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MEMORANDUM

TO Legislative Committee

FROM Brent R. Heberlee

DATE January 8, 2020

RE Federal Legislative Update

This memo provides a Federal Legislative Update on the items appearing on the agenda for the January 13, 2020, Legislative Committee meeting.

1. FY2020 Federal Budget

Nearly three months into the current fiscal year, congressional leaders and the White House reached an agreement in mid-December on a two-part spending deal for FY2020. The overall funding in the spending bills represents the highest level of appropriations since FY2011, and the agreement provides \$27 billion in extra funding for non-defense programs across the federal government.

The budget deal includes the following spending levels and policy provisions of interest to the County:

- Payments In-Lieu of Taxes (PILT) – full funding at \$515 million
- Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Payments and Community Health Centers -- extends funding through May 22, 2020
- Family First Transition Act – legislative fix for child welfare program
- Gun Safety -- \$25 million for gun violence prevention research at the CDC and NIH
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) -- \$3.4 billion, a \$100 million increase over FY2019

- Homeless Assistance Grants -- \$2.8 billion, a \$141 million increase over FY2019; allocates \$80 million to address youth homelessness
- Homeless Veterans Assistance Programs -- \$1.85 billion, a \$47 million increase over FY2019
- Wildland Fire Prevention and Suppression -- \$5.6 billion, a \$1.6 billion increase over FY2019; includes direction to remove dead or dying trees close to homes and infrastructure
- Water Storage -- \$134 million in additional funding for the WIIN Act Section 4007 water storage program

2. 2020 Census – Department of Homeland Security Citizenship Data

President Trump ordered the Census Bureau to collect citizenship information through administrative records from federal agencies and the 50 states after the Supreme Court ruled against his administration last summer by deciding that a citizenship question wouldn't be allowed on the 2020 Census questionnaire. The Department of Homeland Security recently released a document that reveals its intent to share administrative records from USCIS, CBP, and ICE with the Census Bureau to help it determine the number of citizens and non-citizens in the U.S., as well as the number of undocumented immigrants in the country. President Trump's order states that gathering citizenship data would give the states the option to design state and legislative districts using voter-age citizen numbers instead of the total population.

3. National Defense Authorization Act

Congress recently passed the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act that incorporated several provisions that strengthen Central Coast defense installations and improve military housing options. Rep. Panetta successfully included provisions that enhance academic programs and faculty recruitment and retention at the Naval Postgraduate School and Defense Language Institute. He was also successful in incorporating core elements of his military housing legislation, including requirements to establish a tenants bill of rights for residents of privatized military housing.

4. Pajaro River Flood Prevention Project Update

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently approved a final feasibility report for the Pajaro River Flood Risk Reduction Project. Over 50 years in the making, this Director's Report allows the project to enter into the pre-construction phase, and it also makes the project eligible for future construction funding. The project still faces headwinds in the competition for limited federal construction dollars due to a low benefit-to-cost ratio for the recommended plan.

In an effort to jumpstart the project and give it a leg up within the Army Corps budget, Rep. Panetta was successful in inserting report language in final budget agreement that directs the Corps to allocate \$1.5 million for pre-construction activities for “projects that are located in economically-disadvantaged communities where per capita income is less than half of the state and national averages and that have previously experienced loss of life due to flooding.”

5. H.R. 5438, End Valley Fever Now Act

Rep. Panetta recently co-sponsored legislation to help address the increasing number of cases of Valley Fever across the Central Coast. Because it is an airborne disease caused by dirt and soil disturbance, many farmworkers are susceptible to infection, and 5 to 10% of people who get Valley Fever will develop serious or long-term problems in their lungs. The legislation would authorize funding to help train local medical providers to diagnose and treat those exposed to the disease. It would also provide funding for additional research and improved access to clinical trials for affected individuals.

Attachments:

- Support Letter: H.R. 5438, End Valley Fever Now Act
- Federal Bill/Issues Track