

FEDERAL PRIORITY ISSUES



2019

County of Tulare

As approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors on ...

Tulare County Board of Supervisors



(As shown above)

- Dennis TownsendDistrict Five
- Pete Vander Poel (Vice Chairman).....District Two
- Kuyler Crocker (Chairman)District One
- Eddie ValeroDistrict Four
- Amy Shuklian.....District Three

Jason T. Britt
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Federal PRIORITY ISSUES

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FARM TO MARKET ROUTES

Challenge:

The dairy industry plays a major part in the economy of Tulare County and provides five percent (5%) of all milk consumed in the United States. Hundreds of gallons of milk are produced every day from each of the over 360 dairies in Tulare County. All of this milk is transported to processing facilities by truck over county roads. According to Caltrans, a fully loaded dairy truck can weigh up to 80,000 pounds. Roadways carrying 500 trucks per day would be impacted the same as if 5 million passenger cars had traveled that same road. The Tulare County Association of Governments has developed a farm to market strategy for prioritization that can be duplicated or used as a basis for a new program.

Solution:

Provide special funding for rural roads that are used by dairies for daily farm to market shipping through a set aside in the next Transportation or Farm Bill.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Challenge:

On October 20, 2015, Governor Brown declared an emergency proclamation on the tree mortality epidemic and requested federal support and partnership. Fuel reduction, reforestation projects, pest and diseased tree removal, and long-term protection of forested lands vulnerable to conversion are all needed to address the ongoing tree mortality epidemic. To date, 1 ~~47.29~~ million dead or dying trees have been found within 18 California and an estimated ~~28.99~~ million dead or dying trees in Tulare County alone.

Solution:

Support legislation and/or funding appropriations to augment the ongoing pest and diseased tree removal, fire prevention, and reforestation activities in our National Forests.

INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVE – LOCAL MATCH

Challenge:

The ~~recent~~ White House Infrastructure Proposal seeks to fund major infrastructure projects through a combination of new Federal funding, non-Federal funding, and newly prioritized and expedited projects. It is unclear if an existing sales tax measure can be used to match federal funding.

Solution:

Allow already approved sales tax measures to be eligible as the match for the federal funding under the new infrastructure initiative.

INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVE – DEFINITION OF RURAL

Challenge:

The ~~recent~~ White House Infrastructure Proposal seeks to fund major infrastructure projects through a combination of new Federal funding, non-Federal funding, and newly prioritized and expedited projects. A percentage of funding is slated to go to rural areas of a certain population. The definition of rural under consideration would say a County is NOT rural if there exists a metropolitan area in the County. This would immediately eliminate Tulare County from any funding considerations.

Solution:

Include rural portions of counties that have urban areas under the definition of rural by carving out the metropolitan areas and classifying the remaining section as rural.

PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES

Challenge:

Payments in Lieu of Taxes" (or PILT) are Federal payments to local governments that help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries. California received a little over \$48 million in PILT payments based on 44 million acres of federal land in 57 out of 58 counties. Tulare County received \$3,~~538,329,196~~700 in 201~~8~~7 for 1,530,~~729,408~~ acres.

Solution:

Reauthorization of Payment in Lieu of Taxes at full funding.

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

Federal PRIORITY ISSUES

Challenge:

~~The Secure Rural Schools program was reauthorized for 2 years on April 16, 2015. In total, approximately \$285 million in Forest Service authorized Secure Rural Schools funding will benefit 41 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The SRS program provides assistance to rural counties and school districts affected by the decline in revenue from timber harvests on federal lands. Historically, rural communities and schools have relied on a share of receipts from timber harvests to supplement local funding for education services and roads in support of local schools and roads and for other purposes. In FY 2017, California received funding in the amount of \$31,787,327. Tulare County was allocated \$425,526 in Title I (public schools and roads) funds, \$40,050 in Title II funds, and \$35,043 in Title III \$398,515.78 in funding. Final payment for FY 2018 is scheduled for the Spring of 2019. A final amount has not been provided funds.~~

Solution:

Continued support and funding for the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act beyond the 2018 ~~deadline expiration.~~

STATE CRIMINAL ALIEN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Challenge:

Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice administers the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) in conjunction with the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS). SCAAP provides federal payments to states and localities that incurred correctional officer salary costs for incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens with at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions for violations of state or local law, and incarcerated for at least 4 consecutive days during the reporting period. SCAAP funding has decreased 65% since 2010. Tulare County received ~~\$608,907,552,875~~ in 2017 ~~6~~ which is approximately 4% of the actual costs incurred.

Solution:

Reauthorization of SCAAP at full funding.

SUBSIDENCE IN FRIANT-KERN CANAL

Challenge:

Subsidence along the Friant-Kern is a result of increased groundwater pumping from about 2012 to 2016. The groundwater pumping came in response to reduced and curtailed surface water deliveries by the Bureau of Reclamation during that period. Canal capacity is now about 1,750 cubic feet per second, down from a designed capacity of 4,000 cfs. Long term repairs to the canal system could cost upwards of \$350 million in the next couple of years. This includes bridge work in concert with Tulare County. There is a new water bond under consideration in the state of California that could potentially contribute to the repairs but long term-fixes cannot happen without both state and federal funding.

Solution:

Support legislation and/or funding appropriations to address the issue of subsidence along the Friant-Kern Canal and its effect on 5 Tulare County bridges.

SUCCESS RESERVOIR ENLARGEMENT PROJECT (SREP)

Challenge:

The SREP proposal is to increase flood protections to communities in the County of Tulare, including downstream agricultural lands. Success Reservoir was selected to receiving funding to address additional costs needed to account for mitigation for upstream and downstream effects, and incorporation of design changes from recent failure events at Oroville Dam in California. ~~Funding will be in the next Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill.~~

Solution:

Support continued funding and/or legislation to ~~continue to~~ work with community partners and the Army Corps of Engineers to raise the Success Dam spillway.

WATER SUPPLY/RECHARGE PROJECTS

Challenge:

The San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority (SJWVIA) was established under a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement adopted by the Counties of Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, and Tulare. The Joint Powers Authority was formed to seek, promote, arrange and compete for grant and other funding for water infrastructure projects benefitting the San Joaquin Valley constituents. These projects include, but are not limited to, the proposed Temperance Flat Dam on the San Joaquin River and other local surface and groundwater storage projects. The goal is to improve water supply availability and reliability for the San Joaquin Valley's steadily growing population and business community as well as the agriculture industry.

The House passed the Fiscal Year 2018 omnibus spending bill (H.R. 1625) agreement which includes funding for California water storage projects as requested by the U.S. Department of Interior. Funded was Temperance Flat for \$1.5 million to complete the long-pending feasibility study. ~~The project is still pending review from the California Water Commission for State Prop 1 funding. The project was awarded \$171 million in State Water Bond Funding in 2018 but it is still under the budget needed to see the project to completion.~~

Solution:

1. Support for the application, planning and construction of water supply and recharge projects such as the Temperance Flat Dam.
2. Support the exertion of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WINN) Act until 2028 to continue to address the needs of America's harbors, dams, flood protection, and other water resources and infrastructure critical to the Nation's economic growth.

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STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



Yokohl Valley from the Climb to the Oak Tree - Troy Robinson

~~2017-~~
~~2018~~
2019

County of Tulare

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on ~~February 28, 2017...~~

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State Legislative Platform

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AGRICULTURE

1. **Increased funding for Dairy Digester Program and Alternative Manure Management Program: California Department of Food and Agriculture.**

Challenge:

Dairy digesters are a renewable technology that uses livestock manure to produce methane, a renewable source of electrical energy generation and transportation fuel. California is home to the nation's largest dairy industry and Tulare County is the largest producer of dairy products in the State. Unfortunately, investment in dairy digesters has lagged in California due to expensive, uncertain and complex interconnection and permitting obstacles, high environmental compliance costs, lack of long-term economic purchase agreements, and high financing risk and costs.

The CDFA has released ~~\$61.29~~-~~\$75.36~~ million for the 201~~9~~ Dairy Digester Research and Development Program, however additional support is needed for success. Regulatory hurdles still exist that will impede the best use of this funding in the proposed ~~two-year~~ time frame. An additional \$19-\$33 million will be provided in incentives to support non-digester practices that reduce methane emissions from dairy and livestock operations through a separate program, the Alternative Manure Management Program. The ultimate goal for both programs is long-term methane emission reductions on California dairies or mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

Solution:

Continue to sSupport initiatives to provide regulatory support to dairy digester projects such as those eligible under the CDFA 201~~9~~ Dairy Digester Research and Development Program and the Alternative Manure Management Program as authorized by ~~the Budget Act of 2016 (Chapter 370, Statutes of 2016)~~ Senate Bill 856 of Budget Act of 2018 (Chapter 30, Statutes of 2018).

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2. **Asian citrus psyllid (ACP).**

Challenge:

The Asian citrus psyllid and the bacterial disease that it vectors, Huanglongbing (HBL), are two of the biggest threats to the future of the California citrus industry and backyard fruit production. ACP was first detected in 2008 in San Diego and quickly became established in southern California before moving north to Tulare County and other parts of the state. ~~HBL can be catastrophic to commercial and backyard citrus. HBL has contributed to a decrease in citrus production and has drastically increased production costs.~~ Today, close to 70% of the state's acreage is located in Fresno, Kern and Tulare Counties.

Solution:

Support efforts to secure a funding resource directed at researching ACP to aid in finding a potential cure and prevent the continued spread of the disease.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

3. ~~Forest Management, Resiliency, Fire Prevention & Fire Response.~~

Challenge:

Years of prolonged drought, bark beetle infestation, and devastating wildfires combined with years of inadequate fuels treatment have resulted in an ongoing tree mortality that needs to be more comprehensively addressed. The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region released an Aerial Detection Survey Report totaling ~~66-147~~ million dead or dying trees within the 18 counties most impacted statewide by Tree Mortality. Tulare County was identified as having the highest number of dead trees ~~with an estimate of 240,000 acres~~ with new conifer mortality and an estimated ~~8-128.9~~ million dead or dying trees. ~~The survey found that more than half of all dead trees statewide are located in Tulare and Fresno Counties.~~

~~Tulare County initiated a two-phase Tree Mortality Removal Project in 2016. Phase I is now 90% complete with a total expenditure of \$75,000. Upon Board approval, Phase II will continue the County's efforts to continue to mitigate the imminent safety hazard presented by dead and dying trees on the County right-of-way, or on private properties that present a threat to the general public. It is anticipated that Phase II tree removal costs will range from \$90,000 to \$125,000 in County funds.~~

~~The Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, as added by section 8204 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill) provides for the designation of landscape-scale areas on national forests to address insect and disease threats. Over 5.3 million acres of forests in California are designated under this provision and Section 603 of the Farm Bill provides for the potential use of a Categorical Exclusion in these areas. Forests contain critical watersheds and their current condition presents a danger to these watersheds, wildlife, and air quality.~~

~~In light of the devastating wildfires and resulting disasters that occurred last year, the Governor's budget proposal includes \$213 million pursuant to SB 901 (Chapters 626,818) the wildfire prevention and recovery legislation. Funds would be used for fuels reduction, prescribed burning, etc. It is the first investment out of a total of \$1 billion over the next five years for fire prevention and forest management activities.~~

Solution:

1. Request ~~that the continued support by the~~ Governor ~~continue to advocate in advocacy efforts~~ at the federal level for treatment of the areas designated under Section 8204 of the Farm Bill, and request that the State of California partner with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal entities to treat the affected areas.
2. Support legislation ~~/funding-~~for local assistance, financial resources, regulatory relief, and outreach efforts to effectively reduce safety risks to the public from dead and dying trees.
3. Support legislation ~~/funding for fire prevention through fuel reduction projects through prescribed burn fire crews and grants for forest health projects.~~
- ~~3.4. Support additional funding for enhancing aviation resources, expanding firefighting surge capacity, expand firefighting capacity and response. to improve active management in the national forests.~~
- ~~4. Support the use of biomass facilities in the state. -?~~

CEQA REFORM

4. Elimination of the “Fair Argument” Test.

Challenge:

Many projects (including publicly-sponsored projects) are delayed or stopped because of the very low threshold set by the “fair argument” test.

Essentially, the “fair argument” test provides that if there is a fair argument that the proposed project will cause a significant effect on the environment, then an environment impact report (EIR) shall be prepared, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary. (See the leading case of *Friends of “B” Street v. City of Hayward* (1980) 106 Cal.App.3d 988.)

Solution:

Support legislation to amend both CEQA and the applicable State CEQA Guidelines to eliminate the “fair argument” test applicable to negative declarations and mitigated negative declarations. (See Public Resources Code Section 21080, subs. (c), (d); 14 Cal. Code Regs. Section 15064.) Non-exempt projects under CEQA should be replaced with the “substantial evidence” test. According to the “substantial evidence” test, an environmental document will be upheld by the court if there is any substantial evidence to conclude that the project will not cause a significant environmental effect, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary.

The “substantial evidence” test is a more uniform and equitable way to judge disputes over CEQA documents, particularly negative declarations which are used more extensively by public entities.

The above-cited CEQA provision and State CEQA Guideline should be amended to read as follows: “The ‘substantial evidence’ test shall apply to a challenge to a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration in that this environmental document may be upheld if there is any substantial evidence to conclude that the project will not cause a significant environmental effect, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary.”

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5. “Good Faith” Limitation on exhaustion of administrative remedies.

Challenge:

There is currently considerable delay in public proceedings caused by project opponents who were not participating in good faith.

Solution:

To avoid document abuse during the public comment period or at a public hearing, CEQA should have a "good faith" limitation written into the exhaustion of remedies requirement; that is, project opponents should not be allowed to continue to slow down proceedings by dropping massive amounts of documents into the record at the eleventh hour. Consequently, the statute should be amended to provide a reasonable limitation. For example, Public Resources Code Section 21177, subdivision (a), should be amended to add at the end of the sentence the following language: ...*"provided, however, the public agency may exclude any evidence presented during the public comment period or public hearing, if the submittal of such evidence was not in good faith and for the purpose of improper delay of the proceedings."*

DRINKING WATER

6. Private well assistance.**Challenge:**

Tulare County has ~~more than~~ 1,585 private domestic wells ~~that have gone dry~~ ~~(add in an as of date?)~~ ~~during the~~ ~~due to~~ prolonged drought ~~conditions~~. In many cases the property ~~is was~~ not near an alternative domestic water supply such as a community or municipal public water system. The existing funding programs are geared toward community systems and do not address problems with private wells. The County has had limited success in accessing drought funds on behalf of private well owners to connect them to existing systems. Obstacles include identifying an entity that can apply on behalf of the well owners, incentivizing existing systems to make their service available, and getting a sufficient number of homes to connect. ~~This has resulted in residences out of water for over two years. While~~ Tulare County supports sustainable solutions, ~~through a balance between prohibitions on new water system development and eradication of~~ dependence on replacement individual domestic wells ~~wherever possible and funding criteria that supports~~ ~~must be reached~~ regional solutions.

Solution:

Provide local assistance through Technical Assistance Requests to identify long-term solutions for those with continued outages. SB 88 allowed for consolidation of small water systems with nearby municipal systems, but does not address communities with individual private wells. Address funding criteria that do not reflect the State's priority to decrease reliance on individual private wells.

7. Create sustainable operation & maintenance revenue streams.**Challenge:**

The ability of a water or wastewater system to provide a level of service that protects the health and safety of those they serve is directly dependent on their ability to collect sufficient revenues to cover the cost of operating and maintaining the system. While the intention of Prop. 218 is noble, it often hinders

systems and local governments from collecting reasonable and necessary fees to cover basic costs of operating and maintaining systems. The result is systems operating with ~~less-insufficient~~ revenue which then sets in motion inadequate maintenance practices, decline in drinking water quality or quantity, and system failures. ~~Due to the size of many communities and the lack of appropriate economies of scale to spread fixed costs residents are also faced with paying unaffordable water and sewer rates.~~ The outcome is water and wastewater systems in various states of disrepair that require large capital investments ~~that-which~~ typically come from public funding programs. Furthermore, when a county is asked to be a sewer or water purveyor on a short-term or interim basis, the impacts of Prop. 218 on the ability to fund the service deters counties from getting involved. ~~Additionally, the financial audit requirements are often expensive and add additional expense to a community's already high overhead costs.~~

Solution:

~~Reform the statute to include provisions for reasonable and necessary water and sewer rates. In order to protect rate payers (the crux of Prop 218) a means test could be established to determine "reasonable and necessary" rates. Further, reducing the extensive auditing requirements to a less frequent and less robust standard would reduce costs. While technical assistance on developing rate studies and establishing rate policies exist, additional resources and outreach is needed for disadvantaged communities to establish sustainable operation and maintenance programs and corresponding rates. Provide operation and maintenance funding directly to disadvantage community water systems. Create a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund or similar funding source.~~

8. Streamline funding processes.

Challenge:

In previous water bond measures, less than 2% of the funding went to disadvantaged community water and wastewater needs. Due to the incapacity of these communities to prepare complicated application packets and waiting for years for a project to be funded, disadvantaged community water funds are not reaching their target audiences in an efficient and effective manner. Often funds go to other projects that are "shovel ready" and have a marginal tie to disadvantaged community water needs.

Solution:

Work with local agencies, including counties, to identify willing applicants (such as a County) to receive the funding on behalf of the community to: move projects forward; provide competent project management; and increase the effectiveness of disadvantaged community water and wastewater funding.

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9. Streamline processes for local entity formation.

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10. Conflict between requirement to provide farm labor housing and the requirement to provide safe drinking water.

Challenge:

The Department of Housing and Community Development analyzes special housing needs for farm workers. If the County's Housing Element demonstrates a need for farm labor housing the County is required under statute to permit the development of said housing. However, often the identified water supply does not meet State and Federal drinking water standards. In this scenario the County is forced to violate State

policy either by denying the housing development based on inadequate water supply or approving the housing without adequate safe drinking water.

Solution:

Resolve the conflict by requiring proof of safe drinking water availability prior to approving farm labor housing development.

11. Allow drinking water funding agencies to fund fire flow requirements when such requirements jeopardize the execution of the project.

Challenge:

Some sources of funding for drinking water projects do not allow for the necessary upgrades to provide fire flow capacity (larger pipe size, hydrants, and additional storage capacity). In severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged communities residents are unable to pay for the upgrades. When this happens the projects stalls because the project cannot move forward without the fire protection and the funding agency can't pay for that protection.

Solution:

Recognize that those in severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged communities are the poorest residents in the State and their living conditions are below average. Removing silos at the State level to access funds that can meet both needs is paramount to solving this challenge. A holistic approach that meets both drinking water and fire protection needs is necessary to improve the quality of life for the residents and get projects completed.

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~~12. 12. Disadvantaged community integrated regional water management involvement.~~

Challenge:

~~Proposition 1 provided funding through the Department of Water Resources (DWR), Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) division for the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program to ensure the involvement of disadvantaged communities, economically distressed areas, or underrepresented communities in IRWM planning efforts. DWR is seeking a single Funding Area wide proposal from each of the 12 Proposition 1 Funding Areas.~~

Solution:

~~Request support for Tulare County's Disadvantaged Community Involvement Proposal.~~

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WATER SUPPLY

13. Water supply south of the Delta.

Challenge:

Existing interpretation of regulations and guidelines imposes limitations on water supply through the Central Valley Project water system. [With the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act surface water supplies are even more important to Tulare County's residents and growers as Groundwater Sustainability Agencies work to implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans.](#)

Solution:

Request that the State Water Resources Control Board interpret its duties with maximum flexibility to allow for water deliveries south of the Delta.

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14. Surface water storage.

Challenge:

Proposition 1, passed in November 2014, includes \$2.7 billion for water storage projects, dams, and reservoirs. However, there exists uncertainty regarding the nature, scope, and timelines for surface storage projects. Proposition 1 also includes guidelines for water quality and ecosystem public benefits of storage projects, however the method of evaluation by the State Water Resources Control Board as to whether or not a storage project meets the criteria remains unclear.

Solution:

1. Request that the California Water Commission direct storage funding to surface storage projects such as Temperance Flat and Site Reservoir and that these projects be expedited.

~~Request clarification and maximum flexibility from the State Water Resources Control Board in evaluating whether or not a storage project meets the criteria for water quality and ecosystem public benefits.~~

WILLIAMSON ACT

15. Reduction of funding to cities/counties.

Challenge:

The Williamson Act, also known as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, authorizes a city or county to enter into contracts with owners of land devoted to agricultural use. Existing law sets forth procedures for reimbursing cities and counties for property tax revenues not received as a result of these contracts and continuously appropriates General Fund moneys for that purpose.

Existing law for the 2008-2009 fiscal year and each year thereafter, essentially eliminated the reimbursement. This was a result of revenue shortfalls during the recession when payments were reduced to a total of \$1,000 statewide.

Solution:

Support legislation that

- ~~• Would delete the 1.0% percent reduction requirement by the Controller.~~
- ~~• Repeal the prohibition in regards to an increase or reduction in the amount paid to a city and/or county.~~

1. Would issue all funding received from the cancellation of fees to the local jurisdiction.
2. Would keep and restore the Williamson Act subvention funding.

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STATE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILT)

16. State obligation to cities/counties

Challenge:

State PILT was established in 1949 to offset adverse impacts to county property tax revenues that result when the State acquires private property for wildlife management areas. In 2015, the final state budget package included language in the Fish and Game Code that changed "shall" to "may", putting all future state PILT payments to counties at risk.

~~Although Governor Brown has honored the states commitment during his tenure, it is uncertain if future administration will do the same. In 2018, Tulare County received over \$3.5 million in PILT funding. Funding was included in the 2018-19 State Budget Act but has not been allocated beyond this fiscal year.~~

Solution:

Support legislation for continuous appropriation funding of Payment-In-Lieu of Taxes (PILT) payments for California's counties.

GOVERNMENT FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

17. Civil Fines and Penalties: Amend Government Code Section 54988.

Challenge:

Code enforcement fines and penalties cannot be placed on the tax rolls as a lien for collection, making collection of such fines and penalties difficult for local jurisdictions.

Solution:

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54988, code enforcement fees and costs may be placed on the tax rolls as a lien for collection. Accordingly, since fines and penalties are a customary part of the code enforcement assessment, they should be allowed to be placed on the tax rolls as a lien to insure collection as a deterrent against activities that are harmful to the public health's safety and general welfare. In doing so, Section 54988 should be amended as follows:

54988. (a) (1) In addition to any other remedy provided by law, including the current powers of charter cities, the legislative body of a city, county, or city and county may collect any fee, cost, fine or penalty, or charge incurred in any of the following:

(A) The abatement of public nuisances.

See underlined amended language.

18. County Governance Authority

Challenge:

Charter and general law counties have been under critical observation by several interest groups. The focus has centered on Board of Supervisors and their authority in regards to general decision making power, board structure, and district size. Special interest groups have recently called for an examination of County Administrative Officials, their role, and the potential shift of an appointed position to an elected position. Conversation has also emerged in regards to increasing the number of Supervisors on each Board from 5 to 7.

Solution:

Work with legislature to continue advocating for the preservation of local authority for budget approval, redistricting, and general managerial powers that reflect community service needs.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

19. Elimination of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) for In Home Support Services (IHSS).

Challenge:

~~In 2017, The Governor's budget included the elimination of the IHSS MOE for 2017, thus reverting to the pre-MOE cost-sharing formula, requiring counties to pay 35% of all non-federal costs of the program. Due to a number of factors outside of county control, including CA's minimum wage increase, implementation of overtime and paid sick leave for providers, and the restoration of earlier cuts to the program; IHSS program costs are much higher than they were before the MOE went into effect. Eliminating the MOE would create a \$623 million shift of costs from the state to the counties above the MOE obligations in 2017. Fiscal analysis by the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) shows this cost shift growing to \$1.6 billion dollars by 2022, mostly due to the state minimum wage increase. For Tulare County, elimination of the MOE is projected to add \$2-3 million in county obligation for 2017/18. This county obligation will grow annually as wages and enrollments increase.~~

~~The implications of this proposal to county funding go well beyond IHSS. As IHSS is a caseload-driven entitlement program, realigned in 1991, it has "first call" on any growth funding. This means any growth in IHSS costs diverts funding away other 1991 Realignment programs, including Health and Mental Health. Locally, these programs would certainly lose any growth funds for the foreseeable future, likely leading to program reductions/elimination as well as the inability to meet new program requirements, such as those prescribed by the Continuum of Care Reform.~~

~~The Department of Finance produced an IHSS reopener report containing detailed findings on four suggested elements to address the IHSS fiscal structure which include the following:~~

- ~~• Are revenues available for the 1991 Realignment sufficient to meet costs~~
- ~~• Are administrative costs higher, lower than the MOE~~
- ~~• Impacts of the IHSS MOE on Health Subaccount, Mental Health Subaccount, County Medical Services Program Subaccount, other services~~

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• Status of collective bargaining for the IHSS program in each County

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Solution:

1. Request that the Governor work with the State Legislature on a more reasonable proposal that will not shift such a large burden on the counties, but rather ensure an equitable and sustainable solution for the IHSS Program for many years to come.

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2. Support legislation that will:

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- Invest additional funding in the State General Fund for IHSS over the next four years and in turn will lower the County IHSS MOE base in 2019-20.
- Adjust the MOE base downward, lower the inflation factor to four percent, stop the Current IHSS mitigations, and make other changes to 1991 realignment.
- Eliminate the State General Fund mitigation beginning in 2019-20.
- Stop the redirection of 1991 Realignment VLF Growth from the Health and Mental Health subaccounts to the Social Services subaccounts.
- Eliminate accelerated caseload growth for IHSS and return to the original method for calculating IHSS caseload.

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20. **County Veterans Services Officers.**

Challenge:

California is home to approximately two million veterans. Currently, the state budget allocates \$5.6 million in one-time funding to the County Veterans Service officers (CVSO) in 58 California counties. CVSO's are the first contact for most veterans and are historically able to bring in \$100 of federal veterans benefits for every \$1 spent by the state. Without full funding, California's veterans will not receive the government benefits they earned through their military service.

Solution:

Support/sponsor efforts to educate the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the public on the importance and value of the County Veteran's Offices (CVSOs) with the eventual goal of fully funding CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d).

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21. **Medi-Cal and Medicare reimbursement rates.**

Challenge:

Access for low-income families ~~and Medicare beneficiaries~~ to primary medical care and specialty care services in the County is impaired as a result of high un-insurance rates, inadequate reimbursement rates from ~~Medicare and~~ Medi-Cal, and a shortage of healthcare providers. ~~Tulare County added approximately 45,000 newly eligible residents to Medi-Cal as a result of the Affordable Care Act ("ACA"). At the end of 2016, approximately 55% of Tulare County's population received coverage via Medi-Cal. The 2016 County Health Rankings reveals there is one primary care provider for every 2,350 Tulare County residents compared to one for every 1,270 for the State of California. Low reimbursement rates exacerbate this disparity.~~

~~The Governor estimates a decrease in Medi-Cal costs of about \$2.3 billion for the Budget Year. The Governor also intends to expand Medi-Cal coverage to young undocumented adults ages 19-25. The Governor's budget proposes an increase of \$53 million for Medi-Cal county administration over the 2018-19 funding level.~~

Solution:

Support/sponsor legislation that:

~~1. Increases the rates of reimbursement for Medi-Cal and Medicare consistent with rates available in other jurisdictions and costs experienced by efficient providers;~~

~~+2. Support legislation/funding to retain and attract competent healthcare providers.~~

~~2. Provides reasonable reimbursement for acquisition of medications, such as chemotherapy agents, which are administered in physician offices; Provides reasonable reimbursement rates for mental health and dental services for all age groups (children, adolescents, and adults).~~

22. Alcohol and drug/mental health treatment.

Challenge:

Proposition 47 reduces six crimes from felonies or wobblers, which are crimes for which either a felony or a misdemeanor can be charged, to misdemeanors. The measure specifically reduces the penalties for the following crimes: grand theft, shoplifting, receiving stolen property, writing bad checks, check forgery, and drug possession. The passage of Proposition 47 suggested a shift in spending on jails and court costs for non-violent offenders to spending on drug treatment, mental health services, victim services, and other programs. Proposition 47 set aside up to \$250 million to help local agencies treat drug offenders. ~~The county was not guaranteed receipt of such funds. To date, no Proposition 47 funding has been received by Tulare County.~~

~~The Department of Finance currently estimates a net savings of \$78.5 million when comparing 2018-19 to 2013-14, an increase of \$13.8 million over the estimated 2017-18 savings. The Health and Human Services Agency reports there was an increase in persons accessing services of 7% for FY 14/15 and 1% for FY 15/16, however, this cannot be attributed solely to Proposition 47. There is direct and indirect costs to the Public Defender's Office, the Office of the District Attorney, and the Probation Department for the processing of the 5,910 petitions for relief to date have been: \$224,141, \$137,337, and \$55,708 respectively.~~

~~The above costs, which total \$417,186 for the period of November 7, 2014 through February 17, 2017, were not considered during the drafting of the proposition and do not include time spent by Public Defender or District Attorney personnel in court during the hearing process, costs to the court for the actual hearing time, or the hours of multi-agency planning meetings to establish the workflow.~~

Solution:

Sponsor legislation that will support the receipt of county funds or offer support for related impacts to Mental Health services and Alcohol and Drug (AOD) treatment services.

23. No Place Like Home initiative Homelessness & Affordable Housing

Challenge:

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Governor Jerry Brown signed into law the No Place Like Home Initiative (AB 1618) on July 1, 2016. The proposal provides \$2 billion for the construction and rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals with mental illness. The funding is divided into competitive (\$1.8 billion) and non-competitive (\$200 million). Counties are grouped into four categories and will submit proposals in order to obtain funding.

Communities in Tulare County and throughout California have experienced increases in the number of homeless persons in recent years. Tulare County is estimated to have 631 homeless persons. Although there are many organizations committed to serving homeless persons and reduce their prevalence, resources are lacking. The absence of available and affordable permanent housing, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and other infrastructure to reduce homelessness also remain as significant barriers.

Solution:

1. Support efforts to secure AB 1618 funding to help aid in combating the issue of homelessness and provide affordable housing to the homeless population of Tulare County, funding for siting emergency shelters, navigation centers, and supportive housing.
2. Support expedited allocation of No Place Like Home grant allocations to counties to build permanent supportive housing for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
3. Support one time funding allocation for Tulare County for partnership with local organizations to build housing at an affordable cost.

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TRANSPORTATION

24. Comprehensive transportation package.

Challenge:

The 2014 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment identified an annual funding shortfall of nearly \$8 billion annually over the next 10 years to bring the local transportation system up to date. The California Transportation Commission notified the State Legislature on January 27, 2016 that it was deprogramming \$754 million from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) including over \$60,000,000 in Tulare County projects.

The California State Legislature was unable to pass a transportation package in 2016, but efforts will continue in the 2017 legislative session. The goal this year will be for the legislature and governor to reach a comprehensive and sustainable transportation funding and reform deal that will increase the amount of allocated funding for local streets and roads.

Solution:

1. Support a long term transportation bill which includes the following priorities:

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State Legislative Platform

- ~~• Fix the annual price-based excise tax adjustment by resetting the tax and indexing the rate to inflation.~~
- ~~• Equal revenue sharing between the systems on any new revenues for road maintenance and rehabilitation.~~
- ~~• Use truck weight fees for transportation projects.~~

2. Support/sponsor legislation that:

- ~~• Will provide much needed new statewide investment to maintain and improve local streets and roads and state highways.~~
- ~~• Ensure existing revenues meant for transportation projects are redirected to transportation.~~
- ~~• Expand existing CEQA exemption available to counties for maintenance, rehabilitation, and safety projects.~~

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DRAFT

STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



2019

County of Tulare

As approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors

on ...

Tulare County Board of Supervisors



(As shown above)

- Dennis Townsend District Five
- Pete Vander Poel (Vice Chairman)..... District Two
- Kuyler Crocker (Chairman)..... District One
- Eddie Valero District Four
- Amy Shuklian..... District Three

Jason T. Britt
County Administrative Officer
2800 W. Burrel Avenue
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 636-5005

State Legislative Advocate
Paul Yoder
Shaw, Yoder, Antwih, Inc.
1415 L Street, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-4656

State Legislative Platform

COUNTY OF TULARE

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors annually adopts a State Legislative Platform. The platform is a statement of priority issues for Tulare County and provides direction for county staff and for those persons advocating on behalf of the County.

The Board of Supervisors recognizes that unforeseen issues may arise as the legislative year proceeds. Full Board of Supervisors endorsements or opposition to legislation or policy to address new issues must come before the Board of Supervisors for approval. Supervisors may periodically provide letters of support or opposition for issues impacting their Supervisorial Districts within the County.

AGRICULTURE

1. Increased funding for Dairy Digester Program and Alternative Manure Management Program: California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Challenge:

Dairy digesters are a renewable technology that uses livestock manure to produce methane, a renewable source of electrical energy generation and transportation fuel. California is home to the nation's largest dairy industry and Tulare County is the largest producer of dairy products in the State. Unfortunately, investment in dairy digesters has lagged in California due to expensive, uncertain and complex interconnection and permitting obstacles, high environmental compliance costs, lack of long-term economic energy purchase agreements, and high financing risk and costs.

The CDFA has released \$61-\$75 million for the 2019 Dairy Digester Research and Development Program, however additional support is needed for success. Regulatory hurdles still exist that will impede the best use of this funding in the proposed time frame. An additional \$19-\$33 million will be provided in incentives to support non-digester practices that reduce methane emissions from dairy and livestock operations through a separate program, the Alternative Manure Management Program. The ultimate goal for both programs is long-term methane emission reductions on California dairies or mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

Solution:

Continue to support initiatives to provide regulatory support to dairy digester projects such as those eligible under the CDFA 2019 Dairy Digester Research and Development Program and the Alternative Manure Management Program as authorized by Senate Bill 856 of Budget Act of 2018 (Chapter 30, Statutes of 2018)

2. Asian citrus psyllid (ACP).

Challenge:

The Asian citrus psyllid and the bacterial disease that it vectors, Huanglongbing (HBL), are two of the biggest threats to the future of the California citrus industry and backyard fruit production. ACP was first detected in 2008 in San Diego and quickly became established in southern California before moving north to Tulare County and other parts of the state. HBL can be catastrophic to commercial and backyard citrus. Today, close to 70% of the state's acreage is located in Fresno, Kern and Tulare Counties.

Solution:

Support efforts to secure a funding resource directed at researching ACP to aid in finding a potential cure and prevent the continued spread of the disease.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

3. Forest Management, Resiliency, Fire Prevention & Fire Response

Challenge:

Years of prolonged drought, bark beetle infestation, and devastating wildfires combined with years of inadequate fuels treatment have resulted in an ongoing tree mortality that needs to be more comprehensively addressed. The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region released an Aerial Detection Survey Report totaling 147 million dead or dying trees within the 18 counties most impacted statewide by Tree Mortality. Tulare County was identified as having the highest number of dead trees with new conifer mortality and an estimated 28.9 million dead or dying trees. The survey found that more than half of all dead trees statewide are located in Tulare and Fresno Counties.

In light of the devastating wildfires and resulting disasters that occurred last year, the Governor's budget proposal includes \$213 million pursuant to SB 901 (Chapters 626,818) the wildfire prevention and recovery legislation. Funds would be used for fuels reduction, prescribed burning, etc. It is the first investment out of a total of \$1 billion over the next five years for fire prevention and forest management activities.

Solution:

1. Request continued support by the Governor in advocacy efforts at the federal level for treatment of the areas designated under Section 8204 of the Farm Bill, and request that the State of California partner with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal entities to treat the affected areas.
2. Support legislation/funding for local assistance, financial resources, regulatory relief, and outreach efforts to effectively reduce safety risks to the public from dead and dying trees.
3. Support legislation/funding for fire prevention through fuel reduction projects through prescribed burn fire crews and grants for forest health projects.
4. Support additional funding for enhancing aviation resources, expanding firefighting surge capacity, expand firefighting capacity and response.

?

CEQA REFORM

4. Elimination of the “Fair Argument” Test.

Challenge:

Many projects (including publicly-sponsored projects) are delayed or stopped because of the very low threshold set by the “fair argument” test.

Essentially, the “fair argument” test provides that if there is a fair argument that the proposed project will cause a significant effect on the environment, then an environment impact report (EIR) shall be prepared, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary. (See the leading case of *Friends of “B” Street v. City of Hayward* (1980) 106 Cal.App.3d 988.)

Solution:

Support legislation to amend both CEQA and the applicable State CEQA Guidelines to eliminate the “fair argument” test applicable to negative declarations and mitigated negative declarations. (See Public Resources Code Section 21080, subds. (c), (d); 14 Cal. Code Regs. Section 15064.) Non-exempt projects under CEQA should be replaced with the “substantial evidence” test. According to the “substantial evidence” test, an environmental document will be upheld by the court if there is any substantial evidence to conclude that the project will not cause a significant environmental effect, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary.

The “substantial evidence” test is a more uniform and equitable way to judge disputes over CEQA documents, particularly negative declarations which are used more extensively by public entities.

The above-cited CEQA provision and State CEQA Guideline should be amended to read as follows: “*The ‘substantial evidence’ test shall apply to a challenge to a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration in that this environmental document may be upheld if there is any substantial evidence to conclude that the project will not cause a significant environmental effect, even if there is substantial evidence to the contrary.*”

5. “Good Faith” Limitation on exhaustion of administrative remedies.

Challenge:

There is currently considerable delay in public proceedings caused by project opponents who were not participating in good faith.

Solution:

To avoid document abuse during the public comment period or at a public hearing, CEQA should have a “good faith” limitation written into the exhaustion of remedies requirement; that is, project opponents should not be allowed to continue to slow down proceedings by dropping massive amounts of documents into the record at the eleventh hour. Consequently, the statute should be amended to provide a reasonable limitation. For example, Public Resources Code Section 21177, subdivision (a), should be amended to add at the end of the sentence the following language: ...“*provided, however, the public agency may exclude*

any evidence presented during the public comment period or public hearing, if the submittal of such evidence was not in good faith and for the purpose of improper delay of the proceedings.”

DRINKING WATER

6. Private well assistance.

Challenge:

Tulare County had more than 1,585 private domestic wells go dry during the prolonged drought. In many cases the property was not near an alternative domestic water supply such as a community or municipal public water system. The existing funding programs are geared toward community systems and do not address problems with private wells. The County has had limited success in accessing drought funds on behalf of private well owners to connect them to existing systems. Obstacles include identifying an entity that can apply on behalf of the well owners, incentivizing existing systems to make their service available, and getting a sufficient number of homes to connect. Tulare County supports sustainable solutions through eradication of dependence on replacement individual domestic wells wherever possible and funding criteria that supports regional solutions.

Solution:

Provide local assistance through Technical Assistance Requests to identify long-term solutions for those with continued outages. SB 88 allowed for consolidation of small water systems with nearby municipal systems, but does not address communities with individual private wells. Address funding criteria that do not reflect the State's priority to decrease reliance on individual private wells.

7. Create sustainable operation & maintenance revenue streams.

Challenge:

The ability of a water or wastewater system to provide a level of service that protects the health and safety of those they serve is directly dependent on their ability to collect sufficient revenues to cover the cost of operating and maintaining the system. While the intention of Prop. 218 is noble, it often hinders systems and local governments from collecting reasonable and necessary fees to cover basic costs of operating and maintaining systems. The result is systems operating with insufficient revenue which then sets in motion inadequate maintenance practices, decline in drinking water quality or quantity, and system failures. Due to the size of many communities and the lack of appropriate economies of scale to spread fixed costs residents are also faced with paying unaffordable water and sewer rates. The outcome is water and wastewater systems in various states of disrepair that require large capital investments which typically come from public funding programs. Furthermore, when a county is asked to be a sewer or water purveyor on a short-term or interim basis, the impacts of Prop. 218 on the ability to fund the service deters counties from getting involved.

Solution:

Provide operation and maintenance funding directly to disadvantage community water systems. Create a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund or similar funding source.

8. Streamline funding processes.

Challenge:

In previous water bond measures, less than 2% of the funding went to disadvantaged community water and wastewater needs. Due to the incapacity of these communities to prepare complicated application packets and waiting for years for a project to be funded, disadvantaged community water funds are not reaching their target audiences in an efficient and effective manner. Often funds go to other projects that are “shovel ready” and have a marginal tie to disadvantaged community water needs.

Solution:

Work with local agencies, including counties, to identify willing applicants (such as a County) to receive the funding on behalf of the community to: move projects forward; provide competent project management; and increase the effectiveness of disadvantaged community water and wastewater funding.

10. Conflict between requirement to provide farm labor housing and the requirement to provide safe drinking water.

Challenge:

The Department of Housing and Community Development analyzes special housing needs for farm workers. If the County’s Housing Element demonstrates a need for farm labor housing the County is required under statute to permit the development of said housing. However, often the identified water supply does not meet State and Federal drinking water standards. In this scenario the County is forced to violate State policy either by denying the housing development based on inadequate water supply or approving the housing without adequate safe drinking water.

Solution:

Resolve the conflict by requiring proof of safe drinking water availability prior to approving farm labor housing development.

11. Allow drinking water funding agencies to fund fire flow requirements when such requirements jeopardize the execution of the project.

Challenge:

Some sources of funding for drinking water projects do not allow for the necessary upgrades to provide fire flow capacity (larger pipe size, hydrants, and additional storage capacity). In severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged communities residents are unable to pay for the upgrades. When this happens the projects stalls because the project cannot move forward without the fire protection and the funding agency can’t pay for that protection.

Solution:

Recognize that those in severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged communities are the poorest residents in the State and their living conditions are below average. Removing silos at the State level to access funds that can meet both needs is paramount to solving this challenge. A holistic approach that meets both

drinking water and fire protection needs is necessary to improve the quality of life for the residents and get projects completed.

WATER SUPPLY

13. Water supply south of the Delta.

Challenge:

Existing interpretation of regulations and guidelines imposes limitations on water supply through the Central Valley Project water system. With the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act surface water supplies are even more important to Tulare County's residents and growers as Groundwater Sustainability Agencies work to implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans.

Solution:

Request that the State Water Resources Control Board interpret its duties with maximum flexibility to allow for water deliveries south of the Delta.

14. Surface water storage.

Challenge:

Proposition 1, passed in November 2014, includes \$2.7 billion for water storage projects, dams, and reservoirs. However, there exists uncertainty regarding the nature, scope, and timelines for surface storage projects. Proposition 1 also includes guidelines for water quality and ecosystem public benefits of storage projects, however the method of evaluation by the State Water Resources Control Board as to whether or not a storage project meets the criteria remains unclear.

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1. Request that the California Water Commission direct storage funding to surface storage projects such as Temperance Flat and Site Reservoir and that these projects be expedited.

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15. Reduction of funding to cities/counties.

Challenge:

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Solution:

Support legislation that

1. Would issue all funding received from the cancellation of fees to the local jurisdiction.
2. Would keep and restore the Williamson Act subvention funding.

STATE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILT)

16. State obligation to cities/counties

Challenge:

State PILT was established in 1949 to offset adverse impacts to county property tax revenues that result when the State acquires private property for wildlife management areas. In 2015, the final state budget package included language in the Fish and Game Code that changed “shall” to “may”, putting all future state PILT payments to counties at risk.

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Solution:

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17. Civil Fines and Penalties: Amend Government Code Section 54988.

Challenge:

Code enforcement fines and penalties cannot be placed on the tax rolls as a lien for collection, making collection of such fines and penalties difficult for local jurisdictions.

Solution:

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54988, code enforcement fees and costs may be placed on the tax rolls as a lien for collection. Accordingly, since fines and penalties are a customary part of the code enforcement assessment, they should be allowed to be placed on the tax rolls as a lien to insure collection as a deterrent against activities that are harmful to the public health’s safety and general welfare. In doing so, Section 54988 should be amended as follows:

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(A) The abatement of public nuisances.

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Solution:

Work with legislature to continue advocating for the preservation of local authority for budget approval, redistricting, and general managerial powers that reflect community service needs.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

19. Elimination of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) for In Home Support Services (IHSS).

Challenge:

In 2017, the Governor's budget included the elimination of the IHSS MOE, thus reverting to the pre-MOE cost-sharing formula, requiring counties to pay 35% of all non-federal costs of the program. Due to a number of factors outside of county control, including CA's minimum wage increase, implementation of overtime and paid sick leave for providers, and the restoration of earlier cuts to the program; IHSS program costs are much higher than they were before the MOE went into effect.

The Department of Finance produced an IHSS reopener report containing detailed findings on four suggested elements to address the IHSS fiscal structure which include the following:

- Are revenues available for the 1991 Realignment sufficient to meet costs
- Are administrative costs higher, lower than the MOE
- Impacts of the IHSS MOE on Health Subaccount, Mental Health Subaccount, County Medical Services Program Subaccount, other services
- Status of collective bargaining for the IHSS program in each County

Solution:

1. Request that the Governor work with the State Legislature on a more reasonable proposal that will not shift such a large burden on the counties, but rather ensure an equitable and sustainable solution for the IHSS Program for many years to come.
2. Support legislation that will:
 - Invest additional funding in the State General Fund for IHSS over the next four years and in turn will lower the County IHSS MOE base in 2019-20.
 - Adjust the MOE base downward, lower the inflation factor to four percent, stop the Current IHSS mitigations, and make other changes to 1991 realignment.
 - Eliminate the State General Fund mitigation beginning in 2019-20.
 - Stop the redirection of 1991 Realignment VLF Growth from the Health and Mental Health subaccounts to the Social Services subaccounts.
 - Eliminate accelerated caseload growth for IHSS and return to the original method for calculating IHSS caseload.

20. County Veterans Services Officers.

Challenge:

California is home to approximately two million veterans. Currently, the state budget allocates \$5.6 million in one-time funding to the County Veterans Service officers (CVSO) in 58 California counties. CVSO's are the first contact for most veterans and are historically able to bring in \$100 of federal veterans benefits for every \$1 spent by the state. Without full funding, California's veterans will not receive the government benefits they earned through their military service.

Solution:

Support/sponsor efforts to educate the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the public on the importance and value of the County Veteran's Offices (CVSOs) with the eventual goal of fully funding CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d).

21. Medi-Cal reimbursement rates.

Challenge:

Access for low-income families to primary medical care and specialty care services in the County is impaired as a result of high un-insurance rates, inadequate reimbursement rates from Medi-Cal, and a shortage of healthcare providers.

The Governor estimates a decrease in Medi-Cal costs of about \$2.3 billion for the Budget Year. The Governor also intends to expand Medi-Cal coverage to young undocumented adults ages 19-25. The Governor's budget proposes an increase of \$53 million for Medi-Cal county administration over the 2018-19 funding level.

Solution:

Support/sponsor legislation that:

1. Increases the rates of reimbursement for Medi-Cal consistent with rates available in other jurisdictions and costs experienced by efficient providers;
2. Support legislation/funding to retain and attract competent healthcare providers.

22. Alcohol and drug/mental health treatment.

Challenge:

Proposition 47 reduces six crimes from felonies or wobblers, which are crimes for which either a felony or a misdemeanor can be charged, to misdemeanors. The measure specifically reduces the penalties for the following crimes: grand theft, shoplifting, receiving stolen property, writing bad checks, check forgery, and drug possession. The passage of Proposition 47 suggested a shift in spending on jails and court costs for non-violent offenders to spending on drug treatment, mental health services, victim services, and other programs. Proposition 47 set aside up to \$250 million to help local agencies treat drug offenders.

The Department of Finance currently estimates a net savings of \$78.5 million when comparing 2018-19 to 2013-14, an increase of \$13.8 million over the estimated 2017-18 savings.

Solution:

Sponsor legislation that will support the receipt of county funds or offer support for related impacts to Mental Health services and Alcohol and Drug (AOD) treatment services.

23. Homelessness & Affordable Housing

Challenge:

Communities in Tulare County and throughout California have experienced increases in the number of homeless persons in recent years. Tulare County is estimated to have 631 homeless persons. Although there are many organizations committed to serving homeless persons and reduce their prevalence, resources are lacking. The absence of available and affordable permanent housing, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and other infrastructure to reduce homelessness also remain as significant barriers.

Solution:

1. Support funding for siting emergency shelters, navigation centers, and supportive housing.
2. Support expedited allocation of No Place Like Home grant allocations to counties to build permanent supportive housing for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
3. Support one time funding allocation for Tulare County for partnership with local organizations to build housing at an affordable cost.