

AGENDA ITEM 3

TO: Members, County of Santa Barbara Legislative Committee

FROM: Monica Miller, Legislative Advocate
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County of Santa Barbara

RE: June 2011 Legislative Update

DATE: June 21, 2011

As we begin another hot summer in Sacramento, we also begin very heated budget discussions. The Legislature successfully passed a budget bill “jr.” on June 15, 2011. Additionally, they were also successful at passing all of the necessary budget trailer bills. Unfortunately, 12 hours later Governor Jerry Brown vetoed both the budget bill “jr.” as well as SB 69 which was the initial budget bill (conference report) passed in late March but held in enrollment in an effort to continuing to work out the rest of the budget deal.

Needless to say, once the Governor vetoed the budget bills, both houses and parties were very surprised. The negotiations will start again, but we anticipate that this will not happen right away. The trailer bills that were passed on June 15th remain in enrollment, it is anticipated that these will not be released to the Governor until there is a deal in place for the overall budget.

One other outstanding, but important, issue is that if the legislature failed to pass a balanced budget by midnight on June 15, 2011, they would not get paid. No one took into consideration the thought of a veto, so the State Controller, John Chiang, reviewed the budget very closely to see if it was in fact a balanced budget, he then determined it was not and will not pay legislators until there is a balanced budget signed by the Governor. We will continue to keep you updated on the budget and the possibility of another deal in the near future.

We are also continuing to work on our legislative agenda. We passed a major deadline on June 3, 2011 which is the house of origin, meaning that if the bill was introduced in the Senate or the Assembly, it must then get in to the second house in order to continue moving for this year. Many bills were not successful at moving to the second house, mostly in an effort to get a better version of that bill.

One of our sponsored bills is AB 765 which is successfully moving forward. To date this bill has had bi-partisan support and is scheduled to be heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee on June 28, 2011. This bill was introduced at our request by Assembly Member Katcho Achadjian on behalf of our DA, Joyce Dudley and is part of the Board of Supervisor’s platform. This measure will allow the penal code to catch up with modern day life related to sexually violent crimes and allow for DA’s to properly prosecute offenders. We anticipate the road might be a bit bumpy in the Senate, but are continuing to meet with the committee members and their staff.

AGENDA ITEM 3

We also introduced AB 537 authored by Assembly Member Das Williams and co-sponsored with SBCAG; this is related to the highway 154 issue. The bill will continue to be parked for this year while we continue to work with CHP and others to gather the necessary data to substantiate our claims. We have talked with Assembly Member Williams staff and the SBCAG lobbyist, we expect to begin stakeholder meetings over the summer recess which begins July 15th and will go until August 15th. We will keep the Board updated.

Another bill introduced by the County is AB 1356 by Assembly Member Mike Eng (D-LA); this bill was an attempt to address the local issues related to wine tasting rooms and better regulation of them in our local communities. We had several stakeholder meetings on this bill with ABC, The Family Wine Makers, the Wine Institute and various vintners' associations throughout California. In an effort to get the best outcomes we have decided to park this bill for this year to allow further discussion on this issue to ensure we have a strong and successful bill to move forward. Therefore this bill is now a two-year bill. We are also working with Assembly Member Williams office as he is trying to address the constituents concerns as well at the local level along with our Board.

Another county sponsored bill is AB 412 by Assembly Member Das Williams. The bill has received bi-partisan support to date. The bill made it through the Assembly and will now be heard in the Senate Health Committee then the Senate Public Safety Committee. We are working closely with the members of the committee to ensure its passage. The bill would potentially bring the county \$600,000 per year for the next two years to support the trauma system.

Earlier this year we worked closely on SB 106 by Senator Sam Blakeslee. This bill sought to reimburse counties for the cost of special elections. The bill was successful in the Senate policy committee; however it was not released off of the Senate Suspense file when they heard the bills during deadline week due to the fiscal impact on the state. This is an on-going fight, which we will continue to engage in as the year unfolds.

SB 444 by Senator Noreen Evans was a bill supported by the county; this measure permits a local government to subject an application to convert a mobilehome park to resident ownership to all relevant state and local laws, including all provisions of the Subdivision Map Act. The bill did get out of policy committee however it fell short of the necessary votes on the Senate floor when it came up during the deadline week. It is now a two-year bill.

We are currently anticipating that the Legislature will break for their scheduled summer recess by July 15, 2011. Upon their return, they will have less than 30 days to complete their work for this year. Keep in mind, this is the first year of a two-year session, as such, anything unresolved this year is expected to be continued next year along with new proposals. We anticipate that there will be a budget deal in place soon; however we are unclear on what to expect. We will continue to keep the Board updated on this and other items of interest. Should you or your staff have any questions, please don't hesitate to let us know.