

TO: Legislative Committee, County of Santa Barbara

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

RE: March 2013 State Update

DATE: April 2, 2013

The Legislature returned from their spring recess on April 1, 2013 and policy committees have now begun to meet. April is usually a very busy month as committees and author's attempt to move their legislation into the fiscal committee or the floor in an effort to meet the policy deadline that is quickly approaching. As the bills begin to move, we will also begin to see many of them amended. Additionally, there were several bills we term "spot bills" which means they have legislative intent but have yet to be amended with the substance, so we anticipate that those will begin to take shape.

Now that the legislature is hearing bills, we anticipate that many issues related to our County Platform will start to take shape, some of those issues include oil and gas fracking, CEQA Reform, housing issues and the on-going discussion related to the Medi-Cal Optional Expansion. While the County has not taken any specific positions on some of the issues or the bills that have been introduced we would like to update you on where the issues currently stand.

There have been five bills introduced and/or amended related to fracking in an effort to address the state's on-going desire to set some statewide standards. As you are aware, there was an informational hearing earlier this year in the Senate hoping to get a better understanding on what local governments are doing related to this issue in an effort to keep the conversation going. With the five bills that have been introduced none have been heard in committees, but are all expected to be heard this month. We will continue to watch these bills and keep the board updated as they move to see what positions, if any, the legislative committee would like to recommend to the Board.

Another issue that the County is watching is CEQA reform. As we have mentioned previously with Senator Michael Rubio resigning we are unsure if there will be any CEQA reform this year, however, there were over a dozen bills introduced on this issue. We have been told that the only bill that will most likely be successful this year is SB 731 by Senator Steinberg; however this bill is still just an intent bill at this time. We will continue to watch these bills and work with the legislative committee in an effort to review and take positions on the various bills that may be of interest to the County.

Another issue that continues to percolate in the legislature is the proposed expansion of the Medi-Cal Optional Expansion. While we have met with the various county departments that this will potentially impact, they are in the process of putting together a position for the Board's review. In terms of the state's on-going discussion related to whether they should realign it to the counties that continues as part of the budget sub-committees meet; however, there still remains a major outstanding issue related whether

this will continue as a budget discussion or a policy discussion. Additionally, it should be noted that the State has still not received the blessing of the Federal CMS for this to potentially be realigned.

### **Specific Legislation of interest to Santa Barbara County**

**AB 65 (Achadjian)** – This bill was a reintroduction of AB 765 from the last session. 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 has had bi-partisan support both this year and last year session. AB 765 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. There has been some significant media around the issue that AB 65 intends to fix; the Assembly Public Safety Committee moved the bill out with unanimous support on March 11, 2013. The Senate passed a similar measure in early March, so while this bill continues to be a fight between the Assembly and the Senate regarding which house will take credit, we are optimistic that AB 65 will be successful this year.

**SB 191 (Padilla)** – The Board just took a support position on this bill. The bill would authorize counties to continue to collect funds used to support local emergency medical services systems, pediatric trauma centers, and hospitals and physicians who provide uncompensated trauma and emergency care to ill and injured patients. Given our past work on maintaining the Maddy Fund as a standalone bill, this bill seeks to address locals funding issues related to keeping our trauma system open and accessible. The bill is scheduled to be heard on April 10, 2013 in the Senate Health Committee.

**SB510 (Jackson)** - The Board just took a support position on this bill. The measure is a reintroduction of SB 444 from last session. SB 510 seeks to clarify that a local government, when considering an application to convert a mobile home park to resident ownership, is required to consider the results of the survey to residents about their support for the conversion in making its decision to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the map, and allows the local government to disapprove the map if it finds that the results of the survey have not demonstrated adequate resident support. The bill is currently scheduled to be heard in the Senate Transportation and Housing committee on April 23, 2013.

### **In Conclusion**

The legislature is still in the very early stage of working out major proposals. As we have mentioned in the past, we have 39 new members that now expect to be part of the various conversations. Given all of the moving parts on many issues related to our Platform we will continue to work with staff and the various affected departments to seek legislative positions on some of these very critical issues. Additionally, as the budget discussions begin to heat up we will keep you apprised of the potential impacts on the County. As always, should you or your staff have any questions, please let us know.