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MEMORANDUM

TO Legislative Committee

FROM Brent R. Heberlee

DATE May 8, 2019

RE Federal Legislative Update

This memo provides a Federal Legislative Update on the items appearing on the agenda for the May 13, 2019, Legislative Committee meeting.

1. FY2020 Budget and Appropriations

The House narrowly passed a resolution in April that sets a budget ceiling of nearly \$1.3 trillion for writing the FY2020 spending bills, which represents about a 2 percent increase above current spending limits for defense programs and nearly a 6 percent increase for non-defense. From that top-line number, the Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee has established limits for each of the 12 annual spending bills. In order to avoid \$126 billion in automatic cuts set to go into effect on October 1 as a result of the Budget Control Act of 2011, House Democrats and Senate Republicans must reach a deal on overall spending levels for FY2020. Most Senate Republicans believe the House spending levels are too high, but the Senate Majority Leader has committed to working with the Speaker of the House to negotiate a two-year budget deal to avert automatic spending cuts in FY2020 and FY2021.

In spite of the lack of an overall budget deal, House appropriators are moving forward with drafting the individual FY2020 spending bills. The Labor-HHS-Education spending bill contains significant increases for many accounts that support County priority programs, including the following:

- \$178 million increase for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Grants
- \$10 million increase for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program
- \$50 million for firearm injury and mortality prevention research

- \$14 million increase for substance abuse treatment, including continued funding for opioid prevention and treatment, and three new behavioral health programs to enhance treatment efforts
- \$4 billion increase for early childhood programs, including Head Start, the Child Care and Development Block Grant, and Preschool Development Grants
- \$6.5 million increase for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program (McKinney-Vento)
- \$15 million increase for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (provides grants to Monterey County libraries)

The bill also contains policy language that would prohibit the Trump Administration from housing child migrants in “soft-sided dormitories,” aka tent cities in border states, or in unlicensed facilities set up to deal with the massive influx of refugees seeking asylum.

2. Infrastructure

House and Senate Democratic leaders met with President Trump to discuss the parameters of an infrastructure bill. Both sides announced an agreement in principal for a \$2 trillion bill, but discussions over how to pay for it were put off for several weeks. The President agreed with Democrats that a broad infrastructure package should include surface transportation as well as water and broadband. Subsequent to the meeting, House and Senate Republicans, as well as senior White House officials, expressed doubt over being able to find the means to pay for the bill.

3. H.R. 310 (Huffman) / S. 1318 (Feinstein) West Coast Ocean Protection Act

Legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate to permanently ban offshore drilling in federal waters off the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington. Last year, the Trump Administration proposed opening up the entire West Coast to new oil and gas development, including two proposed lease sales off the Central Coast. The Interior Secretary testified before Congress this week that he is still determining how to move forward with the proposal in light of an adverse court decision related to drilling in the Arctic.

At the request of Senator Feinstein, the County adopted a resolution last year opposing new offshore drilling and oil and gas development in California. A support letter for Senator Feinstein’s bill is attached for your review.

The Trump Administration is also pursuing efforts to reopen federal land in California to oil and gas development. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently released an updated draft Environmental Impact Statement that analyzes the impacts of fracking on over 1 million acres of BLM land in eight counties just south of Monterey County. The BLM’s draft plan for oil and gas development in Monterey County was

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released for public comment in early 2017, and BLM has yet to announce when the final plan will be completed.

Attachments:

- West Coast Ocean Protection Act support letters
- Federal Bill/Issues Track