



TO: Monterey County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Ashley S. Walker, Senior Policy Advisor
RE: Legislative Program: 2021 Annual Report
DATE: January 11, 2022

I. Introduction

Nossaman LLP is honored to represent the County of Monterey at the state level of government to achieve the goals outlined in the County’s Legislative Program. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have faced extreme challenges in our state and nation, as disparities in our society have been further exacerbated. We have taken an “all-hands on deck” approach to advocacy, expanding our work into new policy areas, resulting in an even stronger working relationship between Nossaman, the County, and our legislative delegation. We look forward to continuing our success and work together in partnership with the County, as we enter what is sure to be another interesting and demanding legislative year.

II. Summary of Legislative Accomplishments in 2021

Nossaman collaborated with the County to achieve the following legislative accomplishments:

- **Monterey County’s 2021 Legislative Advocacy Fast Facts:**
 - Reviewed 2,776 bills for potential impacts to the County.
 - Drafted 77 position letters.
 - Drafted 67 position memos.
 - Supported 33 bills.
 - Opposed 0 bills.
 - Watched 2 bills.
 - Advocated on 13 state budget issues outside of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Advocated on 10 COVID-19 specific issues.
 - Of the bills supported by the County, 15 bills were signed.
- **State Budget Issues (Outside of COVID-19):** This past year was a very heavy state budget focused year. We worked with the County of the following 13 budget related issues that were not directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AB 135/SB 135 IHSS Fiscal Penalty Provisions: Opposition to the provisions in the human services trailer bill (AB 135/SB 135) to impose a seven percent penalty on counties that fail to reach an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) collective bargaining agreement. The fiscal penalty provisions ignore the progress that has been made on IHSS collective bargaining, punishes counties that have done the right thing, is inappropriate, and will negatively impact funding for other Realignment programs.

California Comeback Plan – Cannabis Funding: Support for Governor Newsom’s “California Comeback Program” within the FY 21-22 State Budget May Revision proposal. The California

Comeback Plan proposes \$100 million in grant funding for local governments to complete cannabis related environmental studies, license reviews, and mitigate environmental impacts. The proposal supports a broader effort to transition cannabis businesses into the regulated market and to reduce barriers to entry for small businesses. The California Comeback Plan dedicates \$1.7 million specifically for Monterey County’s efforts on these cannabis related issues.

Children and Youth Behavioral Health: Support for Assemblymember Rubio’s budget proposal (see here), requesting \$112 million of the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Initiative proposal, be dedicated to early childhood mental health programs to support the social-emotional health of young children and families impacted by the pandemic.

County Veterans Services Officers: Proposal to increase local assistance funding in state budget for County Veterans Service Officers.

Department of Cannabis Control: Request for cleanup language addressing our concerns related to AB 141, the budget trailer bill on cannabis, enrolled and presented to the Governor on July 5, 2021.

Governor’s Broadband Proposal: Support for Governor’s proposal to invest \$7 billion to make a serious, concentrated effort to close the Digital Divide.

Hebbron Heights Family Center: Support for Assemblymember Robert Rivas’ budget request of \$8.1 million to the City of Salinas for the reconstruction of the Hebbron Heights Family Center.

INSV/PW Research in Monterey County: Support for Assemblymember Robert Rivas’ budget request of \$1,000,000 to the California Leafy Greens Research Program within the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to provide grants to study the Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus & Pythium Wilt (INSV/PW) epidemic in Monterey County.

IRWM Funding (Senate Budget): Support for the inclusion of \$510 million in statewide funding for Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) regions in the final drought relief and resiliency package. We request the funding be allocated to IRWM Funding Areas based on hydrologic regions as defined by the California Water Plan, consistent with the previously approved Proposition 1 Water Bond. The \$510 million request exactly replicates the amount allocated to IRWM regions through Proposition 1.

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Lanterman-Petris-Short County Contracts: Opposition of the May Revision proposal to discontinue State Hospital contracts with counties for Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) conservatees over three years. This proposal would effectively close the State Hospital to LPS conservatees in two months’ time and put close to a thousand LPS conservatees throughout the state at risk.

Senate Water Infrastructure Proposal: Request to include \$500 million for public safety enhancements at existing California dams and reservoirs.

Transportation Funding: Request for an additional \$1 billion investment into local bridge, safety and active transportation infrastructure from one-time funds.

- Efforts on Legislation:** The County took 35 positions in 2021 which is consistent with a normal legislative year. Given that 2021 was the first year of a two-year session, many bills introduced have been held over to be considered in 2022. Below is a chart outlining the bills we took positions on that made it to the Governor’s desk, and the final actions taken on the proposals.

Measure	Author	Topic	County Position	Governor’s Action
AB 14	Aguiar-Curry D	Communications: broadband services: California Advanced Services Fund.	Support	Signed
AB 61	Gabriel D	Business pandemic relief.	Support	Signed
AB 73	Rivas, Robert D	Health emergencies: employment safety: agricultural workers: wildfire smoke.	Support	Signed
AB 89	Jones-Sawyer D	Peace officers: minimum qualifications.	Watch	Signed
AB 101	Medina D	Pupil instruction: high school graduation requirements: ethnic studies.	Support	Signed
AB 361	Rivas D	Open meetings: state and local agencies: teleconferences.	Support	Signed
SB 4	Gonzalez D	Communications: California Advanced Services Fund: deaf and disabled telecommunications program: surcharges.	Support	Signed
SB 9	Atkins D	Housing development: approvals.	Support	Signed
SB 10	Wiener D	Planning and zoning: housing development: density.	Support	Signed
SB 28	Caballero D	Rural Broadband and Digital Infrastructure Video Competition Reform Act of 2021.	Support	Signed
SB 395	Caballero D	Excise tax: electronic cigarettes: Health Careers Opportunity Grant Program: Small and Rural Hospital Relief Program.	Support	Signed
SB 496	Laird D	Flood control: water development projects: Pajaro River.	Support	Signed
SB 714	Caballero D	Democratic Party: county central committees: appointment and election.	Support	Signed

SB 780	Cortese D	Local finance: public investment authorities.	Support	Signed
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- **COVID-19 Related Issues and Disparate Impacts:** We worked with our legislative delegation and policy makers across the state on the following issues that are prioritized in the County’s Covid-19 Pandemic Disparate Impact Report, such as: Broadband expansion, economic development, education, housing and homelessness, increased state investments, public health related issues, and Spanish translation of pandemic guidance documents. Specifically, we advocated for:
 - **CVS Vaccine Locations:** Requested to make COVID-19 vaccines available at CVS locations in zip codes with higher incidence rates in Monterey County.
 - **Data Request Public Records Act:** Requested data related to the allocation of vaccines and distribution from the California Department of Public Health.
 - **Emergency Rental Assistance:** Requested that the State align obligation and expenditure deadlines to coincide with US Department of Treasury deadlines.
 - **EMT Authorization as Pediatric Vaccinators:** Requested that EMSA allow EMTs to provide pediatric vaccinations for children ages 5-11, as they do for other population groups.
 - **FEMA/CalOES Vaccine and Mobile Clinics:** Requested assistance from FEMA and CalOES to provide COVID-19 vaccine and mobile clinics to serve the most highly impacted and hard-to-reach areas of Monterey County.
 - **Guidance Unvaccinated Youth:** Requested guidance on what unvaccinated people, especially young children, need to do with respect to prevention measures such a face coverings and physical distancing both for indoor and outdoor gatherings.
 - **Multi-County Entities (MCEs) Request for Vaccine Clinics for Ag Workers:** Requested assistance from MCEs to support and/or operate vaccination clinics for agricultural workers in Monterey County disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
 - **Response to California Department of Public Health related to Request for Vaccines, Data and Equity:** Responded to a letter from CDPH, responding to the Board’s 1/28/21 letter to the Governor requesting assistance on critical issues of equitable vaccine supply and distribution, especially for the farmworker community.
 - **VA Vaccine Reporting:** Requested the Department of Veteran Affairs report vaccines administered to the California Immunization Registry (CAIR).
 - **Vaccine Equity Metric:** Sent a letter supporting the State’s newly rolled out Vaccine Equity policy.

- **Other Advocacy Efforts:**
 - **Big Sur Fire:** The County met with Senator Laird and Assemblymember Rivas’ staff, along with Supervisor Adams office to discuss Big Sur Fire. Given that Big Sur Fire Brigade is an all-volunteer force, issues related to independent contractor law (AB 5) were threatening Big Sur Fire’s non-profit status if they provide any stipends to their volunteer firefighters.

- **Brown Act Bills:** The County supported AB 361 (Rivas) which was passed and signed by the Governor; however there have been issues with implementation. The County met with Assemblymember Rivas' office to discuss concerns that we hope to have addressed in any Brown Act related legislation that may move forward next year.
- **Climate Change:** Nossaman worked in a coalition of stakeholders to advocate for a minimum of \$900 million to be included in the Legislature's Climate Change and Resiliency Bond proposals for critically needed dam safety improvements. The Bond have been carried over to the second year of the two-year legislative session.
- **Dam Safety Tour:** Nossaman worked with the County to host a tour of Nacimiento and San Antonio Dams and Reservoirs to discuss the need for dam and spillway safety improvements. The County has been advocating for dam safety funding through a coalition of stakeholders across the State. In attendance were Senator Laird, Assemblymember Rivas, staff from Senator Caballero's office, Supervisor Alejo, Supervisor Lopez, the Farm Bureau, and the Grower Shipper Association. We will continue to work with our Legislative members to advocate for funding for dam safety projects.
- **Engagement with County Board of Supervisors and Staff:** Nossaman continued participating in weekly briefings for the Board of Supervisors, preparing and providing detailed updates related to COVID-19 state legislative and budget issues. Additionally, as we do each year, we met with each Member of the Board of Supervisors to ensure our legislative program reflects the Board's vision. Nossaman met regularly with county staff to provide updates on state legislation and our advocacy efforts.
- **Engagement with CSAC and RCRC:** Nossaman attended weekly legislative meetings with CSAC and advocates for counties across the State. In these meetings, we discussed the most important issues facing counties and coordinate strategy for supporting, opposing or amending legislation or budget proposals. The County joined RCRC and Nossaman keeps in communication with RCRC staff to update them on the Counties rural related priorities.
- **Engagement with Legislative Delegation and Staff:** Nossaman met with the County's legislative delegation and/or staff on an almost weekly basis to discuss legislative proposals and positions, budget issues, and priority projects within the County. Additionally, Nossaman assisted the County coordinating topics for discussion at the annual Legislative Workshop.
- **Governor Newsom's Actions and Executive Orders:** Nossaman kept the County informed of anticipated or signed actions and/or executive orders that the Governor and Administration put forth that impacted the County.
- **Housing for the Harvest Program:** Nossaman was in regular communication with the County's legislative delegation about the need to expand the Housing for the Harvest Program in the County. The Board sent a letter to the State requesting assistance in contracting local hotels/motels to administer the program.
- **Project Homekey:** Nossaman worked with the County and the City of Salinas to meet with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and to alert the Governor's office of our concerns and request assistance related to federal requirements for this Homekey project. We requested assistance from our legislative delegation to help

successfully secure a HUD waiver on the Regulatory Violation to permit the Authority to Use Grant Funds (85 PBVs) for Salinas Homekey, and to help align State and Federal environmental processes (CEQA and NEPA) for these projects.

- **Public Health Infrastructure and Workforce Funding:** The California Can't Wait Coalition (#CACantWait) developed a proposal that would begin to reverse the decade-long disinvestment in local public health departments. The budget proposal would have dedicated \$200 million annually to local public health departments to begin rebuilding workforce and infrastructure before the next public health crisis and make strides towards health equity. An additional one-time investment of \$3.5M would have funded an assessment of the current and future needs of public health departments as proposed by AB 240 (Rodriguez). Monterey signed on to the letter through the CAO's office. This effort was unsuccessful.
- **Veterans Home Project:** The Board of Supervisors has approved sponsoring legislation that would allow the construction of a Veterans home on the former Fort Ord in Marina. Nossaman attended meeting with all of the County's legislators to discuss the opportunity. Nossaman will work with the legislative delegation on a sponsored bill in 2022.

III. Looking Ahead to 2022

- **2022 Legislative Session – Anticipated Policy Issues:** While the Legislature and Administration accomplished some significant policy and fiscal goals in 2021, Sacramento will be as busy as ever in the coming year with several anticipated hot policy topics. The Legislature reconvenes on January 3, 2022 and some of the important issues for counties we anticipate being debated include, but are not limited to: Continued COVID-19 response and recovery, public health, including mental and behavioral health, housing and homelessness, broadband, Brown Act modernization, wildfire and other climate change impacts on sustainability, drought response and water storage, water affordability, and cannabis.
- **FY 2022-23 State Budget Projections:** On November 17, 2021, the Legislative Analyst's Office released their 2022-23 California Budget Outlook, projecting a \$31 billion surplus. The LAO explains that the trend in surplus expected, can support the State investing in new, ongoing investments and/or tax reductions. We know that the Legislature and Administration will be debating what types of investments should be made, and the County will work with our Members to continue to advocate for our legislative and funding priorities, as well as local projects. A link to the full LAO report can be found here: <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4472>.
- **2022 Legislative Committee Assignments:** The following chart outlines the County's legislative delegation and associated committee assignments.

LEGISLATOR	COMMITTEE/LEADERSHIP ASSIGNMENT
Senator Anna Caballero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agriculture ● Banking And Financial Institutions ● Budget And Fiscal Review ● Budget And Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 4 On State Administration And General Government ● Housing ● Joint Committee On Fairs, Allocation And Classification ● Joint Legislative Budget Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judiciary
Senator John Laird	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriations • Budget And Fiscal Review • Budget And Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 1 On Education • Joint Committee On Rules • Joint Legislative Audit Committee • Joint Legislative Budget Committee • Judiciary • Labor Public Employment And Retirement • Natural Resources And Water • Rules
Assemblymember Robert Rivas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Appropriations • Governmental Organization • Joint Committee On Fairs, Allocation And Classification • Local Government • Select Committee On Latina Inequities
Assemblymember Mark Stone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking And Finance • Budget • Budget Subcommittee No. 5 On Public Safety • Human Services • Joint Committee On Fisheries And Aquaculture • Judiciary • Natural Resources