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MEMORANDUM

TO Legislative Committee

FROM Katlyn Koegel and Maria Tripplaar

DATE August 11, 2025

RE Federal Legislative Update

This memo provides a Federal Legislative Update for items appearing on the agenda for the August 14, 2025, Legislative Committee Meeting.

a. Federal Government Update

i. *Congressional Overview*

After passing the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), Republican members of both the House and Senate chambers shifted efforts to explaining and touting the bill in their home districts, which they will continue to do so during the August recess. In the House, Speaker Johnson cut short legislative business and sent members home early in advance of the summer recess. Johnson's actions, reportedly, came as a response to Democrat efforts to release the "Epstein Files."

The Senate remained in session passing three spending bills on July 31, 2025, discussed in greater detail below. Senators remained deadlocked on confirmations for executive branch nominees, and Senate leaders considered delaying the August recess. Regardless, the Senate did leave for its month-long recess on August 2nd without a clear path forward on nominees. There is early speculation that Republican Senate leaders may attempt to change the rules upon its September return, to allow for the quicker confirmation of nominees. Amending the 60-vote threshold is not unprecedented, with Democrats changing the rules in 2013 for lower court judicial nominees and Republicans changing them in 2017 for Supreme Court nominees.

Additionally, we are hearing early reports of another federal Budget Reconciliation process in FY27. House Republican leadership reportedly met Committee leadership in late July to

have preliminary discussions of potential parameters for a Reconciliation instruction, however it is unclear if this process will get off the ground,

ii. Executive Order Updates

In July, President Trump signed an Executive Order “Making America Beautiful Again by Improving Our National Parks.” It ordered the Secretary of the Interior to increase revenue by increasing the price of national park entry for non-residents. The Secretary is instructed to use the increased revenue to improve the infrastructure, enjoyment of and access to federal recreational areas. In addition, the Secretary is ordered to review the rules and restrictions for access to federal lands and take appropriate acts to grant American residents preferential treatment.

At the end of July, President Trump signed an Executive Order on further pushing the effect date for many reciprocal tariffs until August 7, 2025. This change comes because “certain foreign trading partners . . . have agreed to or are on the verge of concluding meaningful trade and security agreements with the United States.” We will continue to monitor any relevant developments and report those updates.

b. Appropriations Update, including Community Project Funding Requests

The Senate’s first three funding bills received bi-partisan support and funded the departments of Veterans Affairs and Agriculture, military construction, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Congress itself. After returning from August recess, the Senate will still need to pass a stop-gap measure or an additional 9 bills in order to avoid a government shut down at the end of September. The passed bills allocate \$154 billion for military construction and veterans’ programs, and \$27 billion to the Department of Agriculture and FDA. In both cases this funding represents a 2% upward adjustment from current funding levels.

In regard to Community Project Funding Requests (CPFs), since the last federal legislative report, we received word from Rep. Lofgren’s office that the initial funding levels for House CPFs were released, with the San Lucas Clean Drinking Water Project included at \$1.092 million and the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex included at \$500,000. These are the initial draft levels, but historically final levels have been close to initial levels. The next step for CPFs will be for Congress to pass final FY 26 appropriations legislation, which is not anticipated until September at the earliest. In fact, it is possible that we will see stop-gap funding (called a Continuing Resolution or CR), with the appropriations process concluding after FY27 begins on October 1st. Alternately, some of the appropriations bills may be enacted with others postponed until after October 1st. We will continue to provide updates in subsequent federal legislative reports and on this chart as the earmark process progresses through Congress.

FY26 Project Submitted	Description	Submissions	Funding Requested	Submitted to House/ Senate Committee
San Lucas Clean Drinking Water (PWFP)	Partial funding request for a project to permanently address water quality problems in San Lucas, which have occurred since 2006 and caused its residents to live under bottled water orders.	Sen. Padilla	\$3,668,000	
		Sen. Schiff	\$3,668,000	\$3,668,000
		Rep. Lofgren	\$3,668,000	\$3,668,000
Nacimiento and San Antonio Dams and Reservoirs Safety Project (MCWRA)	Partial funding request for the Nacimiento and San Antonio Dams Reservoirs Safety Projects (sometimes referred to as the Low-Level Outlet Works Rehabilitation Project) to ensure the safe operation of the dams during the state mandated replacement of the San Antonio Dam spillway.	Sen. Padilla	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000
		Sen. Schiff	\$6,000,000	
		Rep Lofgren	\$6,000,000	
Skate Park and BMX Pump Track (PWFP)	Partial funding request for development of a bike and skate park in Salinas. The site, and its connection to multi-use trails, offers unique regional recreation options for the tri-county area. This project is in partnership with the Salinas Regional Soccer Authority.	Sen. Padilla	\$3,000,000	
		Sen. Schiff	\$3,000,000	
		Rep. Lofgren	\$3,000,000	
Salinas Regional Soccer Complex (PWFP)	Partial funding request for the next phase expansion of the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, envisioned to become the most significant sports complex between Los Angeles and San Francisco, with the potential to serve 18,000 children/ youth weekly (plus their families). This project is in partnership with the Salinas Regional Soccer Authority.	Sen. Padilla	\$2,500,000	
		Sen. Schiff	\$2,500,000	
		Rep. Lofgren	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
County Parks Outdoor Education and Environmental Stewardship Project (PWFP)	Funding request to construct outdoor education facilities at Toro and San Lorenzo Parks.	Sen. Padilla	\$635,500	
		Sen. Schiff	\$635,500	
		Rep. Lofgren	\$635,500	
		Rep. Panetta	\$635,500	
County Parks Outdoor Accessible and Inclusive Fitness Project (PWFP)	Funding request to construct outdoor inclusive physical fitness facilities at Toro and San Lorenzo Parks to further support public health and wellbeing.	Sen. Padilla	\$509,600	
		Sen. Schiff	\$509,600	
		Rep. Lofgren	\$509,600	
		Rep. Panetta	\$509,600	
Nacimiento Lake Drive Repaving Project (MCWRA)	Funding request to repave a degraded two mile segment of Nacimiento Lake Drive, directly over the Nacimiento Dam crest. The road serves emergency responders, residents, and recreational visitors.	Sen. Padilla	\$2,100,000	
		Sen. Schiff	\$2,100,000	
		Rep. Panetta	\$2,100,000	

Homeless Encampment Resolution – Reclamation Ditch Restoration (MCWRA)	Funding request to rehabilitate 6.8 acres within the existing Salinas Reclamation Channel (Reclamation Ditch No. 1665) system and maintain lands to support public use and enjoyment and improve the riparian zone and waterway.	Sen. Padilla Sen. Schiff Rep. Lofgren	\$500,000 \$500,000 \$500,000	
Porter-Vallejo Library and Mansion Historical Restoration Project	This project would undertake critical infrastructure and building improvements, adding safety and egress features and enabling more of the structure to be used by the public and as a hub for County services, including a public library.	Rep. Lofgren	\$3,500,000	

c. Federal Advocacy

i. U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Community Infrastructure Program for the Jolon Road Safety Improvement Project

The County of Monterey applied to the Department of Defense (DOD), Defense Community Infrastructure Program for funding for the Jolon Road Safety Improvement Project. The Ballard team worked with Rep. Lofgren’s, Rep. Panetta’s, Sen. Schiff’s, and Sen. Padilla’s offices to obtain support letters for this project. We timely obtained the letters, and the County was able to submit the application to DOD on July 3, 2025.

ii. National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program

Earlier this year the Secretary of the Interior directed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to begin the process to “develop a new schedule for offshore oil and gas lease sales on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf.” BOEM subsequently began 11th Program Development issuing a Request for Information and opening a public comment period. The BOEM is now drafting a proposed program analyzing all 27 outer continental shelf (OCS) planning areas. Once the Secretary presents the draft proposal, it is subject to another comment period.

The County of Monterey has historically opposed any new oil and gas leases in the OCS. As outlined below, based on the concerns raised, the Ballard team is recommending the County again support proposed federal legislation which would prohibit oil and gas leases in the OCS: the Central Coast of California Conservation Act of 2025 and the West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2025. At the county’s request, the Ballard team has also drafted a letter directly opposing development of the 11th Program to the OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program Manager.

iii. Migrant Education Program and Other Education Categorical Funding

At the request of the Monterey County Office of Education via Supervisor Askew's Office, the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors submitted a letter to the County's congressional delegation in support of the Migrant Education Program (MEP) which has been eliminated from the President's proposed FY 26 budget. MEP assists children whose families relocate frequently due to economic hardship and seasonal work, typically agricultural in the County of Monterey. The program supports children facing mobility-related challenges by offering targeted district-level services: supplemental instruction in core subjects, credit recovery, high school case management, and summer programs, all of which reduce educational disruption and college readiness. The Ballard team circulated the County's support letter to the Congressional Delegation on July 31, 2025, and will continue to monitor the issue.

Earlier this year the White House withheld appropriated grant money for the MEP and other education categorical funding. It ordered the U.S. Department of Education to review grant programs to ensure "taxpayer resources are spent in accordance with the President's priorities and the Department's statutory responsibilities." California and 23 other states sued, arguing the administration could not withhold Congressionally appropriated funds. The Department of Education eventually released the funds, good news for the impending school year. However, states and educators still have concerns that education categorical funding will be cut from the FY 2026 federal budget.

The educational categorical programs include Title I which supports schools with high concentrations of students from low-income families; Title III funding which supports English language learners in attaining language proficiency and meeting academic standards; Title II funding which helps recruit and retain highly qualified educators; Individuals with Disabilities Education funding which supports students with disabilities; and Career and Technical Education funding which expands access to career training and technical education programs. At the County's request the Ballard team has also drafted a letter in support of funding for all these categorical programs.

d. Legislation

i. FEMA Independence Act of 2025 (H.R. 2308; S. 1246) – Recommend Support

The FEMA Independence Act of 2025 seeks to establish the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as an independent agency. Specifically, the bill would remove FEMA from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and make it an independent, cabinet level agency which would report directly to the President. The goal of this legislation is to unencumber FEMA from DHS and enable it the flexibility to respond more quickly to emergencies.

Rep. Moskowitz introduced this legislation in the House and Sen. Tillis introduced it in the Senate with Sen. Padilla as an original co-sponsor.

ii. Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act (S. 356) – Recommend Support

The Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act seeks to extend the revenue-sharing payments to forest counties through the U.S. Forest Service's Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program. SRS was first enacted in 2000 to stabilize payments to counties and school districts which historically relied on receipts from timber harvests to fund local education services and infrastructure projects. The County of Monterey is an SRS recipient. However, SRS authorization expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2023, so without reauthorization the County will no longer receive SRS funds.

Sen. Crapo introduced this bill in the Senate; both Sen. Schiff and Sen. Padilla are co-sponsors. This bill passed the Senate and is being considered by the House. There is also an identical bill in the house (H.R. 1383), introduced by Rep. LaMalfa.

iii. Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R. 3227) – Recommend Support

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act is a reintroduction (most recently) of a 2023 bill which the county previously supported. This bill seeks to create a workforce solution for America's agriculture industry, one of the most critical sectors of the national economy. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act first passed the House in December 2019 after negotiation and input from farmers, agricultural stakeholders, labor organizations, and farmworker advocates. Since then bipartisan supporters have sought to move the bill through the legislative process. Specifically, this bill would:

(1) reform the H-2A program to provide more flexibility for employers, while ensuring critical protections for workers;

(2) establish a program for agricultural workers in the United States to choose to earn legal status through continued agricultural employment and contribution to the U.S. agricultural economy; and

(3) modify the program to make it more responsive and user-friendly for employers and provide access to the program for industries with year-round labor needs.

This legislation was introduced by Rep. Lofgren in the House. There is not yet an identical companion bill in the Senate

iv. Central Coast of California Conservation Act of 2025 (H.R. 2882) – Recommend Support

The Central Coast of California Conservation Act of seeks to amend the Out Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337) to prohibit the Secretary of the interior from issuing a lease for the exploration, development, or production of oil or gas in any area of the Central California Planning Area.

Rep. Panetta introduced this legislation in the House and Rep. Lofgren is an original co-sponsor. There is not yet an identical companion in the Senate.

v. West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2025 (H.R. 2849, S. 1432) – Recommend Support

This bill is a reintroduction of a 2023 bill which the county previously supported. The West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2025 seeks to prohibit the Department of the Interior from issuing a lease for the exploration, development, or production of oil or natural gas in any area of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of California, Oregon, or Washington.

Rep. Huffman introduced this legislation in the House with Rep. Panetta and Rep. Lofgren as co-sponsors. Sen. Padilla introduced the Senate version of the bill and Sen. Schiff is a co-sponsor.

vi. The Reentry Act of 2025 (H.R. 2586) – Recommend Support

This bill is a reintroduction of 2023 bill which the county previously supported. The Reentry Act of 2025 seeks to allow Medicaid payment of medical services to be furnished to an incarcerated individual during the 30-day period preceding the individual's release. This would fill the coverage gap for released individuals who often have no access to health care or treatment, allowing for smoother transitions to community care and reducing risk of overdose deaths post release. Importantly, this legislation does no change which persons are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage, it would simply ensure a warm handoff back for those already eligible.

Rep. Tonko introduced this legislation in the House. There is not yet an identical companion bill in the Senate.

vii. Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2025 (H.R. 18) – Recommend Support

This bill is a reintroduction of a 2023 bill which the county previously supported. The Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2025 seeks to ensure that individuals prohibited from gun possession under federal law are not able to obtain firearms. The bill would require a background check for every gun sale or transfer, with exceptions such as gifts to family members and temporary transfers for purposes such as hunting, target shooting, and self-defense. Federal law already requires licensed gun dealers to conduct background checks on

gun purchasers or transferees. This bill extends the requirement of background checks to unlicensed gun sellers. Under this bill, unlicensed gun sellers would meet their buyers at a licensed gun dealer, who would run a background check using the same process already used for sales from their own inventory.

Rep. Thompson introduced this bill in the House with Rep. Lofgren and Rep. Panetta as co-sponsors. There is not yet an identical companion bill in the Senate.

viii. *Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2025 (H.R. 3868) – Recommend Support*

This bill is a reintroduction of a 2023 bill which the county previously supported. The Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2025 seeks to close the “Charleston Loophole”, which allows the sale of a firearm to proceed if the FBI does not complete its background check process within three business days. Under the new process created by the bill, if the background check has not been completed after 10 business days, the purchaser may request an escalated review by the FBI. This request for an escalated review will trigger a more intensive FBI investigation, designed to resolve the case within an additional 10-business-day period. If the additional 10 business days elapse without a response from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, only then may the dealer sell or transfer the gun to the purchaser, according to the press release.

Rep. Clyburn introduced this legislation in the House and Rep. Lofgren is an original co-sponsor. There is not yet an identical companion bill in the Senate.

ix. *Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929 (H.R. 4696; S. 2468) – Recommend Support*

This bill is a reintroduction of a 2023 bill which the county previously supported. The Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929 would update the existing Registry statute so that an immigrant may qualify for lawful permanent resident status if they have lived in the U.S. continuously for at least seven years before filing an application for lawful permanent resident status and are of good moral character.

Rep. Lofgren introduced this legislation in the House and Sen. Padilla introduced an identical companion bill in the Senate.

e. *Federal Bill/Issues Track*

Attachment(s):

Federal Bill/Issues Track