



**SOLANO COUNTY**

**FEDERAL**

**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

**& POLICY GUIDELINES**

**2013**

As approved, December 4, 2012

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## SOLANO COUNTY 2013 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

### PRIORITY ISSUES

The ability of the County to serve the residents of Solano County (County) and provide for a thriving and sustainable community requires support from all levels of government. Federal legislative policy and funding decisions affect the County's ability to deliver services. In order to fulfill the County's commitment to the community, Federal resources should be sought to support the County's mission to enrich the quality of life in County. To this end, the County Board of Supervisors supports the priorities and the legislative principles set forth below.

Priority issues are those that have a significant impact on County business and on which County staff, including the County's Federal legislative advocates, will concentrate their legislative efforts during the 2013 Legislative Session. The County's top priorities (Listed Alphabetically) include:

1. **Funding for Key Infrastructure Projects** - Support efforts in Congress to authorize and appropriate funding for infrastructure projects in Solano County, including Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) funding for water projects identified as priorities by the Board of Supervisors.
2. **Housing, Economic Development, and Transportation Programs** - Support the highest possible funding level for key federal housing and economic development programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). In the area of transportation, support efforts to protect the Highway Trust Fund and support programs that provide funding for local roads, bridges, transit initiatives, and aviation.
1. **Military Presence** - Support efforts to secure Travis Air Force Base from budget reductions, downsizing, and enhance it with future rounds of additional Base Realignment & Closure (BRAC). Support additional assets/missions such as C-17, KC-46 squadrons, modernization of C-5 and KC-10, and gaining other aviation and non-aviation missions. Support infrastructure investments, including military construction projects and housing upgrades and enhance use of underutilized property on base.
3. **Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness** - Support funding for programs that assist Solano County with efforts aimed at reducing crime and enhancing public safety through community partnerships and multi-jurisdictional efforts, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program and the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program. In addition, support funding for programs that assist the County with disaster preparedness and homeland security-related needs, including efforts aimed at achieving communications interoperability.
4. **Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta** - Support legislative and administrative efforts to protect the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and County's interests relative to land use, agricultural stability, economic development, police or emergency response mandates, environmental preservation, flood protection, levee stability, habitat conservation, recreation, water supply, water quality, water rights, and dredging activities. Support governance structures that give local government an equal voice with other stakeholders in setting Delta policy.
5. **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Reauthorization** - Support a reauthorization of the TANF program that would restore state and Solano County flexibility in operating a program focused on services leading to outcomes that stabilize families and lead to employment, including federal incentives for subsidized jobs.

Furthermore, the Board of Supervisors adopts the following legislative principles (Listed by Policy Area Alphabetically):

### **Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Water**

- Support efforts to strengthen inspections at borders and ports of entry to safeguard against invasive pests and diseases.
- Support efforts to continue the provisions and existing funding levels provided in the implementation of the Farm Pest and Disease Management Program (Section 10201 of the 2008 Farm Bill) and similar efforts to eradicate invasive pests.
- Support passage of a Farm Bill that includes pest prevention provisions (such as Section 10201 of the previous Farm Bill) increases for specialty crop support and adequate financial support for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Support legislation reducing redundant enforcement of aquatic herbicide/pesticide use under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Clean Water Act. (The Board took a position on this last year in a special item brought by Mosquito and Vector Control.)
- Support - through legislation or appropriation - a more equitable distribution of USDA funds for Wildlife Services provided to California counties.
- Support efforts to protect the Suisun Marsh consistent with the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act and the Suisun Marsh Plan;
- Support efforts to protect the County's Farm Gate, including, but not limited to, full mitigation of agricultural and other economic impacts associated with habitat restoration efforts.
- Support funding for local mapping of flood hazard areas and advocate for the US Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies to protect the County from these hazards.
- Support, develop, or seek out legislation that protects the County's quality of life, its diverse natural resources, and preserves the essence and history of the County.
- Support legislation to establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area to protect and promote the economic vitality and cultural, historical, and natural assets of the region.

### **General Government**

- Support efforts to realign government services with necessary funding in order to improve the delivery of services and make government more accountable and efficient to the people of California.
- Seek out, develop, and support legislative, regulatory, and budget efforts that protect and/or enhance local governments' revenues, maximize the County's access to Federal funding sources, and/or increases local funding flexibility.
- Support legislation that provides tax and funding formulas and regulations for the equitable distribution of Federal monies while opposing attempts to decrease, restrict, or eliminate County revenue sources.
- Support legislation that encourages mutually respectful relationships between tribal and local governments, including reforms in both the fee-to-trust process and off-reservation gaming provisions to ensure that the impacts of tribal development are fully mitigated and jurisdictional issues resolved.
- Support Federal legislative and budget action that will provide robust funding for domestic infrastructure, public safety, community development, and environmental programs, which support County efforts to maintain and enhance quality of life.
- Support any expansion, continuation, and/or increased flexibility in the bidding/procurement, delivery, and management of construction projects.
- Oppose legislative or administrative actions that would create Federal unfunded mandates and/or preempt local decision-making authority.
- Oppose attempts to restrict local authority with respect to issues that affect local communities.

## Health and Human Services

- Support ongoing, increased, and/or reauthorization of funding for existing programs such as the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF), the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Community Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grants, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Oppose efforts to reduce or divert funding away from these programs.
- Support eliminating the Federal health benefits "inmate exception" for persons in County jails and detention centers who are in custody pending disposition of charges.
- Federal Grants. Support efforts to ensure competitive equity for suburban areas (on par with urban and rural areas) for Federal grant opportunities.
- Support legislation and budget action that would protect and enhance funding for subsidized child care services and child development programs including school readiness.
- Support any budget, legislative, or administrative action to increase Title IV-D Child Support Program funding.
- Oppose cuts, block grants, and other measures that will shift Medicaid costs to counties. Support efforts to allow for utilizing billing codes for brief intervention services for alcohol and drugs and for two different services on the same day in a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). (H&SS)

## Housing, Community and Economic Development, and Workforce Investment

- Support continued funding for existing programs including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). Oppose efforts to reduce funding and operational flexibility for these programs.
- Support funding and incentives for smart growth and sustainable development.
- Encourage and seek legislation to facilitate orderly economic expansion and growth, and increase the opportunity for discretionary revenues, programmatic and financial flexibility for the County.
- Support legislation that encourages job growth and the success of the business community.
- Support legislation that provides a stable national-level appropriation for workforce development programs as a longer-term investment strategy for the nation's economy.
- Support legislation that enhances a public/private, performance-driven block grant program that provides positive investments in the nation's workforce, including both the unemployed and those in need of skills training.
- Support or seek federal grant funding opportunities that advance and improve housing, community and economic development, and workforce investment opportunities and legislative principles.
- Oppose Federal legislation that would reduce U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds and support the expanded eligibility and access to these funds.

## Public Safety and Emergency Disaster Preparedness

- Support the preservation of funding levels for existing public safety programs such as the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne/JAG) Program, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, and the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Oppose efforts to reduce or divert funding away from these programs.
- Support continued or new funding for emergency disaster preparedness programs such as FEMA - Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG), the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI), and emergency disaster preparedness and infrastructure damage recovery programs. Oppose efforts to reduce or divert funding away from these programs.

## **Public Safety and Emergency Disaster Preparedness – Continued**

- Support funding to address emergency preparedness needs, particularly those that include communications equipment, training/exercises, or ongoing operations and maintenance costs.
- Support the preservation of existing funding levels for the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG) program to help offset the cost of monitoring juvenile offenders through electronic means to ensure compliance with court orders and/or terms of probation, thereby holding them accountable.
- Support any budget, legislative, or administrative action to increase Title IV-E Juvenile Probation Services funding.
- Support legislation and grants that provide increased funding for prevention, intervention, victim support and services for families experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, dating violence, stalking, elder abuse and human trafficking.
- Support legislation to provide Federal offset to recover outstanding restitution ordered to the victims of crimes and other delinquent court ordered fines, penalty assessments, and fees associated with criminal or juvenile justice proceedings. Support new legislation that would increase the collection term from 3 years to between 10 and 20 years, thereby avoiding having to seek civil judgments against clients.
- Seek support for legislation and funding opportunities to implement supervision strategies and evidence-based practices that consider the treatment and service needs of targeted probationers such as sexual offenders, domestic violence offenders, and/or those with mental illness, in order to improve outcomes for these populations.

## **Resource Management, Environmental Health, and Sustainability**

- Seek Federal-funding opportunities to pay for green road maintenance and other enhancements to the transportation network that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support legislation and administrative action that further the goals of the County's climate protection and sustainability efforts, including programs that promote energy-efficient home improvements like the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program.
- Support any budget, legislative, or administrative action that improves environmental health regulatory program implementation that improves the County's ability to provide a responsive, efficient and effective County Environmental Health program.
- Support measures and funding for County programs and projects that address sustainability issues such as air quality improvement, energy efficiency, water efficiency, renewable energy, fuel efficiency, energy adequacy, and security while balancing the reduction of emissions with impacts on business.
- Support Federal climate change legislation and policies that include local government funding and consideration for implementation at the local level.
- Support legislation that modifies existing law to improve implementation of environmental health regulatory programs.
- Support legislation and grants that provide funding for implementation of environmental health programs such as food protection, recreational health, solid waste, liquid waste, water supply and hazardous materials programs.
- Support any legislation that reduces or simplifies reporting requirements for local environmental health programs to the state.
- Oppose FEMA proposals to require local jurisdictions to purchase repetitive loss properties.
- Support legislation and grant funding opportunities that improve land use planning for major economic drivers and infrastructure projects in the County.

## Transportation

- Support efforts to maintain existing or increased funding for transportation programs and projects within the County.
- Support legislative efforts for Federal transportation reauthorization measures that reflect the needs of the County and project priority in funding streams.
- Support consideration of an increase or the indexing of the Federal gasoline tax and alternative sources of funding.
- Support legislation and budget action that provides additional and continuing funding for local infrastructure, including local roads, bridges, and transit priorities.

## Veterans and Veterans Affairs

- Support efforts that provide enhanced benefits for veterans and active duty, reserve and National Guard members that are cost-neutral to counties, including expanded mental health services.
- Support federal legislation and regulatory changes that would provide increased access for County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO) to VA information systems for use in developing and monitoring claims submitted on behalf of veterans, including but not limited to the federal Public Assistance and Reporting Information System (PARIS).
- Support legislative, regulatory or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the VA veteran's claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans.
- Support legislation that would make it a criminal offense to intentionally misdirect or mislead a veteran, or anyone acting on the veterans behalf, concerning benefits or entitlements.
- Support legislation, regulatory or policy changes which expand/ increase VA responsibility to educate veterans on their entitlements.
- Support legislation that would establish priority enrollment and registration for veterans in community colleges, state colleges, and universities.

## Other Agency Interests

- Travis Community Consortium – Support the mission of all military organizations located within the County. Support the 2013 federal legislative priorities adopted by the Travis Community Consortium.
- Solano Transportation Authority – Support the 2013 federal legislative priorities and programs as outlined and adopted by the Solano Transportation Authority.