

TO: Members, County of Santa Barbara Legislative Committee

FROM: Cliff Berg, Legislative Advocate
Monica Miller, Legislative Advocate

RE: April 2012 State Update

DATE: May 1, 2012

2012-2013 Budget update

With May having arrived we are waiting on the release of the May Revise, which is scheduled to come out May 15, 2012. The May revise is always based on the April receipts, this year the numbers were down significantly. The State Controller stated that they are down by about \$2 Billion more than anticipated, \$9.132 billion was anticipated and \$7.171 billion was received. Once the May Revise is released, the budget sub-committees will begin to wrap-up their process and we will then move back into the full budget process only to go straight to the Budget Conference Committee. The Conference Committee is where the outstanding items that had different outcomes are then dealt with in an effort to reconcile each house. In the midst of all of this we anticipate that the “Big Five” (Governor and the Legislative Leaders in each house) will meet to hash out any larger issues such as pension reform, etc.

If you recall, the legislature must pass a balanced budget by June 15, 2012 by midnight in order to continue to receive their paychecks. Last year they did pass one and the Governor vetoed the bill, we are told that would be considered “bad faith” if that were to happen again. It should also be noted that the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Democratic Leader sued the State Controller over his interpretation of Prop. 25 and what is considered a balanced budget, the Controller lost, so this allows for more leverage over the budget than the leaders had last year.

We will continue to keep you updated as the budget discussions unfold and the direct impacts on the County.

Specific Legislation of interest to Santa Barbara County

AB 537 (Williams)/Highway 154 Resolution - This is an issue that is co-sponsored with SBCAG which we have worked on for the past year and a half in an effort to get some resolution. AB 537 was a bill that was a two year bill as the County continued to work with CHP and others to gather the necessary data to substantiate our claims. After many meetings Assembly Member Williams, SBCAG and we determined that a resolution is the best course of action at this time. We are continuing to work on the specifics of that in order to move it forward.

AB 765 (Achadjian) 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. The bill had bi-partisan support but was held in the Senate Public Safety Committee on June 28, 2011 due to concerns that the bill would create a new crime. 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 are continuing to work with the Senate Public Safety Committee in an effort to get this bill moved out of policy and into the fiscal committee in the Senate.

AB 1998 (Achadjian) This bill was introduced at our request on February 23, 2012 which was introduced as part of our 2012 legislative platform. This bill would allow a Board of Supervisors to locally opt-in to amend their surplus property plan to include the ability to surplus computer property directly to CalFresh, CalWorks, Medi-Cal, and General relief recipients. We actively worked to secure additional support from other like-minded entities and we were successful. The bill moved out of the Assembly Local Government Committee with unanimous, bi-partisan support on April 18, 2012. The bill is currently sitting on the Assembly Floor waiting for a vote. The bill was not considered fiscal and therefore did not have to go to a fiscal committee. There are some amendments that we have been requested to take related to tightening up the protocols for the individual in receipt of the computer, we are working on those now. Once we have sign-off we will be able to continue to move the bill.

AB 2443 (Williams) This bill was introduced at our request by Assembly Member Das Williams. The bill has been a work in progress for the last year; we have pulled together a stakeholder group and have worked with Assembly Member Williams' office in an effort to get the bill introduced. We successfully moved the bill out of the Assembly Water Parks and Wildlife Committee and were able to get the bill back to a single referral, which means the bill only had to go to one policy committee instead of two, as it was originally slated to do. The bill is on its way to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where it will go on the Assembly Appropriations Committee Suspense file while we work towards get the bill amended in a way that will have NO impact on the state as we will be providing the necessary resources to off-set any state costs. This should happen in late May.

Wrap-up

The Legislative Session just completed a major deadline of the first policy committee as of April 27, 2012. This is always a bit of a hectic time as the legislature continues to further refine through amendments what their legislation should look like in an effort to continue to move their bills forward. There are always a number of bills that die during this process and this year is no exception.

We now will move into the floor deadline and heated budget discussions. We will continue to keep you and your staff updated on major issues that affect the County and your Constituents.