



TO: Monterey County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Ashley S. Walker, Senior Policy Advisor

RE: Legislative Program: 2025 Annual Report

DATE: January 26, 2026

I. Introduction

Nossaman LLP is honored to represent the County of Monterey before the State Legislature, and advocate on priority issues outlined in the County's Legislative Program. We look forward to continuing our success and work together, in partnership with the County, as we enter into what is sure to be another interesting and demanding legislative year.

II. Summary of Legislative Advocacy Actions in 2025

Nossaman collaborated with the County on the following legislative advocacy actions:

- **Monterey County's 2025 Legislative Advocacy Fast Facts:**
 - Reviewed 2,250 bills for potential impacts to the County.
 - Drafted 85 position letters and/or memos on proposed legislation; over double the letters from 2024.
 - Supported 25 bills.
 - Opposed 8 bills.
 - Advocated on 12 state budget proposals and/or other policy issues outside of specific legislation.
- **State Budget Funding Request:** Nossaman worked with the County to ensure our Legislative Delegation was aware of our local funding needs. submittal of budget proposals for the 14th Senate District. The Board of Supervisors agreed to prioritize a clean drinking water project for the community of San Lucas, should there be an opportunity for State Budget funding. The final enacted budget included \$4 million for a clean drinking water solution for the community.
- **Other State Budget and Policy Issues:** Nossaman kept the County updated on all relevant state budget proposals throughout the year, including the Governor's January proposal, the May Revise, and the Legislature's negotiation with the Governor and Administration on the final enacted budget. We worked with the County on the following state budget proposals or other policy issues, outside of advocating on specific legislation.

Subject	Description	Action
MISCELLANEOUS		
San Lucas February 2025 Engineering Report	Comment letter from Board of Supervisors supporting Alternative 4 – Wellhead Treatment with New Well Drilling,	3/20/25 letter to the Division of Drinking Water

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	specifically with Sub-Alternative B – Physical and/or Managerial Consolidation with Cal Water.	
CPUC: Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Facilities Safety	Letter to CPUC to raise concerns about the safety and regulatory oversight of battery energy storage system (BESS) facilities in California.	5/7/25 letter to CPUC and cc'd to County State and Federal delegation.
AB 1439 Implementation Letter to CTCAC	Letter to CTCAC expressing support for the timely and effective implementation of AB 1439.	8/15/25 letter to CTCAC State Treasurer Fiona Ma and cc'd to County state delegation.
STATE BUDGET		
Budget Funding to Defend California Values.	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors letter supporting funding for any and all efforts to allocate state budget funding toward legal fees necessary to defend California against any threat from the incoming Trump Administration on immigration, abortion access, civil rights, and climate change.	12/5/24 letter to Governor Newsom, Senator Laird, Assembly Speaker Rivas Assemblymember Addis, Senator Scott Weiner, Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, Senate Budget Committee, Assembly Budget Committee.
Budget Funding SB 72 (Caballero) California Water Plan Budget Request	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors letter supporting the Budget allocation of \$6.8 million in ongoing funds for 5 years, and \$3.4 million ongoing for the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to update and modernize the California Water Plan and develop long-term targets for the state's future water supply, in support of SB 72.	2/10/25 letter to Senators Weiner and Allen and Assemblymembers Gabriel and Bennett along with County delegation, CSAC and RCRC.
Budget CDPH: Future of Public Health & myCAvax	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors letter supporting the California State Association of Counties' (CSAC) request that the Legislature provide \$44 million ongoing in the General Fund for the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) California Vaccine Management System, also known as myCAvax.	3/12/25 letter to Senator Weber and Assemblymember Addis.
Budget CalWORKS	Letter from CAO of County of Monterey requesting support for a one-time investment of \$245 million for county administration of the CalWORKS program to address critical and persistent underfunding of the program.	4/7/25 letter sent to members of Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees on Health, with copies to County delegation, RCRC, CSAC, CWDA.
Budget	Letter from CAO of County of Monterey requesting that the budget methodology for county administration of the In-Home	4/7/25 letter sent to members of Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees on Health, with

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In-Home Support Services (IHSS)	Support Services (IHSS) program be updated at the May Revision to address longstanding underfunding.	copies to County delegation, RCRC, CSAC, CWDA.
Budget Support of 211 Services in the 2025-26 Budget	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors' letter supporting \$20 million in one-time State General Funds to strengthen critical 211 services and access to essential resources for Californians in need.	5/13/25 letter to Governor Newsom, Senator Wiener, Senator Weber Pierson, Assemblymember Jackson, Assemblymember Gabriel, CSAC and RCRC.
Budget 2025-26 Budget Priorities	Letter to Governor detailing County of Monterey's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–26 budget priorities, and in response to the May Revision and the projected effects on programs and services, warrant the following appropriations and inclusion in the 2025 Budget Act	6/4/25 letter to Governor Newsom.
Budget CalFresh Budget Investments Needed to Mitigate Dire Impacts from H.R. 1	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors letter urging immediate action in response to the damaging federal changes enacted under House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1) to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also known as CalFresh in California).	8/29/25 letter to Assembly and Senate Budget Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.
Budget	County of Monterey Board of Supervisors letter urging support on SB 144 a new Budget Bill re California Vaccine Recommendations.	8/10/25 letter to Governor, Senator Wiener and Speaker Rober Rivas.

- **Positions on Legislation:** The County took 33 positions on bills in 2025. Nossaman worked with the County to draft position letters and memos based on feedback from county departments, worked with statewide organizations in coalitions where relevant, coordinated meetings with Members and staff to relay our positions, and testified in all policy and fiscal committee hearing as bills we had position on were being heard.
- **Other Advocacy Efforts:**
 - **Immigration Rights Ad Hoc Committee:** With Supervisors Alejo and Lopez' leadership, the Immigration Rights Ad Hoc Committee continued the County of Monterey's longstanding priority to protecting immigration rights. Nossaman continued to monitor legislation and policy that support the County's efforts.
 - **Special Session:** In response to the Los Angeles County wildfires, the Governor swiftly opened his special session focused on "Protecting California Values from the Trump Administration," to include wildfire recovery. The Legislature passed, and the Governor signed a \$2.5 billion package for wildfire recovery in January 2025. The Legislature also passed two budget bills in the Special Session related to defending California values, that the County supported and the

Governor signed, that funded litigation expenses for the California Department of Justice against the Trump Administration.

- **Proposition 4 Hearings and Advocacy:** The County supported Proposition 4, the Climate Bond, and were engaged and monitored all related legislative hearings about the rollout of those funds. We reported back all relevant information to the County and suggested and implemented advocacy strategies to support funding being allocated as quickly as possible.
- **May Revise Letter:** Once the May revision was released, Nossaman worked with the County to submit a letter to the Governor detailing our budget priorities, including:
 - Request for funding allocations for Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) programs;
 - Request for dedicated funding for Proposition 36;
 - Support for the May Revise' myCAvax allocations;
 - Providing In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) - Administrative Rebase Funding;
 - Funding request for 2-1-1 Services; and
 - Funding request for Medi-Cal, SNAP, CalWORKs, and other vital social welfare programs.
- **California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Letter – Victims of Crime Act (VOCA):** With ongoing instability in federal funding, the future of services funded by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) remains uncertain. CSAC has asked the County of Monterey to sign onto a coalition letter to the governor and key State Legislators requesting \$97 million in one-time funding to bridge the gap in federal funding for victim services and prevent the catastrophic impact that decreased federal funding will have on survivors of crime.
- **Dam Safety Coalition Update:** Nossaman continued to participate as an active member of this coalition on behalf of the County. The County and WRA signed on to urge the Administration and Legislature to allocate dam safety funding in Proposition 4, in the 2025-26 fiscal year.
- **Engagement with County Board of Supervisors and Staff:** Nossaman 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 in varies Departments to provide updates on state legislation and our advocacy efforts.
- **Engagement with CSAC and RCRC:** Nossaman attended weekly legislative meetings with CSAC and other county advocates. In these meetings, we discussed the most important issues facing counties and coordinate strategy for supporting, opposing or amending legislation or budget proposals. Nossaman also kept in communication with RCRC staff regarding their legislative priorities on rural county related issues.
- **Engagement with Legislative Delegation and Staff:** Nossaman met with the County's legislative delegation and/or staff regularly to discuss legislative proposals and positions, budget requests and 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.

III. Looking Ahead in 2026

While the Legislature and Administration accomplished some significant policy and fiscal goals in 2025, Sacramento will be as busy as ever in the coming year with several anticipated hot policy topics. The 2026 legislative session reconvened on January 5, 2026.

As California enters 2026, state leaders are expected to confront a challenging policy agenda impacted by fiscal constraints, climate imperatives, and persistent affordability pressures. With the Governor and Legislature navigating a post-surplus budget environment, debates will center on how to sustain critical public investments while addressing slowing revenues, rising program costs, and growing demands on state and local governments. Counties will continue to play a central role in implementing state priorities, particularly in health and human services, housing, transportation, and climate resilience.

Fiscal policy will be a dominant theme in 2026. Members are likely to revisit long-term budget sustainability, including the structure of ongoing programs funded during prior surplus years, the balance between one-time and ongoing expenditures, and the growing cost pressures associated with Medi-Cal, homelessness programs, and behavioral health reforms. Pension obligations, infrastructure backlogs, and the impact of economic volatility on state revenues will further shape negotiations between the Governor and Legislature.

Housing and homelessness remain at the forefront of the state's policy agenda. In 2026, the Legislature is expected to continue debating strategies to accelerate housing production, refine accountability frameworks for local governments, and expand behavioral health and supportive housing models. Counties will be closely involved as the state evaluates the effectiveness of recent housing laws, homelessness funding programs, and the implementation of major reforms such as CARE Court and Proposition 1-related investments in behavioral health infrastructure.

Climate, energy, and transportation policy will also be hot topics. The state is expected to advance discussions around meeting aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets, strengthening climate adaptation and wildfire resilience, and modernizing transportation systems. This includes continued debate over funding for transit, roads, and zero-emission vehicle infrastructure, as well as the implications of state climate mandates for rural, coastal, and agricultural communities.