

TO: Members, County of Santa Barbara Legislative Committee

FROM: Cliff Berg, Legislative Advocate  
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RE: March 2016 Update

DATE: March 30, 2016

We are now getting into spring and the legislature has returned from their spring recess to begin the process of moving their bills along and working the budget through the sub-committee process. As we look towards many hearings related to both policy and budget, we are beginning to see some major policy changes related to housing this year. It is being handled in both the budget and the policy arena.

The President Pro-Tem has proposed that we look at the budget to work on leveraging the Prop. 63 funds to bond again at get housing for our mentally ill homeless populations. As we have discussed before we need to be mindful that this does not take away funds that are in our community to provide supportive services, so we are watching closely, briefing our delegation and keeping a close eye on what the actual proposal will look like. As I mentioned, this will be a budget play so there is not a timeline when specifics will be released, but we are hopeful to at least get the framework to determine what this will look like in the community.

The other initiative out there is called “housing first” which many legislators have introduced bills in this area to get permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless and then once they are settled begin to address their other outstanding issues, such as substance abuse, mental health, etc. We will work with your staff to determine where we should weigh-in and the potential impacts on the County.

### **Special Sessions**

#### **Transportation:**

Caltrans, the state’s Transportation Department, maintains 50,000 lane-miles of highway and nearly 13,000 state-owned bridges. While the repair, maintenance and efficient operation of the state’s highway system are vital to the state’s continued economic growth, current funding fails to adequately fund this necessary work. The state’s current fuel excise tax is sufficient to fund only \$2.3 billion of work—leaving \$5.7 billion in unfunded repairs each year.

The Governor proposed that the Legislature enact permanent and sustainable funding to maintain and repair the state’s transportation and critical infrastructure, improve the state’s key trade corridors and complement local infrastructure efforts.

He has proposed a plan as part of his January budget. In this plan he proposes that they reinstate truck weight fees, increase VLF by \$65.00 per vehicle and an increased gas tax. We are still

evaluating it to see if it is a workable solution for the county. The legislature must also decide if this is the best solution during their special session discussions. We will work with County staff and continue to keep the board updated as this discussion unfolds.

### **Bills of Interest to the County**

AB 35 (Chiu) This bill increases the amount of low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) the California Tax Credit Allocation Commission (CTCAC) can allocate for low-income housing; revises percentages; and establishes new categories. The County is in support of this bill. Unfortunately, the bill was vetoed by the Governor on October 10, 2015. The author plans to address these issues again in 2016, especially in light of the proposed Homelessness package, but we have yet to see anything out of his office.

AB 45 (Mullin) This bill is opposed by the County. The bill would mandate cities and counties that provide residential collection and disposal of solid waste to create a household hazardous waste (HHW) baseline and to meet an unspecified diversion requirement for HHW collection. The bill was opposed by many cities and counties. The bill is sitting in the Senate Environmental Quality Committee awaiting a hearing, which will most likely be late spring, early summer as they are trying to get through the Senate bills first.

AB 1335 (Atkins) This bill would enact the Building Homes and Jobs Act. The bill would make legislative findings and declarations related to the need for establishing permanent, on-going sources of funding dedicated to affordable housing development. The bill would impose a fee of \$75 to be paid at the time of the recording of every real estate instrument, paper, or notice required or permitted by law to be recorded,. Per each single transaction per single parcel of real property, not to exceed \$225. The bill died on the Assembly Floor in January.

AB 1564 (Williams) This bill Requires the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and county coordinators to review the states routing of 911 calls. The bill was heard on the consent calendar on March 20, 2016 in the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee, it will go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee next. The County is supporting the bill.

AB 1825 (Gordon/Maienschein) This bill will provide more local control and allow shelters to follow best practices to assess dogs upon entering them. Under current law the label of “vicious dog” is automatically applied to dogs seized under the penal code. Many dogs that are seized under this section, such as from a breeder that is connected to animal fighting, do not pose a risk and are perfectly safe for future adoption. The County is in support of this bill.

SB 122 (Jackson, Hill and Roth) This bill is a vehicle for potential CEQA reform. The bill would require the lead agency, at the request of a project applicant and consent of the lead agency, to prepare a record of proceedings concurrently with the preparation of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, EIR, or other environmental document for projects. The bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation establishing an electronic database clearinghouse of notices and environmental document prepared pursuant to CEQA, establishing a public review period for a final environmental impact report, and relating to the record of proceedings for a project for which an environmental impact report is prepared pursuant to CEQA. This County is supporting the

bill. The bill passed the Assembly Natural Resources Committee where it passed 7-1; it is now sitting on the Assembly Appropriations Suspense file, and will be taken up in 2016.

SB 233 (Hertzberg) AB 2503 (Perez) Chapter 687, 2010, established the “rigs to reefs” program when it passed. The current law passed with much consideration across the state and included relevant stakeholders and agencies to address the issues surrounding oil platforms remaining in the ocean off the coast of California. The County is opposed to SB 233 because we believe it is unnecessary. The measure is a two-year bill, sitting in the Assembly Appropriations Committee and will come up in 2016.

SB 788 (McGuire) The County is supporting this measure. This bill eliminates the exception in the California Coastal Sanctuary Act of 1994 (AB 2444, O'Connell) (CCSA) that allows the State Lands Commission (Commission) to issue an offshore oil lease if state oil or gas deposits are being drained by wells on federal lands and the lease is in the best interests of the state. The bill is a two-year bill; it is sitting in the Assembly Appropriations Committee where it will be heard in 2016.

SB 876 (Liu) This bill would allow unregulated camping on any public space, creating encampments. The “Right to Rest” is the campaign behind the measure. The bill was heard on March 29 and died in committee. The County was opposed to the bill.

### **Conclusion**

With Spring upon us, things are heating up. Speaker Rendon (D-Lakewood) was officially sworn-in on March 7, 2016. He has the possibility of being the Speaker for the next 10 years, which will be the second longest standing speaker, Speaker Willie Brown holding the longest title. When he came in he brought all new senior staff which has not been done since Willie Brown, many are trying to navigate the newness of their office but are really excited about the possibilities that exist.

We will continue to work with staff on the many bill and budget items that are moving and keep the committee and Board updated. As always, should you or your staff have any questions, please don't hesitate to let us know.