

Memorandum



Date: September 13, 2021

To: **Legislative Committee**

From: Jasmine McGinty, Legislative Coordinator

Subject: Request from Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) for County Participation on Advocacy Board

Intro

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is a thirty-seven member county strong service organization that champions policies on behalf of California's rural counties. Rural is defined by population size, demographics, or economic data. RCRC works with its membership to advocate on behalf of rural issues at the state and federal levels. RCRC provides the rural county perspective on a myriad of issues during the legislative and regulatory process, including land use, water and natural resources, housing, transportation, wildfire protection policies, and health and human services. Santa Barbara County is not currently a member of RCRC, but is identified as an eligible county based on population size to be a part of RCRC, if they chose.

Background

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services for its members to enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. RCRC was founded in 1972 to represent California's small, rural counties on issues that are unique to them. With more than 4.3 million residents and comprising approximately 56 percent of the state's land mass, the geography of their thirty-seven member rural counties ranges from forested and mountainous landscapes to coastal areas, desert regions, farm lands and vineyards.

Discussion

Santa Barbara County is one of the six non-member counties with a population of no more than 600,000, currently not members of RCRC. With a population of approximately 441,000, Santa Barbara County meets the eligibility requirements to sit on the RCRC advisory board. When a new county joins RCRC, they also gain a seat for one of their supervisors to sit on the RCRC Board. A single delegate appointed by the Board of Supervisors of each member county will serve on the Board of Directors, with a term of one year. Normally, dues for a county with a population of 400,000- 4999 is \$15,000. This year, RCRC did not charge dues in an effort to help mitigate the impacts of COVID on member counties.

If the Legislative Committee authorizes endorsement to recommend representation on the RCRC Advocacy Board to the full Board of Supervisors, a resolution for Membership in the Corporation, including a statement of support for recent policy principles (Attachment 3) adopted by the Board of Directors would need to be approved by the Board of Supervisors by a 4/5 vote. Current initiatives

underway by the RCRC include broadband, housing, and natural resources, among others. Further information on RCRC policies and initiatives can be found in Attachment 3.

Recommended Action

- 1) Receive and file presentation from Rural County Representatives of California, and
- 2) Authorize endorsement from the Legislative Committee to recommend County representation on the RCRC Advocacy Board to the full County Board of Supervisors.

Attachments

- 1) RCRC Overview
- 2) RCRC Membership Information
- 3) 10 Policy Principles
- 4) RCRC's Rural Broadband Initiative