

Washington Update

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

MARCH 12, 2009

FY 2009 FEDERAL FUNDING

After President Obama signed the stimulus package into law on February 17 as H.R. 1, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, Congress returned to working on completion of FY 2009 funding for most Federal agencies. The 110th Congress did not complete action on 9 out of 12 of the FY 2009 appropriations bills – including all domestic spending with the exception of homeland security. H.R. 1105, the *FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act*, combines those 9 bills into a single legislative package. It was signed into law by President Obama on March 11 despite some controversy over the number of earmarks in the package.

As previously reported, the final conference agreement on H.R. 1105 includes:

- \$6,699,000 for the Santa Maria Levee
- \$807,500 for the Lompoc Veterans Building
- \$287,000 for Lower Mission Creek
- \$96,000 for Goleta Beach Restoration

In addition to funding for these County projects, the bill also provides funding for programs that we lobbied on behalf of the County in the areas discussed below. Please note that many of these programs also received substantial funding under the stimulus package.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The conference agreement on H.R. 1105 approved by the House last week provided \$1.328 billion overall for State and local public safety initiatives, including \$546 million for the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) and \$550.5 million for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). The bill also provides \$415 million for violence against women prevention and prosecution programs; \$374 million for juvenile delinquency preven-

tion and accountability programs; \$156 million to eliminate DNA analysis backlogs; \$39.5 million for meth hot spots; \$25 million for forensic science improvement grants; \$25 million for offender re-entry; \$10 million for treatment of mentally ill offenders, and \$15 million to reduce gang violence.

IMMIGRATION IMPACTS

The Department of Justice section of the omnibus bill also provides \$400 million for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), and \$31 million for the Southwest Border Prosecution Initiative (SWBPI).

PUBLIC HEALTH

House and Senate conferees on H.R. 1105 included funding for the following public health programs of significance to the County: \$2.19 billion for community health centers, \$1.77 billion for substance abuse block grants, \$495 million for immunizations, \$420 million for mental health block grant, \$662 for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant program, \$143.8 million for TB control and prevention, and \$307 million for family planning. It also provides \$815 million for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. In addition, the measure includes \$746.5 million for upgrading State and local bioterrorism preparedness capacity, and \$387.5 million for bioterrorism hospital grants.

HOUSING/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The final version of H.R. 1105 included substantial funding for housing and community development programs of significance to the County. The *FY 2009 Transportation, HUD Appropriations* section of the measure rejects the Bush Administration's proposal to eliminate HOPE VI, proposing \$120 million for the program. The bill increases CDBG by \$35 million over the FY 2008 level to \$3.9 billion, and provides \$1.82 billion for HOME Investment Partnerships, \$1.66 billion for homeless assistance grants, \$765 million in elderly housing, and \$310 million for HOPWA.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The conference committee rejected the Bush Administration's proposal to reduce the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) by \$500 million, and to completely eliminate funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The final conference agreement includes \$1.7 billion for SSBG, and \$700 million for CSBG. It also increases funding for the Agency on Aging to \$1.37 billion, including \$361 million for supportive services and senior centers, and \$21.3 million for grants to States for protection of vulnerable older Americans.

OTHER

Other funding levels of significance to the County provided in H.R. 1105:

- \$350 million for Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) as the result of last year's *Emergency Economic Stabilization Act*, which included provisions guaranteeing full funding for PILT;
- \$328 million for the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) hazardous fuels reduction program on or adjacent to USFS lands;
- \$224 million for EPA's Section 103 and Section 105 grants to State and local air pollution control agencies; and,
- \$693,000 for California County Agricultural Import Inspection and \$581,000 for California County Pest Detection under the Department of Agriculture.

FY 2010 APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

We continue to work with our local Congressional delegation and Senators Feinstein and Boxer regarding support for the County's specific funding proposals through the FY 2010 appropriations process. FY 2010 requests include:

- Santa Maria River Levee -\$14.5 million
- Lower Mission Creek - \$5.5 million
- Lake Cachuma Recreation Area - \$3.345 million
- Goleta Beach - \$1.024 million
- Lompoc Veterans Building Renovation - \$700,000

With completion of the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, the respective House and Senate Appropriations Committees will now turn their attention to the FY 2010 process. The issue of earmarks continues to be a controversial flashpoint, and both Congress and the Administration are proposing additional requirements to assure transparency in the process, including requiring members to post specific information about their requests on the Internet.

On February 25, President Obama released "A New Era of Responsibility – Renewing America's Promise," the blueprint for his \$3.6 trillion budget proposal for FY 2010. Detailed budget requests for the various Federal agencies are expected to be released the last week of March or the beginning of April, and the Appropriations Subcommittees are already beginning hearings in anticipation of drafting their bills later in the spring.

ELDER ABUSE

We urged Congresswoman Capps and Congressman Gallegly to support Congressman Sestak's (D-PA) H.R. 448, the *Elder Abuse Act*, which would provide Federal resources to strengthen State, local, and community-based efforts to fight elder abuse. The measure would authorize funding for specialized elder justice police and prosecution units, as well as regional emergency crisis response teams to provide services to elder victims. Both members of our delegation voted in favor of H.R. 448, and it was approved by the full House and referred to the Senate for action.

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