AGENDA ITEM #6

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
COUNTY OF MONTEREY
MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2025

TO: Legislative Committee

FROM: Annette D'Adamo, Legislative Program Manager

ITEM #6: Receive report and provide direction on renewal of the County's state and federal legislative advocacy and grant services contracts.

OVERVIEW

Monterey County maintains a long-standing and successful Legislative Program, ensuring that County interests are well represented in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento. The Strategic Grant Services Program concentrates funding efforts on the County's highest priority needs, and projects which require a high level of collaboration among County departments and community partners. The Board of Supervisors annually approves priorities for these programs.

The Legislative Program and Strategic Grant Services Program operate under the ongoing guidance of the Board's Legislative Committee. The County Administrative Office – Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs Division manages the programs, including the contracts with the County's state (Nossaman LLP) and federal (Ballard Spahr LLP) legislative advocates and grant funding specialists (Nossaman LLP).

CONTRACTS

The County's current contracts with Nossaman LLP and Ballard Spahr LLP have been extended several times and are set to expire on June 30, 2025. There is one contract for state legislative advocacy services and grant services (Nossaman LLP), and a second contract for federal legislative advocacy service (Ballard Spahr LLP). Staff recommends that these be separated out to three contracts: 1) state legislative advocacy; 2) grant services; and 3) federal legislative advocacy.

SCOPES OF WORK

Staff recommends that the "scope of work" for each of the three contracts be updated to reflect current workload. For example, the scope of work for the federal legislative advocacy contract does not mention assisting on the Count's federal earmarks submissions because when the contract was originally approved earmarks were not allowed. Additionally, over recent years the County has faced several emergencies and both Nossaman and Ballard Spahr have been extensively involved in advocacy efforts related to securing funding and resources for the County.

FUNDING HISTORY

The County is currently funding these contracts at the same level they were 10 years ago, while the workload has significantly increased in terms of numbers of bills the County has taken positions on, engagement by the Board, disaster assistance, and the inclusion of federal earmarks. For these reasons, staff recommends a 15% increase to each of the contracts.

	Federal Legislative Advocacy	State Legislative Advocacy	Grant Services	Notes
FY14-15	125,000	144,000	60,000	Sept. 2014 - Grant services started
FY15-16	125,000	144,000	84,000	
FY16-17	125,000	144,000	84,000	
FY17-18	70,000	100,000	54,000	August 2017 - RPF and new contracts
FY18-19	70,000	100,000	54,000	
FY19-20	70,000	100,000	54,000	
FY20-21	70,000	100,000	54,000	
FY21-22	125,000	144,000	84,000	July 2021 - Board restored contracts to FY14 levels in recognition of workload and performance, especially related to COVID-19/disaster response.
FY22-23	125,000	144,000	84,000	
FY23-24	125,000	144,000	84,000	
FY24-25	125,000	144,000	84,000	
FY25-26	**$ 143,750**	**$ 165,600**	**$ 96,600**	**Staff recommended 15% funding increase**

Breakdown of staff recommended 15% funding increase

FY25-26	Current rate	+ 15%	Total
Federal Legislative Advocacy	125,000	18,750	143,750
State Legislative Advocacy	144,000	21,600	165,600
Grant Services	84,000	12,600	96,600
Total	**$ 353,000**	**$ 52,950**	**$ 405,950**

RELATIONSHIP CONTINUITY

With the number of issues that the County is currently facing, it is increasingly important that the team tasked to carry out the County's legislative advocacy and grant funding efforts be knowledgeable and capable of representing the County's needs and have trusted relationships with the County's state and federal elected officials and their staffs.

Ashley Walker of Nossaman LLP has served as the County's state legislative advocate since July 2017 and has brought on Kasha Hunt to assist her in serving the County. Additionally, Ashley has provided grant services to the County since the inception of the County's Strategic Grant Services program in 2014.

Maria Tripplaar of Ballard Spahr LLP has served as the County federal legislative advocate since March 2023, and has brought on Katelyn Koegel to assist her in serving the County.

DIRECTION

Staff seeks direction from the Legislative Committee on how to proceed with renewal of these contracts, and a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

It is staff's recommendation that the contracts be renewed with revised scopes of work and a 15% contract increase, along with the option of approval for extending the contracts for three (3) additional one (1) year periods under the dollar amounts and scopes of work.