 1359 would disproportionately burden communities like ours, where economic hardship is already widespread, energy costs are a major monthly expense, and housing production struggles under existing state mandates. The bill's impact on construction costs, paired with the reduced availability of natural gas service, risks deepening the housing shortage and slowing economic development in regions that can least afford it.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes this measure and respectfully urges you to vote **NO on SB 1359**.

Sincerely,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

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