



TO: Monterey County Legislative Committee

FROM: Ashley S. Walker, Senior Policy Advisor
Kasha Hunt, Policy Advisor

DATE: January 13, 2025

RE: State Legislative Program: Advocacy Update

4. State Report –

- a. **Status of the Legislature:** The 2025 legislative session reconvened on January 6, 2025, after swearing-in newly elected members on December 2, 2024. This year in the Assembly, 65% of the members will have two or fewer years of legislative experience. In the Senate, that number is closer to 30%. While we expect there to be growing pains as new members and staffers acclimate to their new positions, this is also a great opportunity to build new relationships and rethink existing policies.

Both Pro Tem McGuire and Speaker Rivas have encouraged members to focus their introduced bills, limiting them to 35 per member for the two-year session. We expect to see many bills this session focused on improving affordable housing, job creation, reducing energy costs, addressing climate policy, improving public infrastructure, and alleviating everyday Californians' financial burdens.

Also, in response to anticipated federal policy, we also expect to see many bills focused on supporting immigrants and connecting those in need with essential services to bolster protections.

The Senate has recently announced full Committee assignments, whereas Speaker Rivas has so far only announced the Assembly Policy Committee Chair assignments. Although we engage various policy committees throughout the year on the County of Monterey's behalf, the Committees and their respective chairs with which we tend to engage the most are noted below. There are several newly assigned chairs, and we will begin connecting with them on behalf of the County immediately.

The legislative delegation for the County of Monterey remains the same; however, Senator Caballero no longer represents the County due to redistricting.

SENATE

Agriculture

Senator Melissa Hurtado, Chair

Appropriations

Senator Anna M. Caballero, Chair

Budget and Fiscal Review

Senator Scott D. Wiener, Chair

**Budget Subcommittee #4 on State
Administration and General Government**
Senator Christopher Cabaldon, Chair (NEW)

Governmental Organization

Senator Steve Padilla, Chair (NEW)

Health

Senator Caroline Menjivar, Chair (NEW)

Housing

Senator Aisha Wahab, Chair (NEW)

Human Services

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair (NEW)

Labor, Public Employment and Retirement

Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Chair

Local Government

María Elena Durazo, Chair

Public Safety

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair (NEW)

ASSEMBLY

Agriculture

Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, Chair

Appropriations

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Chair

Budget

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, Chair

**Budget Subcommittee No. 5 on State
Administration**
Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva, Chair

Emergency Management

Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom, Chair
(New)

Governmental Organization

Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, Chair

Health

Assemblymember Mia Bonta, Chair

Housing and Community Development
Assemblymember Matt Haney, Chair (New)

Human Services

Assemblymember Alex Lee, Chair

Labor and Employment

Assemblymember Liz Ortega, Chair

Local Government

Assemblymember Juan Carrillo, Chair

Public Employment and Retirement
Assemblymember Tina McKinnor, Chair

Public Safety

Assemblymember Nick Schultz, Chair (New)

- b. Governor's January State Budget Proposal:** The Governor's budget proposal was released on January 10. We will provide verbal comments regarding the proposal. It has been estimated that the budget will have a \$2 billion deficit for 2025-26; however, during the governor's January 6th press conference, he announced a balanced budget. He also announced at this press conference, a new website meant to create transparency and accountability focused on homelessness, housing, and behavioral health. It will be focused on counties and reaching the state's goals.

Now that the governor's budget proposal is released, both the Senate and Assembly budget committees' staff will begin preparing a summary overview. In early March, the subcommittees will begin holding hearings and taking testimony from the Department of Finance (DOF), Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), respective state agencies and departments, and members of the public. Then, in mid-May, the governor will release the May revision of the budget once April tax receipts are known. The California Constitution requires the Legislature to pass the budget by June 15th, which is done by a majority vote on the floor of both chambers. Once passed, the bill takes effect immediately.

- c. Legislation of Interest:** We are currently tracking about 50 bills for the County. Most of these bills will be amended in the coming months and/or are just spot bills. Bill introduction deadline is February 21. Below are bills with recommended positions.
- i. SB 48 (Gonzalez) Immigration enforcement: schoolsites: prohibitions on access, sharing information, and law enforcement collaboration.** This bill would prohibit school districts, county offices of education, or charter schools and their personnel from granting a United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer, or other federal official engaging in immigration related investigation or enforcement, permission to access a school campus without a judicial warrant.
Recommended Position: Support.
- d. Special Session Updates:** The governor called a special session, which commenced on December 2nd and will run concurrently with the regular session, to safeguard civil liberties as threatened by the incoming presidential administration's promises. With the special session, the governor is proposing to create a litigation fund to bolster the state's legal resources to respond to policy proposals that could be harmful to Californian's immigration, abortion access, climate change, and civil rights.

Aside from the fact that a special session is limited to the subject matter for which it was called, there are no significant differences in the legislative process between a regular and a special session. However, one important note, regular session bills generally take effect on the following January 1, yet special session bills take effect on the 91st day after the adjournment of the special session. Of course, a bill with an urgency clause in a special session will take effect immediately once the governor signs, just like an urgency clause bill in a regular session.

Below are the bills introduced in this special session, which the legislature has submitted to provide funding to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) should it be necessary. The County filed a letter of support for the following bills on December 5th.

- **SBX1 1 (Wiener)** -Includes \$25 million in funding proposed by Governor Newsom for the California Department of Justice to bolster legal resources and adds \$10 million for County Counsels and City Attorneys for similar purposes. It also expands on that effort by including \$25 million for Legal Aid efforts and legal services for local communities.
Current Position: Support

- **ABX1 1 (Gabriel)** - Will set aside up to \$25 million in funding to cover potential litigation costs for the California Department of Justice and other state agencies to challenge any unconstitutional or unlawful federal actions that threaten California's interests or values.
Current Position: Support

- **ABX1-2 (Gabriel)** - Will immediately allocate \$500,000 to fund initial case preparation for the California Department of Justice and other state agencies to challenge any unconstitutional or unlawful federal actions threatening California's interests or values.
Current Position: Support

e. **Immigration Rights Ad Hoc Committee:** With Supervisors Alejo and Lopez' leadership, the Immigration Rights Ad Hoc Committee will continue the County of Monterey's longstanding priority to protecting immigration rights. The Ad Hoc Committee's focus is to influence legislation and policy that would enhance community communications and deploy resources to protect its foreign-born members. On December 5th, the County of Monterey sent a letter to Governor Newsom, Senator Pro Temp McGuire, Senator Laird, and Assemblymember Addis noting its support of all funding allocated to protect Californian's rights against any threat to immigration, abortion access, civil rights, and climate change. We will continue to monitor legislation and policy that will support these efforts as we expect many bills will be proffered in reaction to the incoming presidential administration.

f. **Governor's Actions and Executive Orders:** The following actions have been taken by the Governor since the last Legislative Committee meeting. This list is compiled from CalOES, California Health and Human Services, California Department of Public Health, and FEMA. Nossaman can provide additional details of any item listed below, should the Legislative Committee desire.

- January 3 – Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order to crack down on ultra-processed foods and further investigate food dyes.
- January 2 – Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order to boost paid family leave benefits for 2025.

- December 27 - Governor Newsom announced an extension of California Highway Patrol surge operations in the Bay Area.
- December 24 – Cal OES announces the release of the Flexible Assistance for Survivors Pilot Program grant. Deadline for grant submission is January 24, 2025.
- December 24 - Governor Newsom and other West Coast governors are requesting a federal fishery disaster to support communities reliant on the industry following the worst albacore fishery season in over 30 years.
- December 21 - Governor Newsom today announced that President Biden has signed a federal funding bill allocating \$250 million to fully repair and expand the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant near the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego.
- December 20 – Cal OES held a Bird Flu Legislative Briefing for members and staff members of the Legislature, with briefs from CDFA, CDPH, Cal/OSHA, and Cal OES representatives.
- December 18 – Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency to streamline and expedite California’s response to Avian Influenza A (H5N1), providing state and local agencies with additional flexibility around staffing, contracting, and other rules to support the state’s evolving response.
- December 17 – Cal OES coordinates with local authorities in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties to preposition wildfire firefighting resources ahead of a red flag wind event.
- December 17 – California joins federal and community partners to launch pilot project to help clean up Tijuana River.
- December 10 – California secures federal assistance to support response to Franklin Fire in Malibu.

g. State Bill/Issues Track: See attached.