
1909 K Street, NW
12th Floor
Washington, DC 20006-1157
TEL 202.661.2200
FAX 202.661.2299
www.ballardspahr.com

Maria C. Tripplaar
Tel: 202.777-6987
Fax: 202.661.2299
tripplaar@ballardspahr.com

MEMORANDUM

TO Monterey County Board of Supervisors

FROM Maria C. Tripplaar and Katlyn Koegel

DATE January 8, 2025

RE Legislative Program: 2024 Federal Advocacy Report

Introduction

The First Session of the 118th Congress was defined by unpredictability, and the Second Session was slightly more stable but not significantly more fruitful. Unfortunately, this volatility rendered the 118th Congress to be highly unproductive with only 224 bills enacted into law (88 of which were enacted on or after December 1, 2024).

House Republicans have been hampered by a razor thin majority, combined with ongoing internal challenges and disagreements. In 2023, it took the House a total of 18 ballots to elect Kevin McCarthy as Speaker. His speakership only lasted until October 2023, when he was ousted by far-right conservatives. It then took 22 days for House Republicans to agree and vote for Mike Johnson to become Speaker. Speaker Johnson also faced an attempted ouster in May 2024, but was able to survive the proposed motion to vacate. Overall, the House has run more normally in 2024 than 2023, however in addition to the repeated (but failed) effort to remove Speaker Johnson, unprecedented levels of mistrust remain at the highest levels of Republican leadership.

In 2024, Congress was able to successfully pass the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, reauthorize expiring healthcare authorities (including funding for Community Health Centers, National Health Service Corps, Teaching Health Centers with Graduate Medical Education, and Special Diabetes programs), and eventually pass regular appropriations bills for FY24. However, as in 2023, it is arguable if any other meaningful legislation was accomplished. In the absence of passing regular appropriations bills for FY25, two stop-gap funding measures have been required thus far to avoid a federal government shutdown. Congress has until March 2025 to complete the regular appropriations process, and while Republicans now control both chambers of Congress, its ability to do so remains murky. While the County of Monterey currently only has one request for federal funding in play, through the Community Project Funding/Congressional Direct Spending program, I will continue to monitor the process closely for any impact on the county.

Despite the aforementioned challenges and uncertainties, I worked closely with the Legislative Committee and county staff to address many of our federal policy priorities with the County's congressional delegation. Following is a summary of the County's federal advocacy efforts with which I was involved and policy updates on key federal legislative, budgetary, and regulatory issues included in the 2024 Legislative Program.

Engagement with Monterey County Officials

- **BOS Legislative Workshop:** I virtually attended the Board's Legislative Workshop in February. I also assisted County staff with the preparation of issue briefs for the meeting and secured attendance of representatives of the County's congressional delegation, including Rep. Zoe Lofgren in person and a representative from Rep. Jimmy Panetta's office.
- **Legislative Committee:** I provided monthly written and oral reports to the Legislative Committee on federal matters impacting the County.

Summary of Legislative Advocacy

- **Community Project Funding**

In the Spring of 2024, the County submitted nine community project funding requests to the federal Congressional delegation as part of the FY2025 appropriations process. The appropriations process has not yet been completed, however one of the requests was passed by the House for further consideration. The House approved the project for Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Sewer System Improvements (\$1,105,800), but it was not passed by the full Senate. The County has been repairing and replacing manholes and pump stations for the PCSD, but funding is needed to make repairs to the sewer pipes. As of this writing, it remains unclear what the path forward will be for the FY2025 and FY2026 appropriations process.

- **Support for Federal Legislation**

Based on my recommendations, the Legislative Committee officially supported 10 pieces of proposed federal legislation that would benefit the County, and opposed one which would be detrimental if enacted. A detailed federal bill and issues track is attached for further reference.

- **FEMA Reimbursements**

On January 29, 2024, and May 8, 2024, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sent letters to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) regarding documentation and project submission guidance for the Presidentially declared 2023 California Flooding Events (FEMA-4683-DR-CA and FEMA-4699-DR-CA). On May 30th, the County requested an additional 90 days to submit all required documentation to FEMA. Subsequently I coordinated with Reps. Panetta and Lofgren, and on June 3, 2024, they wrote to FEMA in support of Monterey County's request for a 90-day extension regarding the documentation and project submission guidance deadline.

During the January and March 2023 storm events, Monterey County sustained over \$80 million in damages. The successive impacts of these storms have posed immense challenges. The magnitude of impact to the County cannot be overstated. Storm impacts spread across the entire geographical expanse of the County, resulting in widespread flooding, large scale evacuations, major road closures, destruction of residential and commercial property, massive economic impacts, and extensive infrastructure damages. Across both storm events, widespread infrastructure damages have strained local resources and necessitated the monumental task of rebuilding and restoring the County's infrastructure.

On October 18, 2024, County staff from the DEM, WRA, and PWWP departments, along with Annette D'Adamo, met with staff from Rep. Panetta's and Rep. Lofgren's offices to brief them on the status of all the FEMA reimbursements related to Pajaro flooding that are pending ineligibility review by FEMA. Rep. Panetta's and Rep. Lofgren's staff jointly reached out to FEMA to provide clarification that the projects in the table below are eligible and are not the responsibility of Army Corps.

On October 30, 2024, Reps. Panetta and Lofgren's staffs met with FEMA, and provided the following update. Critically, staff shared that FEMA clarified that all of the County's projects have not been lumped together and are all going under review for different reasons.

On October 31st, County staff met with CalOES and FEMA regarding some of the reimbursement issues and determinations that were previously communicated in the letter to FEMA dated October 14, 2024. County staff discussed the challenges the County has had with FEMA staff turnover, outstanding needed documentation, inconsistent policy evaluation, burdensome and duplicate Requests For Information (RFIs), and delays from the federal side that have impacted project eligibility.

County staff participated in a site visit at the levee on December 2, 2024, with CalOES, FEMA, and USACE to engage in a deep dive of the jurisdictional areas of responsibilities. I also communicated with Rep. Panetta's and Rep. Lofgren's office, and they remain engaged in this issue on the County's behalf.

According to the Department of Emergency Management, the County submitted over \$30 million in FEMA Public Assistance grants related to the COVID-19 emergency and wildfires of 2020, but as of December 2023 has been obligated just over \$3 million in reimbursements. Simultaneously, the County is working through the same process for reimbursement of nearly \$100 million in additional eligible damages related to the January and March 2023 Winter Storms. FEMA review of these applications takes considerable time, with the County waiting two or more years to recover costs for approved activities

I will continue to liaise between County staff and the County's Congressional delegation, and facilitate this partnership as all stakeholders work toward reimbursement from FEMA.

- **CRFREE**

The County has been awarded a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$29.6M for the CRFREE Project pending completion of environmental analysis. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Historic Property Treatment Plan (HPTP) between the U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers (USACE) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) had long been a sticking point to complete before the FEMA award could move forward.

I have been working with County staff, assisting with advocacy relating to FEMA's inability to complete their environmental review and award the grant and communicating that the delays could ultimately impact the state funds that have also been awarded and delay construction.

In coordination with many County officials, Ms. Beretti and I partnered with the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) to reach out to Rep. Panetta's office for assistance. On February 22, 2024, Rep. Panetta wrote to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) reiterating his support of the CRFREE project, and to request that both offices expedite completion of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and historic property treatment plan (HPTP) for the CRFREE project. Subsequently on February 28th, USACE sent a draft MOA to SHPO for consideration.

Since then, in regularly scheduled meetings, as well as through additional outreach, I closely coordinated with Reps. Panetta and Lofgren, as well as the Big Sur Land Trust and County staff on this issue. Our combined efforts succeeded to move this project forward. Moreover, the federal funding secured in FY2024 Community Project Funding was critical to closing a funding gap for this project.

- **Roads and Highways**

I have been working closely with County staff and Reps. Panetta and Lofgren on several infrastructure repair and improvement projects that may be eligible for federal funding. We discussed the Davis Road Widening and Bridge Replacement project at length during several Legislative Committee meetings. Additionally, I have engaged in several videoconferences with Rep. Panetta's office and the Director of Public Works, Facilities, and Parks to strategize how to better position the County's competitive grant applications with the Department of Transportation.

Additionally, Reps. Panetta and Lofgren continue to be great advocates for the County and its application with the Department of Defense for a competitive grant for the Jolon Road Safety Improvement Project. I coordinated with both offices and am pleased to share that Rep. Lofgren has engaged directly with DOD to ascertain how we may best position our application to increase the County's potential for a successful award. Reps. Lofgren and Panetta also provided a joint letter of support for the grant application.

Moreover, the Palo Colorado Road improvement project may be eligible for a federal grant under the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program. I have engaged in multiple videoconferences with the Director of Public Works, Facilities, and Parks, as well as DOT and Rep. Panetta's office. Both Sen. Padilla and Rep. Panetta provided letters of support in favor of the County's NSFLTP grant application

Lastly, the repaving of the Nacimiento-Fergusson Road continues to be a tricky situation with a disagreement over the relative responsibilities of the County and the federal government. Once again, I have represented the County's interests to Rep. Panetta, and he has been a zealous advocate and continues to work on our behalf to find federal options for the asphalt for the stretch of roadway.

- **Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)**

On January 4, 2025, President Biden signed the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (WRDA). Prior to its enactment, at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, I advocated to the federal Congressional delegation to include the Salinas River language found in the House version of the Water Resources Development (WRDA) Act, H.R. 8812, Sec. 201(a)(8) (found on page 154, beginning at line 9). The House bill calls for a “[p]roject for flood risk management and ecosystem restoration, Salinas River, California,” although this provision does not appear in the Senate companion bill, S. 4367. I am pleased to report that with the support of the County’s federal Congressional delegation, this language was ultimately included in the WRDA bill that became law.

The inclusion of this language is important to the County because the Salinas River is a highly modified ecosystem due to the construction and operation of two dams and reservoirs, built in the 1950s and 1960s. With proper channel maintenance, precipitation flows allowed for scouring of the river channel, leaving a clear channel for capacity flow, free of sandbars and excess vegetation. The channelization of the riverbed in the late 1940s and early 1950s brought levees to help control these precipitation flows away from farmland, municipalities, and public infrastructure.

With these modifications to the river flow system, an unintended consequence was realized when vegetation growth increased (and scouring decreased) after reservoir water releases became standard practice for groundwater recharge during the irrigation season (and then mandatory for ecological reasons). Because of this consequence, stakeholders began river channel maintenance to maintain capacity flow and vegetation control, primarily for flood control and mitigation.

The Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study called for in the House WRDA bill would primarily consider measures necessary to provide flood risk reduction along the river channel and determine if there is federal interest in undertaking a flood control project to protect farmland, infrastructure, and buildings.

- **Cannabis**

On April 30, 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) recommended that marijuana be reclassified as a controlled substance from Schedule I to Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), which is where some other controlled substances such as Tylenol with codeine are classified (compared to Schedule I which is where heroin is classified). The Office of Management of Budget approved the recommendation, and the proposal was published in the Federal Register to begin the formal rulemaking process. The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), a component of DOJ, solicited public comment on the proposed change.

As has been reported in the media, moving marijuana out of Schedule I could open more avenues for research; ease some of the more harshly punitive criminal consequences; potentially allow cannabis businesses to bank more freely and openly; and, perhaps most significantly for state-licensed operators, result in firms no longer being subjected to a 40-year-old tax code that disallows credits and deductions from income generated by sales of Schedule I and II

substances.¹ However, according to the Congressional Research Service, the manufacture, distribution and possession of recreational marijuana would remain illegal under federal law and possibly subject to enforcement and prosecution regardless of the state's legality.² Nonetheless, the proposed rescheduling would be a dramatic and important shift toward easing federal restrictions on marijuana if it is ultimately approved.

The County continues to advocate for the federal legalization and decriminalization of cannabis/marijuana use. On May 21, 2024, the proposal was published in the Federal Register. On June 11, 2024, the County submitted a Public Comment in a supportive response to the Federal Register publication.

Outlook for 2025

The 2024 elections brought unified government back to Capitol Hill under Republican control. Republicans will continue to control the House in the 119th Congress by even narrower margins than in the 118th, and will also take the majority in the Senate. That said, given the slim margins in both the House and Senate, Democrat votes will still play a vital role in passing legislation. I am hopeful that there may be a few areas of compromise between Republicans and Democrats on legislative initiatives both big and small.

Speaker Johnson was again elected by House Republicans to lead them in 2025, and Senator Thune was elected to be Senate Majority Leader. Both House Minority Leader Jeffries and Senate Minority Leader Schumer will retain their roles in the 119th Congress.

Significantly, President Trump defeated Vice President Harris, and will serve a second term in the White House.

Closer to home, Rep. Jimmy Panetta continues to serve on the Committees on Ways and Means. While official announcements are still pending, he is also expected to continue to serve on the Armed Services Committee and the Budget Committee; he is also expected to continue serving as the Chief Deputy Whip for House Democrats. Similarly, while an official announcement is still pending, Rep. Zoe Lofgren is expected to continue serving on the Committee on the Judiciary (including her appointment to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship); as well as Science, Space, and Technology, where she is Ranking Member. The House Science Committee has jurisdiction over much of the non-defense Federal research and development portfolio, including programs at DOE, EPA, NASA, and NOAA.

Given the challenges with the annual appropriations process in the 118th Congress and the new unified Republican government, it is unclear what direction House and Senate Republicans will take for Community Project Funding in the annual appropriations process in 2025. We hope that the County will continue to have the ability to request funding for local projects from our congressional delegation. Unfortunately, with unified Republican government, and the increased

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2024/04/30/economy/dea-marijuana-rescheduling/index.html>

² <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/LSB/LSB11105#:~:text=The%20planned%20change%20followed%20an,would%20not%20take%20effect%20immediately.>

scrutiny over “government efficiency,” the likelihood of robust Community Project Funding is rather diminished.

Both parties have a common desire to enact a new Farm Bill in 2025, a multiyear bill that reauthorizes a multitude of agricultural, food, nutrition, and conservation programs administered by USDA. In fact, the existing legislation expired in 2023, and Congress acted to extend it twice in the 118th Congress to allow sufficient time to work out the details of the reauthorization. This legislation will have a significant impact on the County’s agricultural industry, and Rep. Panetta is intimately familiar with the reauthorization process through his prior tenure on the House Agriculture Committee.

Additionally, as has been the subject of vigorous discussion within the Legislative Committee and throughout the Board of Supervisors, many within the County have expressed concern for potential executive policies that may be implemented under the Trump Administration. The Ballard Spahr team is committed to advocating on behalf of the County to ensure the federal Congressional delegation is working in partnership to preserve the County’s values. The Legislative Committee has provided clear direction that it will place priority in 2025 to preserve the values that Supervisors and residents alike believe define this community, including fundamental civil rights, reproductive freedom, protection of immigrants, and more. The Ballard Spahr team will closely monitor and provide counsel to the Board of Supervisors on any Congressional or executive action that is not in alignment with the County’s Legislative Platform and in accordance with the direction we have been given.

County of Monterey Federal Bill/Issues Track 2024 (118th Congress, Session 2)

Measure	Sponsor(s)	Topic	Title	Position	Notes
H.R. 2891 S. 1323	Joyce (OH) Merkley	Cannabis	SAFE Banking Act - establishes a safe harbor for financial institutions that provide services to cannabis businesses	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 953 S. 388	Sherrill Warren	Education	Child Care for Every Community Act	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 433	Panetta	Environment	California Central Coast Conservation Act- To establish a moratorium on oil and gas leasing on public land on the Central Coast of California	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 470 S. 22	Huffman/ Panetta Feinstein/ Padilla/ Butler	Environment	West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2023 - To amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently prohibit the conduct of offshore drilling on the outer Continental Shelf off the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington	Support	3/11/24 LC Support 3/11/24 Letters to congressional delegation

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Measure	Sponsor(s)	Topic	Title	Position	Notes
S. 24 H.R. 516	Feinstein/ Padilla/ Butler Lieu	Housing	Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act	Support	3/11/24 LC Support 3/11/24 Letters to congressional delegation
H.R. 1065 S. 448	Barragan Padilla	Infrastructure	Outdoors for All Act	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 715 S. 494	Fitzpatrick Murphy	Judiciary	Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2023	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 2403	Clyburn	Judiciary	Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2023	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation.
S. 188 H.R. 3439	Feinstein Panetta	Public Lands	Wildfire Emergency Act	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation. *5/17/23 - Panetta introduced H.R. 3439
H.R. 1083 S. 414	Hayes Tester	Veterans	Caring for Survivors Act	Support	5/15/23 LC Support 5/16/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 1097 S. 633	Panetta Padilla	Veterans	Everett Alvarez, Jr. Congressional Gold Medal Act	Support	3/13/23 Letters to Rep. Panetta & Sen. Padilla
H.R. 2400 S. 1165	Tonko Baldwin	Judiciary/ BOP	The Reentry Act	Support	9/11/23 LC Support 9/14/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 3074 S. 971	Trone Cassidy	Judiciary/ BOP	The Due Process Continuity of Care Act	Support	9/11/23 LC Support 9/14/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 1511 S. 2606	Lofgren/ Panetta Padilla/ Feinstein/ Butler	Immigration	Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929	Support	9/11/23 LC Support 9/14/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
S. 2202	Feinstein/ Padilla	Infrastructure	Restore Aging Infrastructure Now (RAIN) Act	Support	9/11/23 LC Support 9/14/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 4127 S. 2704	Panetta /Lofgren Padilla	Agriculture	Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act	Support	9/11/23 LC Support 9/14/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 3372	Johnson (SD)	Transportation	To amend title 23, U.S. Code, to establish a safety data collection program for certain 6-axle vehicles, and for other purposes	Oppose	9/11/23 LC Oppose 9/12/23 Signed coalition letter

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Measure	Sponsor(s)	Topic	Title	Position	Notes
S. Res. 400	Padilla/ Butler	Commemorative	A resolution honoring the life and legacy of Dianne Feinstein, the late Senator for the State of California	Support	12/11/23 LC Support 12/21/23 Letter sent to congressional delegation
S. 3565 H.R. 6929	Welch Clarke	Infrastructure/ Communication	Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act of 2024	Support	1/25/24 LC Support 1/29/24 Letter sent to congressional delegation
H.R. 6944	Schiff/ Lofgren	Financial Services	Incorporating National Support for Unprecedented Risks and Emergencies (INSURE) Act	Support	3/11/24 LC Support 3/11/24 Letters to Rep. Lofgren & Rep. Panetta
S. 3830	Padilla	Water	Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program	Support	2/1/24 Letter to Sen. Padilla
H.R. 4319	Lofgren/ Panetta	Agriculture	Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2023	Support	5/13/24 LC Support 5/14/24 Letter to Rep. Panetta & Rep. Lofgren
S.J. Res. 57	Schmitt		A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of the Treasury relating to "Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds"	Oppose	5/15/24 Letter to Sen. Padilla and Sen. Butler, and copy sent to NACo
H.R. 8340	Sherman/ Panetta	Veterans	Housing Unhoused Disabled Veterans Act	Support	6/10/24 LC Support 6/11/24 Letter to congressional delegation
S. 4226	Booker/ Padilla/ Butler	Cannabis	Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act	Support	6/10/24 LC Support 6/11/24 Letter to congressional delegation
H.R. 8575	Goldman	Medicaid/ Mental Health	Michelle Alyssa Go Act	Support	9/9/24 LC Support 9/10/24 Letter to congressional delegation
S. 4367 H.R. 8812	Carper Graves (MO)	Water	Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) – support for “Salinas River” provision in House version.	Support	11/15/24 LC Support 11/18/24 Letter to congressional delegation

OTHER ISSUES

<i>Other Issues</i>	<i>Brief Summary</i>	<i>Action Taken</i>
<p>Winter Storms – Federal Response</p>	<p>Since the levee breach on the Pajaro River on March 10, 2023, Pajaro has suffered devastating damages. The subsequent winter storms have compounded the impact on the area, and county officials and representatives have been working around the clock to secure assistance for county residents and businesses. From a federal perspective, Senator Padilla, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Panetta, and Congresswoman Lofgren have all been highly engaged with me and have rendered assistance in securing a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for nine California counties, including Monterey County. Gov. Gavin Newsom sent the request on March 28, 2023. President Biden signed the declaration on April 3, 2023, and it paved the way for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide federal aid to local governments and individuals impacted by storms in February and March.</p>	<p>Federal advocacy is currently focused on follow-on issues, such as reimbursement issues relating to relocating the force sewer main and Pajaro levee repairs.</p> <p>10/14/24 – Letter to FEMA</p> <p>10/18/24 – WRA, DEM, and PWF meeting with Reps. Panetta and Lofgren to provide update on pending denial and to request advocacy assistance.</p> <p>10/30/24 – Staff from Reps. Panetta and Lofgren met with FEMA on County’s behalf and provided a detailed update (see November federal report)</p> <p>10/31/24 – County staff met with CalOES and FEMA to further discuss reimbursement challenges.</p> <p>12/2/24 - County staff has scheduled a site visit at the levee at 2pm PT, with CalOES, FEMA, and USACE, and in coordination with Reps. Lofgren’s and Panetta’s offices.</p> <p>I will continue to coordinate outreach to the federal delegation regarding appropriate communication with USACE and FEMA and to facilitate reimbursement of expenses.</p>
<p>FEMA Denial of Non-Congregate Shelter</p>	<p>Following the Pajaro Levee breach in March, over 500 residents were sheltering at the Santa Cruz Fairgrounds shelter in Watsonville, along with other temporary housing options. Monterey County conducted assessments to review alternatives and determined that initiating NCS was in the best interest of the survivors and taxpayers. Prior to the initiation of non-congregate sheltering, the County had exhausted all local resources to continue congregate sheltering.</p> <p>FEMA provides Public Assistance funding to local government applicants for costs related to emergency sheltering of survivors. The County has received conflicting guidance regarding eligibility to reimbursement of expenses related to NCS pursuant to Public Assistance funding.</p>	<p>Close coordination with Rep. Lofgren’s office regarding conflicting guidance the County has received in relation to the FEMA non-congregate shelter (NCS) for displaced Pajaro residents. Rep. Lofgren’s office will continue to work with the county and advocate on our behalf with FEMA.</p> <p>5/23/24 Teleconference with Rep. Panetta’s office to discuss various FEMA reimbursement issues.</p> <p>Additional federal advocacy is anticipated in the near term</p>

Other Issues	Brief Summary	Action Taken
FY24 Community Project Funding Requests	<p>In March 2024 the County submitted the following funding requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Justice Center \$500,000 (submitted by Sen. Padilla & Rep. Lofgren) 2. Porter Vallejo Mansion (Pajaro Library) \$500,000 (submitted by Sen. Padilla) 3. Salinas Skate Park & BMX Pump Track \$500,000 – n/a 4. Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP) well rehabilitation/replacement \$3M (submitted by Sen. Padilla) 5. Fort Ord Blight Removal \$650,000 (submitted by Sen. Padilla) 6. Pajaro Park Artificial Turf Replacement \$1M – n/a 7. Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Sewer System Improvements \$1.5M (submitted by Sen. Padilla) 8. Carmel River FREE Project \$3M (submitted by Sen. Padilla & Rep. Panetta) 9. San Lucas Drinking Water \$2M (submitted by Sen. Feinstein, Sen. Padilla, and Rep. Lofgren) 	<p>March 2024 – Funding for four of the projects was included in the FY24 minibus appropriations bill signed into law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500,000 Family Justice Center (King City) \$1.5M Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Sewer System Improvements \$3M Carmel River FREE \$959,752 San Lucas Drinking Water
FY25 Community Project Funding Requests	<p>1/23/24 Board of Supervisors authorized submission of the following projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Broadway Family Connection 2. Carmel River FREE Project 3. Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP) 4. Family Justice Center – Seaside location 5. Fort Ord Blight Removal 6. Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Sewer System Improvements 7. San Lucas Drinking Water 8. Salinas Skate Park & BMX Pump Track 9. Salinas Regional Soccer Complex (this additional project was submitted at the request of the Salinas Regional Sports Authority on 5/6/24) 	<p>March 2024 – Eight projects submitted to Senate (Padilla and Butler)</p> <p>April/May 2024 – Nine projects submitted to House (Panetta and Lofgren)</p> <p>May/June 2024 – Eight of the County’s nine projects were requested for consideration by the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations</p> <p>July 2024 – PCSD included in House-passed Interior-Environment bill. No other projects are expected to continue to move forward in the appropriations process.</p>
2024 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)	<p>On behalf of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) advocate that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study in the future for Salinas River flood prevention.</p>	<p>1/16/24 Letter from Rep. Lofgren confirming her commitment to submit a Congressional request for authorization for such a feasibility study in the 2024 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).</p>

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Palo Colorado Road	Support Public Works, Facilities, and Parks to explore federal funding through the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program.	5/9/24 & 5/31/24 Met with Rep. Panetta's office to discuss this and other highway/road projects. 8/9/24 Met with Rep. Panetta's office to discuss details of grant application requirements including agency sponsor. Sen. Padilla provided a support letter for the County's grant application. Rep. Panetta's office is likely to do the same.
Grant application for the Jolon Road Safety Improvement Project	On behalf of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) obtain letters of support for their Department of Defense, Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) grant application for the Jolon Road Safety Improvement Project.	5/8/24 Requested letters of support from Rep. Lofgren and Rep. Panetta. 5/9/24 & 5/31/24 Met with Rep. Panetta's office to discuss this and other highway/road projects. 6/17/24 Support letter from Reps. Panetta and Lofgren
Grant application for Davis Road Bridge Replacement and Road Widening Project	On behalf of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) obtain letters of support for their U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant application for the Davis Road Bridge Replacement and Road Widening Project.	1/29/24 Support letter from Rep. Panetta 2/23/24 Support letter from Rep. Lofgren 3/8/24 Support letter from Sen. Padilla
Grant application for Davis Road Bridge Replacement and Road Widening Project	On behalf of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) obtain letters of support for their Department of Transportation's (DOT) Rural Surface Transportation Grant program (Rural) for the Davis Road Bridge Replacement and Road Widening Project.	4/23/24 Support letter from Rep. Panetta
Grant application for Nacimiento Dam Spillway Plunge Pool Erosion Project	On behalf of Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) obtain support for the Department of Energy (DOE) grant application for the Nacimiento Dam Spillway Plunge Pool Erosion Project.	2/27/24 Reached out to Sen. Padilla's office regarding support the application and continued regular communication. Support obtained from Sen Padilla's office with letter pending.
Grant for Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement (CRFREE) Project	The County has been awarded a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$29.6M for the CRFREE Project pending completion of environmental analysis. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Historic Property Treatment Plan (HPTP) between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) must be complete before the FEMA award can move forward. Delays jeopardize the project timeline and other funding sources for the project.	Dec. 2023 to present: Coordinate with County Housing & Community Development (HCD), District 5, Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) and Congressman Panetta's office. 2/22/24 Letter from Rep. Panetta to USACE and SHPO urging expeditious completion of MOA and HPTP so FEMA can release grant award and project work can commence.

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Other Issues	Brief Summary	Action Taken
Veterans Facilities in Monterey County	The County is exploring options for a veterans nursing home, to include options for establishing a State Veterans Home or VA Community Living Center (CLC).	<p>4/16/24 & 4/19/24 Outreach to Rep. Panetta's office regarding options to establish a veterans nursing home, and questions relating to veterans' community living centers (CLC).</p> <p>4/29/24 to present: Engagement with VA to request additional information on State Veterans Home and CLC criteria and request a meeting with VA. Continued requests for meeting, with Rep. Panetta's support. VA has not yet provided a meeting date (most recent follow-up was 8/6/24)</p>
Rescheduling Marijuana from Schedule I to III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA)	The Department of Justice (DOJ) proposes to transfer marijuana from schedule I to schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), consistent with direction by the Biden Administration and recommendations by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). On 5/21/24, the proposed rule was published in the Federal Register. Comments on this proposal must be submitted by 7/22/24.	<p>6/10/24 Report to Legislative Committee</p> <p>6/11/24 Public Comment submitted in response to the Federal Register publication</p>