



# *2018 Legislative Platform*

*County of Riverside*

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chuck Washington, Chairman  
Third District

Kevin Jeffries  
First District

John Tavaglione  
Second District

V. Manuel Perez  
Fourth District

George A. Johnson  
County Executive Officer

Marion Ashley  
Fifth District

# Riverside County Board of Supervisors

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**Kevin Jeffries**  
**First District**

**District1@rcbos.org**  
**(951) 955-1010**

*Represents the cities of Wildomar, Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, and most of the city of Riverside.*

*Unincorporated communities include DeLuz, Gavilan Hills, Good Hope, Lake Hills, Lake Mathews, LaCresta, Mead Valley, Meadowbrook, Spring Hills, Temescal Valley, Tenaja, Warm Springs, and Woodcrest.*

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**John F. Tavaglione**  
**Second District**

**District2@rcbos.org**  
**(951) 955-1020**

*Represents the cities of Corona, Norco, Jurupa Valley, and Eastvale. It also includes approximately 1/3 of the City of Riverside, including the following city of Riverside neighborhoods: Northside, Downtown, Wood Streets, Magnolia Center, Grand, and the northern half of Arlanza and La Sierra Acres.*

*Unincorporated communities include Home Gardens, El Cerrito, Coronita, and Highgrove*

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**Board Chair**  
**Chuck Washington**  
**Third District**

**District3@rcbos.org**  
**(951) 955-1030**

*Represents constituents from Idyllwild to Anza Borrego Desert State Park, and from Temecula to San Jacinto. Representation includes the cities of Hemet, Murrieta, San Jacinto, and Temecula, and the communities of Aguanga, Anza Valley, Cahuilla, East Hemet, Gilman Hot Springs, Homeland, Idyllwild, Lake Riverside, Mountain Center, Murrieta Hot Springs, Pine Cove, Pine Meadow, the Pinyon Communities, Poppet Flats, Rancho California, Soboba Hot Springs, Valle Vista, and Winchester.*

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**V. Manuel Perez**  
**Fourth District**

**District4@rcbos.org**  
**(760) 863-8211**

*Represents the cities of Blythe, Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage.*

*Unincorporated communities include Bermuda Dunes, Chiriaco Summit, Colorado River communities, Desert Center, Desert Edge, Eagle Mountain, Indio Hills, Lake Tamarisk, Mecca, Mesa Verde, North Shore, Oasis, Ripley, Sky Valley, Sun City. Palm Desert, Thermal, Thousand Palms, and Vista Santa Rosa.*

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**Marion Ashley**  
**Fifth District**

**District5@rcbos.org**  
**(951) 955-1050**

*Represents the cities of Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Menifee, Perris, and Moreno Valley, March Air Reserve Base and the easterly portion of the March Joint Powers Authority. The district also encompasses tribal lands of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians.*

*Unincorporated areas include the Banning Bench, Cabazon, Cherry Valley, Desert Hot Springs, El Nido, Juniper Flats, Lakeview, Mission Lakes, Nuevo, Romoland, North Palm Springs, Painted Hills, Quail Lake, Reche Canyon, San Timoteo, Snow Creek, Twin Pines, West Garnet, Windy Point, and Whitewater*

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## *Executive Summary*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Office prepared this document in accordance with Board Policy A-27 and with the assistance of Board members and departments. The county continues to support efforts from previous platforms for a four-year period absent any new Board direction. 2018 marks the end of the current four-year term.

## PUBLIC POLICY FISCAL THREATS TO RIVERSIDE COUNTY

### 1991 RE-ALIGNMENT

In the 1970s, two significant public policy decisions forced the state to realign revenues and services with the fiscal effects to be fully realized decades later. A decision by the State Supreme Court (the Serrano v. Priest ruling stated that school districts must be evenly funded throughout the state) ensured property taxes would no longer be the major provider for school district revenue. The state equalized funding through general revenue appropriations. The passage of Proposition 13 capped property tax at 1% of assessed value thereby limiting the amount of property tax local governments received. Those actions caused the state government to send more revenue to local governments. This led to the passage of AB 8, legislation that created funding formulas for specific programs.

In 1991, the state was experiencing continued budget deficits. As a solution, the Governor and Legislature agreed to devolve certain public health and social services to counties coupled with dedicated revenues. The Legislature and administration decided upon a funding formula for the realigned programs, which set a base formula sufficient for the current need but never adjusted for significant growth (using AB 8 formulas as the guideline). Therefore, counties with high population growth, Riverside County being number 1 in growth, saw their funding diluted and reduced every year. This trend has caused an annual loss of approximately \$60 million to Riverside County (as compared to the other counties) in behavior health alone.

Further exacerbating the 1991 deficiency, the Governor proposed in his 2017 budget to realign the realignment of the In Home Support Services program (IHSS). The original proposal would have caused an approximately \$40 million yearly loss to Riverside County. Although there is a two-year reprieve, the loss could be even greater after the stay expires.

**Recommendation:** Riverside County has one lever to pull in order to change the 1991 funding formula: a lawsuit. The enacting legislation contained a poison pill provision whereby a county may claim that funding is insufficient to provide adequate services. That claim could cause an unwinding of the entire statewide realignment formula.

## CalPERS

The management board for the state pension system was created in 1932. Until 2000, the pension fund was basically fully funded. Since then, the fund has accrued over a hundred billion dollars in liabilities. Each year the fund sinks further in the hole requiring a bailout from the state budget and local governments. An example of CalPERS investment decisions, they sold at the low point of the Market (2008 to 2010) and the fund lost billions of dollars as the market recovered and grew. In the last 10 years CalPERS has averaged a 4.4% return while the stock market (measured by the S&P 500) has gone up over 100%. Because of this poor investment performance, Riverside County faces an unfunded liability soon to reach \$3 billion. The continuously increasing general fund payment to CalPERS is harming county vital services.

**Recommendation:** Require investment decisions be performed by professional investment firms with a sole purpose of maximizing returns. Currently many investment decisions are made with a strategy that emphasizes social or environmental goals at the expense of financial returns. This strategy has caused the fund significant financial harm in terms of potential missed earnings.

## AB 1250

This legislation would create significant obstacles for counties to outsource services such as engineering, planning, hospital staff (nurses and psychiatrists), and landscaping and maintenance operations. The obstacles in AB 1250 would ensure no outsourcing occurs. As previously stated, the pension obligations are already threatening funding for core services. Eliminating the ability to outsource will only increase the problem by forcing the county to carry employees who would otherwise be employed by the private sector.

**Recommendation:** Oppose any legislation that would ban the county from contracting out their local services.

## PROP 64 TAX RATES

On November 8, 2016, California voters approved Proposition 64, Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act. Beginning January 1, 2018, three taxes will apply to cannabis businesses:

1. A **15 percent** excise tax imposed upon purchasers of cannabis and cannabis products.
2. A cultivation tax imposed upon cannabis cultivators on all harvested cannabis that enters the commercial market. The rate of the cultivation tax: **\$9.25** per

- dry-weight ounce of cannabis flowers that enter the commercial market, and
3. **\$2.75** per dry-weight ounce of cannabis leaves that enter the commercial market.

❖ **Cumulative Tax Rate= 25%**

Cumulatively, these taxes bring the existing baseline to 25%, before any local taxes are applied. After local jurisdictions apply their taxes, the overall tax rate for cannabis is averaging around 30%-50%. Higher tax rates will push some businesses into the black market and will generate less revenue for the state and local jurisdictions.

Colorado, Washington, and Oregon, along with consideration from Alaska, have all taken steps to reduce their marijuana tax rates, after initial rates of 30 percent or more did not reduce the black market sufficiently. More recent ballot initiative proposals across the country propose rates between 10 and 25 percent. There is a growing body of research highlighting that consumers in the legalized cannabis market are strongly price sensitive.

Optimally, revenue from any local tax will prioritize the regulation of legal operations and ensure the closure of the illegal operations.

**Recommendation:** The State Legislature significantly lower the cumulative tax rate. A 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote from the legislature will be required to amend the tax rates in Proposition 64.

## COST RECOVERY FOR ABATEMENT OF MUNICIPAL CODE VIOLATIONS

Existing law permits the County to make any violation of County ordinance a nuisance, to establish a procedure to abate the nuisance, including collection of abatement costs, attorneys' fees, and related administrative costs, and to allow such costs and fees to be specially assessed against the property. Existing law also authorizes the County to make any violation of a County ordinance subject to an administrative fine, penalty or citation. However, such administrative fines, penalties and citations cannot be specially assessed against the property. The County works cooperatively between departments to resolve Code Enforcement violations through the nuisance abatement process. Unfortunately, property clean-ups and cannabis enforcement violations can be difficult to resolve due to repeat violations at the same property. With the legalization of cannabis businesses and cannabis activities at the state level, this problem will become more acute due to public misperception that all cannabis businesses are legal under state law without regard to local law. The current ability to recover only

abatement costs is not an adequate deterrent to those that violate County ordinances. There is a need to push for legislative changes that allow the County to place Code Enforcement administrative fines and penalties as special assessments against the property, including recordation of abatement liens for such fines and penalties.

**Recommendation:** Support and sponsor legislation that allows the County, after notice and opportunity for hearing, to specially assess and record an abatement lien for any Code Enforcement administrative fines, penalties, and citations related to ordinance violations constituting a public nuisance on the property.

## EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR COUNTY CHILD SUPPORT DEPARTMENTS

Thirteen Counties are currently receiving under parity funding for Child Support Services. There is a need to adequately fund all 58 county Child Support Services due to the long-term welfare of the children and families we serve.

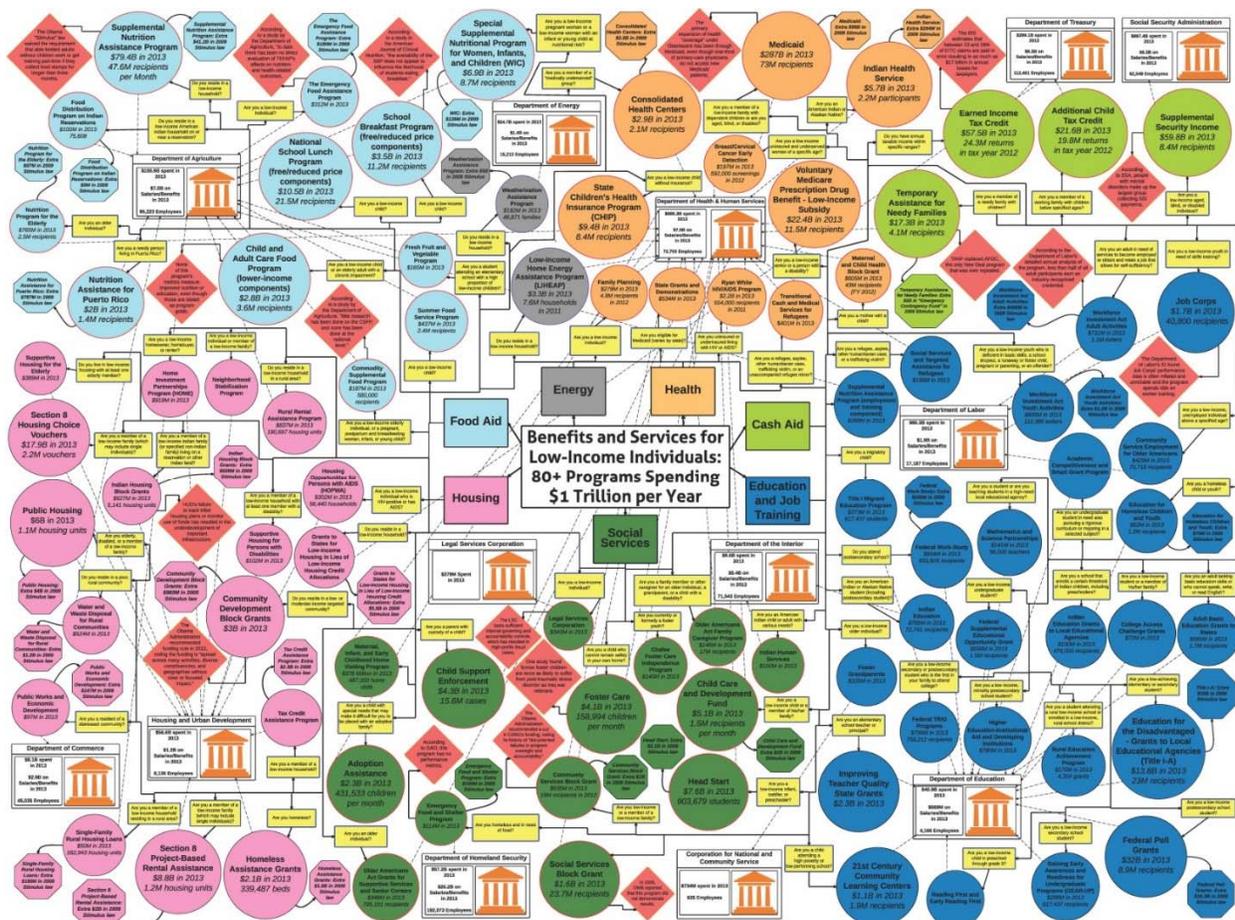
**Recommendation:** Request that the State provide an increase to the State Department of Child Support in order to then increase funding to the Riverside County Department Child Support which has historically received under parity funding allocations when compared to our peer counties.

## ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS PLATFORMS - HIGHLIGHTS

**The Board of Supervisors continues to support and advocate for:**

- ❖ **Equity in Cap and Trade program funds.** AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, set forth a regulatory structure referred to as Cap & Trade. This program is producing close to \$1 billion annually. The Affordable Housing and Sustainability Community (AHSC) grant is one of five pools of money distributed from Cap & Trade. In 2015, The Southern California region received 18% of allocated funds from the program even though the region has 60% of the state population and 67% of the disadvantaged communities in the state.
- ❖ **Pilot Programs - Innovation Grants for Government Efficiency**

This diagram represents the flow of money from the federal government for social services and general welfare programs. The Board advocates for a simplified approach.



Source: House Ways and Means Committee staff, using Congressional Research Service reports and other data.

In 2015, the Board hired KPMG, an accounting and management consulting firm, to conduct forensic audits and reviews of county operations. The results of the first stage of the review identified a potential annual savings of over tens of millions of dollars by implementing a number of programmatic efficiencies and eliminating duplicative or obsolete practices.

The identified savings came from county departments that have budgets using almost exclusively county only funds (net county costs). Further stages of audits and reviews will involve departments that have budgets consisting of a majority of funds from state/federal programs. Riverside County strives to operate as cost effectively and efficiently as possible across all department programs to ensure optimal, customer focused service delivery.

In June 2016, Congress put forth a series of legislative and policy proposals with a goal of finding inefficiencies in government programs. The document identified over 80 separate programs devoted to benefits and services for low income individuals, with over \$1 trillion a year in spending. Specifically, the proposals call for more evidence based evaluations of programs. It also suggests a "tiered

funding approach” in which programs are rigorously evaluated and either discarded or provided with continued funding based on meeting objectives and goals.

**The Board advocates for a pilot program whereby federal and state funding guidelines are created to encourage costs savings through a tiered funding approach as well as the use of other models that bring forth best practices and efficiencies.** The Board proposes that the pilot program incentivize counties and local governments to reinvest any cost savings to further enhance local programs. The Board further request that any pilot program be allowed the maximum possible flexibility in design and implementation. A pilot program with strict federal and state guidelines might not have the insight of local administrative expertise and therefore have a limited use.

## STREAMLINE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

It is government’s job to ensure that infrastructure is operating at peak efficiency. The approval process for infrastructure projects has turned into a decade’s long overly complicated and litigious process that has left our countries infrastructure in a state of inefficiency and disarray.

An analysis on the impacts and solutions to our current system by Common Good, a nonpartisan reform organization, shows that a six-year delay on public projects costs the nation over \$3.7 trillion. This figure, which includes the costs of prolonged inefficiencies and unnecessary pollution, is more than double the \$1.7 trillion needed to modernize America’s infrastructure.

- ❖ **The Board supports legislation to begin the consolidation of decisions within a simplified framework with deadlines, clear lines of authority, and an overarching agency with a purpose to balance the needs created by the cross jurisdictional demands of multiple parties.**

## REFORM CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

Riverside County created the first and largest in the nation Habitat Conservation Plan in an effort to balance environmental policy with the need for improved infrastructure. The plan was created with input from environmental and conservation groups to ensure development occurred and that the environment was protected.

Unfortunately, the need to improve the underlying excessive regulations contained in CEQA has not diminished. A variety of bi-partisan reform proposals have been suggested in the state legislature, but no wholesale change has been

enacted. Instead, there has been a number of single project CEQA exemptions passed into law. For example, when the National Basketball Association's Sacramento Kings franchise threatened to leave for Seattle, California enacted a law to facilitate stadium development in Sacramento that contained an important limitation on the CEQA process.

Thus, like the law enacted to facilitate stadium development in Sacramento, the Board:

- ❖ **Supports legislation that will make it so that all litigation under CEQA can be entirely resolved, including appeals, within 270 days of its filing, and further compel the state's judicial council to enact rules to guarantee this timeline.**

## JUDGESHIPS

- ❖ Support legislation to fund additional Superior Court and Appellate Court Justiceships.
- ❖ Support Federal Legislation to create ten permanent and two temporary judgeships for the Central District of California. *(Referenced by subcommittee on Judicial resources of the Judicial Conference of the United States)*

## SALTON SEA

- ❖ The Board supports the implementation of the Governor's Salton Sea task force plan and encourages continued action without further consternation or formal studies. Riverside County also advocates for an appropriate share of Proposition 1A bond money for the Sea.



*Agricultural Commissioner/ Sealer  
of Weights & Measures*

## AGRICULTURE FUNDING

**Issue:** Reductions in funding and services, or increased costs to agricultural businesses, can cause harm to the local economy.

**Action:**

- ❖ Support efforts to prevent the introduction and potential spread of invasive pests and diseases harmful to agriculture, including strengthening inspections at borders.
- ❖ Support an Irrigated Lands Program that will not increase costs to the growers and will provide reasonable, regulatory oversight in agricultural practices that may affect water quality of the state.
- ❖ Support proposals that maintain or increase funding for pesticide regulatory activities to protect the safety of workers, the public, and the environment, including funding for education, outreach, and compliance assessment activities related to the safe use of pesticides.
- ❖ Support incentives to encourage counties to preserve farmland and open space.
- ❖ Support Williamson Act subventions to encourage farmland preservation.

**Background:** The Agricultural Commissioner protects the environment, public health, and Riverside County's \$1.3 Billion Agricultural industry. Any reductions in funding will harm the mission of promoting and protecting the agricultural industry of the county and its environment, ensuring the health and safety of the county's citizens, and fostering confidence and equity in the marketplace.

## SB 1 BEALL (TRANSPORTATION FUNDING)

**Issue:** Transportation Funding

**Action:**

- ❖ Support the Director of Transportation and the Secretary of Food and Agriculture to amend the report to the Legislature setting forth the current estimate of the amount of money in the Motor Vehicle Fuel Account attributable to agricultural off-highway use of motor vehicle fuel for calendar year 2018.
- ❖ Support the use of agricultural off-highway use of motor vehicle fuel funds at the local level for agriculture code programs under the direction of the Secretary of Food and Agriculture.

**Background:** SB1 created the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program to address deferred maintenance on the state highway system and the local street

and road system. The law provides for the deposit of various funds for the program in the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation account, which is created in the State Transportation Fund, including revenues attributable to a \$0.12 per gallon increase in the motor vehicle fuel (gasoline) tax and a \$0.20 per gallon increase in the diesel excise tax. The Law provided that the fuel excise tax increases take effect on November 1, 2017.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Issue:** Consumer Protection

**Action:** Continue to support legislation that maintains consumer protections related to functions of the Sealer of Weights and Measures.

**Background:** State law currently provides consumer protection for items sold based on count, measure and weight, and for the accuracy of price scanning and quantity in packaged goods.



## *Behavioral Health*

## AB 1299 IMPLEMENTATION EQUITY (STATE)

**Issue:** Funding for healthcare and behavioral health services for foster youth whose case is transferred to another county is retained by the originating county and is not transferred to the county currently providing care

**Action:** Establish and enforce requirement that the funding for care and services be transferred to the County providing care to foster youth regardless of where the case is originated

**Background:** A trend toward increased out-migration of foster care placements to nearby counties has resulted in a mal-distribution of funding between the County receiving funding and the County actually providing services

## AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

**Issue:** Existing ACA approved health plans must provide parity coverage for mental health/behavioral health and substance abuse disorder treatment and services as part of Essential Health Benefit categories

**Action:** Support any legislative or administrative action to maintain and continue requirement to provide parity coverage for mental health/behavioral health and substance abuse disorder treatment and services.

**Background:** Any discontinuation of the requirement and elimination of coverage has the potential to send health care consumers currently in care to publicly funded system of care and to create barriers to access for those who are not covered but need care and treatment.

## REGULATION OF CANNABIS (LABELING OF POTENCY AND CHEMICAL CONTENT)

**Issue:** Varying potency levels and the presence of additional chemical content in cannabis have the ability to induce and exacerbate mental health conditions and create drug interactions.

**Action:** Support legislation that requires labeling of cannabis using consumer-friendly language to clearly disclose the potency level, presence of additional chemical content and risk to user.

**Background:** Retail distribution of recreational cannabis beginning on 1/1/18 creates expanded risk of usage by consumers who are unaware of dangers

resulting from varying potency levels, the presence of additional chemical content and the associated mental health concerns. Youth and young adults are at elevated risk. Proposed legislation AB 175 (referred to Assembly Suspense file on 8/21/17) addresses packaging and labeling of edible cannabis and can be expanded for this purpose.



*Economic Development Agency*

## MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE REGIONAL GROUNDWATER ISSUES

**Issue:** The area around March Air Reserve Base (MARB) is experiencing a combination of rising groundwater levels and water quality degradation that together cause considerable concern for the entire region, and have some potential to threaten MARB's long term viability if they go unaddressed. There are a number of entities working toward solutions, with Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) taking the lead on the rising groundwater mitigation effort and the associated off-base water quality issues. Other entities will be involved as well, including MARB Civil Engineering staff, the County, Western Municipal Water District (WMWD), and the March Joint Powers Authority (March JPA); collectively these entities are referred to as the concerned parties.

Groundwater in the region is impacted by a number of constituents of concern. There are a number of contaminants that contribute to the diminished water quality, including nitrates, perchlorate, perfluorinated compounds, perchloroethylene, and other substances. The water quality challenges are a result of a variety of past uses, including the region's historic agricultural economy and certain uses and disposal practices at MARB. Water quality problems can generally be mitigated with the right combination of treatment and blending options.

Over time, the aforementioned degraded water quality and decline in agricultural usage have resulted in reduced groundwater pumping, which has led in turn to rising groundwater levels. In some locations groundwater levels are within three feet of ground surface, which can create several problems such as increased construction costs for improvement projects and potential liquefaction exposure. The rising groundwater condition is expected to worsen in the absence of some form of physical response. Rising groundwater can be mitigated by increased pumping, provided that the water is then put to some sort of beneficial use.

EMWD recently initiated a feasibility analysis intended to provide options for pumping and treating groundwater in the region, with the goal of reducing groundwater levels and making use of the abundant, rising groundwater. EMWD's preliminary analysis included groundwater modeling, water quality characterization, potential infrastructure needs, and a cost analysis. EMWD is proposing to embark on a second phase of analysis and planning (the MARB Program Refinement Phase) that would result in the completion of a Preliminary Design Report and associated geotechnical work; in turn, it is intended that these studies would lead to the design and construction of permanent facilities that would address the groundwater quantity and quality concerns described above.

**Action:** Advocate for the creation of a Federal, State, and Local partnership to fund efforts to resolve both the rising groundwater condition and water quality concerns that are affecting the region, commencing with EMWD's MARB Program Refinement Phase; this effort is expected to cost around \$3 million. Program refinement will ascertain the next steps of a groundwater recovery program that would safely and efficiently reduce regional groundwater levels. Preliminary investigations show EMWD's efforts could result in a reduction in groundwater levels of up to 30 feet in some areas within the first ten years. Based on the complexity and expense of the problem being confronted by the concerned parties, forming a multi-jurisdictional funding plan is critical to arranging for the necessary long-term water system infrastructure investments needed to successfully lower groundwater levels.

**Benefits:** As reflected in a January 14, 2016 Economic Impact Analysis of MARB prepared by Claremont McKenna College's Rose Institute of State and Local Government, MARB is a significant part of the Inland Southern California economy. The study, which was commissioned and funded by the County, concluded that MARB contributes over 12,600 jobs and more than \$600 million in economic activity to the local economy. Based on the level of impact and as indicated in previous iterations of the County's Legislative Platform, preserving and enhancing MARB has long been one of the County's highest legislative priorities.

The effort to reduce regional groundwater levels would result in multiple benefits, most prominent of which would be the preservation and enhancement of MARB. The high groundwater level is one variable that has the potential to limit the types of aircraft that can be based at MARB; for instance, the Air Force is evaluating basing options for the KC-46A Pegasus next-generation aerial refueling aircraft, and its weight distribution characteristics are such that the weight bearing requirements of runways and taxiways exceed those of many existing bases, specifically including portions of the pavement areas at MARB. This issue is addressed in detail in the initial version of the County's 2017 Legislative Platform (see pages 28-29, *Pavement Improvements - March Air Reserve Base*).

Reducing groundwater levels and improving soil stability would reduce the cost of new construction and retrofit of existing infrastructure, both on MARB property and in nearby areas. For instance, owing to high groundwater levels, certain types of projects have to incorporate pilings and other special foundation and structural design elements, which can have a significant impact on construction costs and make some types of construction infeasible in extreme cases.

Finally, it should be noted that MARB is a preferred Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster response and recovery site. MARB would be a much more reliable and safer staging area for FEMA and other emergency

responders once groundwater level reduction goals are reached. Should a major earthquake strike the region, current groundwater levels could result in damage to the runways and other facilities at MARB and limit FEMA's to transport materials and personnel, which would hinder response efforts. Conversely, working to address the various groundwater issues affect MARB would likely solidify the base's status as a FEMA disaster response and recovery site.

## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

**Issue:** Riverside County is the fourth largest county in California, and is the largest county in the State to not feature a full-fledged, self-identified California State University (CSU) campus, though CSU San Bernardino and CSU San Marcos have satellite campuses in Palm Desert and Temecula, respectively. Aside from Imperial County, the CSU system has campuses in all surrounding counties, including San Bernardino (two campuses), Los Angeles (five campuses), Orange (one campus), and San Diego (two campuses). Together these ten campuses have an enrollment of nearly 249,000 students.

Residents of Riverside County have limited options for attending public four-year degree granting institutions. The University of California, Riverside (UCR) is the only full campus in the County, compelling County residents to commute to other areas to attend a public university (e.g. CSU San Bernardino, CSU Fullerton, Cal Poly Pomona) or choose a more expensive private university option. Furthermore, nearby schools in the CSU system already grapple with overcrowding and therefore may not be feasible alternatives. All of these issues represent obstacles to higher education for an already underserved population.

**Action:** The County of Riverside supports the formation of a new CSU campus in Riverside County, either by upgrading one of the existing satellite campuses or establishing an entirely new campus

**Background:** Employers in the County consistently express concern about the pool of qualified applicants for job openings, including those holding degrees from four year universities, making educational attainment an area of concern as the region's economy matures and diversifies. The skills gap is particularly pronounced for employers needing people with skills gained from education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (commonly referred to as STEM) fields.

Evidence of the important role higher education plays in the economy is the retention rate of college graduates (i.e. graduates who remain in the community as opposed to those who leave the area). A recent study found that Riverside County has one of the highest retention rates in the United States, at approximately 71%, suggesting that there is a great deal of opportunity available

for college graduates. At the same time, the percentage of the County's population that holds at least a Bachelor's degree is considerably lower than the statewide average. One available conclusion from this data is that the number of slots available for prospective college students is lower than that which is necessary to provide for the needs of the region's economy.

Prospective students who want to earn a bachelor's degree are faced with limited options. UCR, the only public university in the County, currently has an enrollment cap of about 24,000 students, including graduate and doctoral candidates. Also, the UC system has more stringent admissions requirements and accepts a smaller portion of high school students and junior college transfers than the CSU system. Schools in the CSU system are faced with impaction, with the number of qualified applicants exceeding the number of available spaces; indeed, at least six CSU schools are fully impacted. At CSU San Bernardino, at least four baccalaureate programs are impacted.

First generation college students are common at the County's various colleges and universities. For instance, UCR was recently noted for the important role it plays in providing access to first generation enrollees. At the start of the 2017 academic year, first-generation students comprised 63% of new and continuing UCR students, compared to less than half in the UC system and 34% nationally. The numbers at CSU San Bernardino are even more striking: first-generation students comprised 81% of the 2017 student body.

A common feature among many of the existing colleges in the County is that they lack on-campus student housing. There are many benefits to students living on campus, including higher retention and graduation rates, higher GPA, better academic progress and performance, and larger gains in critical thinking and cognitive skills. On-campus student housing may be particularly critical to the success of first generation students, for whom lower levels of academic engagement are at least partly a function of living off campus. In addition, online classes predominate many of the course offerings at baccalaureate granting colleges in the region. For the many students who find that online learning is not comparable to traditional, in-person learning, this is problematic.

**Benefits:** Establishing a new CSU campus in Riverside County would address the concerns described above and help to remove obstacles to higher education. The population of Riverside and San Bernardino counties is currently about 4,600,000, about 1,185,000 of whom (~26%) are under the age of 18; many of these residents will want to attend college. A full CSU campus would allow area students to have much better access to the CSU system and a wider range of four-year degree programs. A fully functional campus, including on-campus housing, would reduce the burden on these students that comes from commuting so they can focus on the task of being students.

Also, it should be noted that CSU campuses are centers of economic activity in their own right. Expenditures associated with the CSU system are estimated to generate over \$17 billion in economic activity. With more than 110,000 graduates annually, CSU is the largest producer of Bachelor's degrees in California and helps drive the economy in many sectors, such as agriculture, information technology, business, hospitality, life sciences, healthcare, public administration, education, media, and entertainment. The CSU system supports more than 150,000 jobs statewide, and about one out of every ten private and public sector employees in California is a CSU graduate.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FEDERAL

### Issue:

1. Increased annual appropriations for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to allow grantees to effectively plan, administer, and utilize funding allocations;
2. Regulatory reform of the CDBG program to ensure long-term sustainability and effectiveness; and
3. Supplemental CDBG appropriations to encourage and expand use of CDBG for economic development and infrastructure revitalization.

### Action:

1. Oppose the drastic reductions in 2018 CDBG funding as proposed by the Administration;
2. Support increased appropriations for CDBG to assist state and local government's efforts to address chronic poverty, unemployment, and deteriorating infrastructure;
3. Support regulatory reform of the CDBG Entitlement Program to modify thresholds for grantee entitlement status to ensure long-term viability; and
4. Support supplemental CDBG appropriations for economic and infrastructure development activities and modify public benefit/job creation requirements and other regulatory requirements.

**Background:** Stable Funding: Previous funding reductions together with stagnant funding levels in recent years continue to leave the CDBG program at its lowest funding level, when adjusted for inflation, since the program's beginning. It is imperative that the funding for CDBG remain stable, or preferably increase, to account for increasing program administrative costs that must be incurred by grantees, and sub-recipients, and HUD to appropriately and effectively administer these valuable programs.

Entitlement Reform: The CDBG regulations must be modified to change the "formula" or thresholds for grantees to attain "entitlement" status. In 1984, there were 795 grantees dividing up a \$3.486 billion CDBG allocation. For FY 2017, there are more than 1250 grantees dividing up \$3 billion. The effectiveness and viability

of the CDBG program is at risk and cannot be sustained. Therefore, the County should advocate for legislation that corrects and adjusts the number of grantees to ensure program viability.

**Economic Development and Infrastructure:** Encourage special supplemental appropriations of CDBG funds aimed at sustainable, community-based economic development, as well as infrastructure revitalization. The funding would be used to target job creating economic development and infrastructure improvement activities in areas with higher percentages of poverty, unemployment, and other barriers to economic opportunity, and inadequate and deteriorating infrastructure. To encourage grantee participation, CDBG regulations pertaining to job creation (CDBG \$ per job), public benefit, and other performance issues need to be amended.

## FEDERAL JUDGESHIPS

**ISSUE:** The Central District of California is one of the most overloaded and understaffed district courts in the nation, receiving on average about 640 weighted filings per judgeship per year, compared to a nationwide average of just over 500. The Eastern Division of the Central District, located in Riverside and serving over 4.5 million residents of Riverside and San Bernardino counties, has been functioning with only one judge since July 1, 2016, overburdening the court's personnel with a crushing workload and creating hardship for parties, witnesses, and law enforcement officers, many of whom must travel to other divisions for their cases to be heard because of the number of cases filed in the Eastern Division.

**ACTION:** The County of Riverside urges federal leaders to support legislation that would create ten permanent and two temporary judgeships for the Central District of California. The County also urges conversion of the existing temporary judgeship, scheduled to be defunded, to a permanent position.

**BACKGROUND:** The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California was created in 1966 and consists of three divisions--the Western Division (covering Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties), the Southern Division (covering Orange County) and the Eastern Division (covering Riverside and San Bernardino Counties). The district now has 27 judgeships and one temporary judgeship, but of those, only two currently sit in the Eastern Division. Only one judge is sitting in the Eastern Division after the advancement of Judge Virginia Phillips to Chief Judge of the Central District on July 1, 2016. Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, with a combined population of 4.5 million, are the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> most populated counties in the nation--a population that is projected to increase by more than 30% (to 5.5 million) by 2020. This growth in population has resulted in a dramatic increase in caseloads, creating an increasingly urgent need for more judges.

While caseloads within the Western and Southern Divisions of the district increased 9% and 2%, respectively, from 2008 to 2009, the caseload in the Eastern Division increased 19% during the same period, and the caseload continues to increase. The latest survey by the Subcommittee on Judicial Resources of the Judicial Conference of the United States, headed by Chief Justice John Roberts, included the recommendation that the Central District of California receive ten additional permanent judgeships, two additional temporary judgeships, and that the existing temporary judgeship be converted to a permanent position. This recommendation is based upon the 22% increase in weighted case filings in the Central District since 2007.

Comparing the Central District's Eastern Division to the State of Kentucky's District I Court, the latter has ten active judges and seven senior judges, for a total of 17 judges, to serve almost the same population as the Eastern Division with its much larger caseload. The Southern Division has five judges serving 2 million people, less than half the population served by the Eastern Division with only one judge. Due to the shortage of judicial personnel in the Eastern Division, the number of civil cases transferred from the Eastern Division to the Western Division increased 323% from 2007 (146 cases) to 2011 (618 cases), and currently, 75% of all cases filed are being transferred to either Santa Ana or Los Angeles. These transfers often result in parties, witnesses, and law enforcement officers spending countless hours on Southern California's already overcrowded freeways traveling to required court appearances. Creation of new judgeships in the Central District is a priority for this region and action should be taken without delay.

## HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8) MOVING TO WORK DESIGNATION (FEDERAL)

**Issue:** Supporting Moving to Work (MTW) Program Reform

**Action:** Support an expansion of the MTW program to include larger Public Housing Authorities such as the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside.

**Background:** The 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act, authorized HUD to expand the MTW demonstration to 100 Public Housing Agencies (PHA). However, no more than 3 larger PHAs will be allowed into the demonstration. Further expansion of the MTW demonstration would allow larger public housing agencies to develop measures to promote economic independence for families with children, whose head of household is working, seeking work, or preparing to obtain employment and become economically independent, by participating in job training, educational programs or other supportive services and programs that assist in meeting such goals.

MTW designation would give public housing agencies and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development the flexibility to design and implement various approaches for providing and administering housing assistance that reduce cost and achieve greater cost effectiveness and Federal expenditures.

## HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8) (FEDERAL)

**Issue:** There are over 73,000 households registered for the Section 8 waiting list in Riverside County and an additional 418 chronic homeless individuals awaiting an affordable or supportive housing unit. Riverside County's Section 8 program is at maximum capacity and cannot serve any additional households.

**Action:** Urge Congress to increase funding to the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8).

**Action:** Replicate the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program model to provide housing and services to the chronically homeless through the use of targeted Section 8 vouchers.

**Background:** The Housing Choice Voucher program also known as "Section 8" provides resources essential to ensuring that vulnerable seniors, families, veterans, and people with disabilities have access to decent, safe, and sanitary affordable housing to help stabilize and improve the quality of their lives.

More than 5 million people in more than 2 million low-income families use vouchers to help pay for housing that they find in the private market. About half of the households using vouchers are seniors or people with disabilities; most of the rest are working families with children. These households have incomes of about \$16,100, on average, well below the poverty line.

Vouchers sharply reduce homelessness and other hardships, lift more than 1 million people out of poverty, and give families an opportunity to move to safer, higher income neighborhoods. These effects, in turn, are linked to educational, developmental, and health benefits that can improve children's long term prospects and reduce costs in other public programs.

Vouchers specifically designated for the 418 chronically homeless individuals provides an effective means to quickly end homelessness for these individuals. Supported services would be provided off-site through existing social service programs. In 2016, Riverside County reached a "functional zero", eliminating

veteran homelessness. The same can be achieved through these targeted vouchers.

## HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8) CHRONICALLY HOMELESS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

**Issue:** On any given night, nearly 85,000 Americans with disabling health conditions who have been homeless for long periods of time—some for years or decades—can be found sleeping on our streets, in shelters, or other places not meant for human habitation. These men and women experiencing chronic homelessness commonly have a combination of mental health problems, substance use disorders, and medical conditions that worsen over time and too often lead to an early death. Without connections to the right types of care, they cycle in and out of hospital emergency departments and inpatient beds, detox programs, jails, prisons, and psychiatric institutions—all at high public expense. Some studies have found that leaving a person to remain chronically homeless costs taxpayers as much as \$30,000 to \$50,000 per year.

**Action:** HUD should initiate a demonstration project modeled after the highly successful Veterans Assistance and Support Housing Program (VASH) which earmarks Section 8 vouchers for chronically homeless individuals and families.

**Background:** HUD-VASH is a collaborative program between HUD and VA which combines HUD Section 8 vouchers with VA supportive services to help veterans who are homeless and their families find and sustain permanent housing. This same model can be utilized to combat chronic homelessness with HHS funding used to provide case management services. Riverside County was the first large county in the nation to end homelessness among veterans primarily through the use of HUD VASH vouchers. The Housing Authority of the County of Riverside is a High Performing public housing authority with an in-house Homeless Outreach and Care team and can serve as a pilot site to launch this demonstration project.

## LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

**Issue:** The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program is currently in jeopardy due to proposed tax reform.

**Action:** Urge Congress to take measures to ensure that the LIHTC program remains intact under the proposed tax reform.

**Background:** The LIHTC program is the largest subsidy for the production of new affordable housing units in the nation, producing approximately 100,000 units a

year. Current house representatives have proposed cutting corporate tax rates currently at 35% to 20%. If the corporate tax rate drops this low the desirability of investors to purchase tax credits would diminish as it would be a loss to purchase the credits. The demise of the LIHTC program would have a tremendous impact on the development of future affordable housing units. The Harvard Joint Center on housing studies estimates that 1/3 of the population is considered rent burdened paying more than 30% of their income towards rent and utilities and one in every six households are paying more than 50% of their income towards rent and utilities. The LIHTC program currently provides an 8.9 billion dollar tax break to investors for the production of 100,000 affordable units annually. These units are covenanted with affordability restrictions for 30-55 years. The cost to operate this program is not even comparable to the cost of operating other affordable housing programs such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program which operates on a 20 billion dollars a year budget and primarily creates new affordable units through attrition. Currently the County of Riverside has created 1327 affordable units utilizing the LIHTC program.

## LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS (FEDERAL)

**Issue:** The Low Income Housing Tax Credit rates are currently determined by a formula that is tied to the federal borrowing rates which consistently change. The lower the federal borrowing rates fall, the lower the housing credit rate becomes which reduces the equity available for individual affordable housing developments.

**Action:** Urge Congress to make the minimum housing credit rates permanent.

**Background:** Currently, the affordable housing rates are established at a minimum 9% for new construction and substantial rehabilitation and 4% for acquisition and moderate rehabilitation. Due to the fact that federal rates have dropped to historic lows, there is now 15 to 20 percent less housing credit available for any given project. Without sufficient equity many projects are impossible to finance. Most of the projects are underwritten with other funding sources; however, in recent years these sources have experienced a significant cut in funding. Without the flexibility to provide increased housing credit equity many projects will be impossible to finance.

## LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

**Issue:** The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program is the nation's most successful tool in addressing the severe shortage of affordable housing. S. 548 makes significant strides in expanding and strengthening the program.

**Action:** Urge the U.S. Senate to adopt S.548.

**Background:** For over 30 years the LIHTC program has been a module program in bringing public/private partnerships together to produce affordable housing. Since 1986 the program has financed approximately 3,000,000 apartments and provided over 6.7 million low-income households, including special needs populations with housing that is affordable. S. 548 would change the LIHTC program in the following ways:

- ❖ **Expand the Housing Credit:** Congress has not permanently increased the Housing Credit authority in the past 17 years, which has caused much needed developments to be denied funding. S. 548 proposes to increase the Housing Credit allocation by 50%, phased over a five-year period.
- ❖ **Allow Income Averaging:** Currently tax credit apartments are allowed to serve renters whose incomes do not exceed 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). However, states typically encourage developments to serve the lowest-income populations, which often times makes the developments financially infeasible. S. 548 allows "income averaging", whereas households whose incomes do not exceed 80% of the AMI can occupy units as long as the overall average income of the development does not exceed 60% AMI.
- ❖ **Provide income flexibility for rehabilitation projects:** Current law does not take into consideration existing tenants for a rehabilitation project who are over the allowable income limits when determining eligible basis, often times making it infeasible to rehabilitate an existing tax credit project. S.548 allows tenants who fall under 120% AMI to be counted in determining credit basis as long as the project was a previous tax credit project and the household was determined eligible at the time of occupancy.
- ❖ **Increase the amount of Housing Credits for developments that serve extremely low-income households:** Developments that serve households whose incomes do not exceed 30% of the AMI must substantially reduce or eliminate any debt of the project due to receiving far less rental income from tenants. S. 548 would provide a 50% basis boost for low-income developments that serve 20% or more of their units to homeless populations or individuals whose incomes do not exceed 30% AMI.

## FHFA CONFORMING LOAN LIMIT

Currently the conforming loan limit for mortgages in Riverside County is \$453,100. The federal government last raised the limit by 1.7% in January of 2017, the first increase since 2006. Conforming loan limits are significant because they apply to home loans that meet the underwriting guidelines of Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, the government sponsored entities that acquire mortgages from lenders and ensure a steady flow of money to the mortgage market.

Conforming loan limits are based on median home prices and apply county-wide. The limits vary significantly by county; however, because Riverside County is so large, prices tend to vary from one region of the county to the next. Also, neighboring coastal counties have higher limits, which confers an advantage to buyers in those jurisdictions. As an example, while Orange County's limit is \$649,750 and San Diego's limit is \$679,750, Riverside County's limit of \$453,100 applies to communities (e.g. Corona and Temecula) that border those counties and that have higher median prices. In the case of Temecula, homes have a median price of \$1.3 million while homes in the nearby North San Diego County community of Fallbrook have a median price of \$528,000. This price disparity, coupled with the lower conforming loan limit, creates a significant disadvantage for home buyers in Temecula.

**Recommendation:** Support federal legislation that would account for these regional variances and provide an equitable limit for defined regions, based upon regional economic factors rather than county boundaries.

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT ACT (AB 1111)

**Issue:** Job seekers with high barriers need enhanced supportive services to successfully access training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.

**Action:** Recommend support and passage of AB1111 (E Garcia) to establish a grant funding program to assist high barrier job seekers.

**Background:** This bill would enact the Removing Barriers to Employment Act, which would establish the Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative within the Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The bill would require the initiative to be led by the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development and authorizes the secretary to assign all or part of the administration of the initiative to one or more entities within the agency's oversight, or to authorize another state agency, under specified conditions, to administer a portion of the initiative. The bill would specify that the purpose of the initiative is to create a grant program to assist individuals who have multiple barriers to employment to receive the remedial

education and work readiness skills that will help those individuals to successfully participate in training, apprenticeship, or employment opportunities that enhance skill development that will lead to self-sufficiency and economic stability, and would set forth the goals of the initiative. The bill would require the secretary to develop criteria for the selection of grant recipients, as specified, and would require the secretary, by January 1, 2019, and annually thereafter, to post a report on the agency's Internet Web site that provides a status report on the implementation of the initiative and aggregates information provided by grant recipients. The bill would authorize the secretary, when implementing the initiative, to fund a project that uses a model that was previously funded as a pilot project under certain programs if specified criteria are met. The bill would make the funding of the initiative subject to an appropriation by the Legislature for that purpose and would make implementation of the initiative contingent on the secretary notifying the Department of Finance that sufficient moneys have been appropriated.

**Current status:** Referred to JEDE Cmte. Sponsored by the California Workforce Association (CWS), Riverside County Workforce Development Board has submitted a letter of support, and is available to testify at any hearings.

## ADDITIONAL FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE TOPICS

### REAUTHORIZE THE U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

- ❖ Reauthorization should emphasize public works and planning grants, especially in underserved and rural communities.

### CONTINUED FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR THE BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

- ❖ Support EPA's brownfields cleanup and assessment programs and support the recovery of administrative costs consistent with other federal programs.

### INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

- ❖ Support federal initiatives to assist state and local governments and regional development organizations in planning, developing, and maintaining water and wastewater infrastructure systems.
- ❖ Promote affordable, advanced, and accessible telecommunications and broadband services in underserved and rural areas.

## CONTINUED FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

- ❖ Maintain SBA' s 504 Certified Development Company microloan lending and technical assistance programs.



*FIRST 5*

## AB992 HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

**Issue:** Evidence Based Home Visiting Programs

**Action:** Support Legislation that promotes evidence based home visiting programs that strengthen families by supporting both parents and children.

**Background:** Home visiting has long-term benefits for families and society: improved parenting practices, reduced child maltreatment, increased family resilience and self-sufficiency, improved birth outcomes, and increased school readiness. Evidence-based home visiting programs are one of the best investments California can make to support families on a path to self-sufficiency and prepare our youngest children for lifelong success.

## PROP. 64

**Issue:** Prop. 64 revenue allocation

**Action:** Support legislation and advocate for some dollars to be dedicated to family strengthening efforts for children 0 through 5 years old.

**Background:** Proposition 64 revenue would be used first to pay back certain state agencies for any cannabis regulatory and administrative costs not covered by license fees. The rest of the revenue is specifically allocated towards the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, Public Universities, and the California Highway Patrol.

## AB1250

**Issue:** AB1250 will increase the cost of services, eliminate critical local programs, and result in fewer families being served.

**Action:** Oppose any legislation that would ban the County from contracting out their local services.

**Background:** Across California, counties contract with local organizations to provide family crisis counselors, substance abuse programs, community mental health facilities, physician care and other staff in community clinics and public hospitals, vocational training programs, cognitive behavior programs, mental health programs and substance abuse programs, and other public safety, social and health care services. AB1250 will ban California's counties abilities to deliver local services through private non-profits, local businesses, and other contracted service providers.



## *Parks*

## OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION GRANTS- (STATE)

**Issue:** The County has attempted to build an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation facility within Riverside County for thirty plus years. Current State programs are not equitable in assisting the County with this effort.

**Action:** Work with the California State Parks Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Division to modify grant language that currently penalizes those jurisdictions that do not currently have a facility.

**Background:** The recent passage of SB 249 permanently reauthorized the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program within the State's Department of Parks and Recreation. This reauthorization brings with it the opportunity to revise regulations relating to the Division's Grants and Cooperative Agreement Program.

Under the current regulations, Planning, Acquisition, and Development project applications are subject to the same scoring methodology applied to all projects within the Operations and Maintenance category. Of the 120 points possible within the General Criteria, 77 apply only to those applicants who currently manage legal OHV riding opportunities. This has the unfortunate effect of ensuring applicants who do not currently manage legal OHV riding opportunities rarely score high enough to secure grant funding. It is recommended that Riverside County become an active participant in the collaborative process to revise these regulations in such a way that the regulations no longer unfairly penalize applicants. This will provide the utmost opportunity of receiving grant funding for the development of an Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation facility in Riverside County.

## PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE - (STATE)

**Issue:** The Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District (District) is bound by the Public Resources Code which limits the ability to procure materials and services in an efficient manner.

**Action:** Work with the California legislatures to amend Public Resources Code.

**Background:** The Public Resources Code dictates that purchasing authority is granted to the General Manager up to \$25,000. Expenditures over \$25,000 require Board of Directors approval. The District has traditionally utilized County Central Purchasing for products and services that are over \$25,000, which is granted in other codes and sections to ensure timely delivery of services.

The District seeks to modify the existing Public Resources Code to identify County Central Purchasing as the authority to procure materials and services, similar to other County Departments. Further, the District will seek to increase the General Manager limits to match similar Department/ Division Head limits such as Economic Development, Housing Authority and County Service Areas.



## *Probation*

The Riverside County Probation Department is committed to a research-based approach to public safety that promotes positive behavior change. Our leadership guides policy and practice in the areas of prevention, community-based corrections, secure detention for youth and direct human services. Our goal is to prevent crime and delinquency, reduce recidivism, restore victims and promote healthy families and communities. The Riverside County Probation Department administers juvenile and adult probation programs for offenders placed on probation. Probation makes recommendations to the courts and enforces its orders in communities by providing supervision and treatment programs for juvenile and adult offenders. We are also responsible for overseeing the management, operation, programming, and administration of juvenile detention and rehabilitation facilities.

## ADVANCING / ENHANCING POLICIES

**Action:** Support legislation that will enable the County to: hold its clients accountable through effective community supervision.

**Background:** Effective community supervision can be improved by enhancing Evidence Based Practices, improving re-entry options for our clients, reinvestment at state and local levels, and the protection of federal resources for community corrections.

**Action:** Support legislation that will prevent crime by changing criminal thinking.

**Background:** Changing criminal thinking can be improved through the expansion of Evidence Based Programs that are available to clients and incentivizing successful completion of programs.

**Action:** Support legislation that will objectively assess the law and facts for individuals coming before the court.

**Action:** Support legislation that will restore victims and prevent future victimization.

**Background:** Prevention from future victimization can be accomplished by ensuring and securing the adequate resources for victim impact statements, enhancing successful re-entry, providing victims with opportunities to participate in restorative justice activities, and engaging community members as active partners in efforts to advance community safety.

**Action:** Support legislation that will rehabilitate clients with evidence informed strategies that change their behavior.

**Background:** Different areas are targeted such as the expansion of local capacity for placement and treatment, building offender skills and competencies to support prosocial non-criminal conduct, and strengthening and engaging youth and families to build lasting community relationships.

**Action:** Support legislation that ensures secure and effective detention services and successful reentry.

**Action:** Support legislation that ensures a well-resourced probation system that can effectively accomplish state and local mandates.



## *Public Health*

## PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING (STATE AND FEDERAL)

**Issue:** Sustained and secure funding is needed to maintain public health infrastructure.

**Action:** Support legislation that would provide continued funding and support for core local public health services and public health laboratories. Advocate for the distribution of federal funding to state and local health departments in order to maintain and build core public health infrastructure. Support efforts to re-fund the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

**Background:** California's local health departments are mandated to provide a broad array of core public health services to their communities, and they provide these services through a variety of funding sources, including Health Realignment, county general funds, and state and federal categorical program funding. Local health departments are also responding to the changing healthcare landscape including focusing local efforts on chronic disease prevention and wellness promotion activities. It is essential that local health departments are provided the resources necessary to carry out their mandated public health activities as well as allow for the development of chronic disease prevention programs for their communities. Meanwhile, federal categorical public health funding has been in decline and prevention funding through the Public Health and Prevention Fund has mostly been diverted for other purposes. Finally, many core health programs have seen an increase in administrative costs mandated by the State through funding remains flat or is declining.

## MEDICAL/ADULT USE CANNABIS EDUCATION (STATE)

**Issue:** Education is needed to mitigate community harms resulting from the legalization of cannabis use.

**Action:** Support legislation that promotes health education regarding cannabis.

**Background:** With the expected increased utilization of cannabis resulting from California's legalization of adult use it is important to educate the community regarding the danger of cannabis use and driving, avoiding cannabis use while pregnant and to prevent access to cannabis products by children. Funding will be needed to conduct community health education.



## *Public Social Services*

## ADULT SERVICES – HOME SAFE

**Issue:** Adult Services programs have limited resources to prevent homelessness or assist in rehousing vulnerable elderly adults.

**Action:** Support legislation that provides for programs and funding to prevent homelessness for vulnerable adults.

**Background:** Each year, California receives approximately 150,000 unduplicated reports of elder abuse; the number is rising as the population ages. Reports of elder abuse varies from reports of self-neglect in which seniors or dependent adults cannot meet their own physical needs to reports of financial exploitation, fraud, and theft. Many in this population are at risk of losing housing as a direct result of neglect, abuse, and exploitation.

Emerging research from the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, shows adults who become homeless later in life have significant health declines and die at a rate four to five times greater than the general population. In addition, older homeless adults are more than two (2) times likely to visit hospital emergency rooms than those with stable housing. Programs are needed to help keep vulnerable adults in their homes or to house those that have become homeless.

## ADULT SERVICES – DMV RECORDS CONFIDENTIALITY

**Issue:** Adult Protective Services (APS) social workers experience personal safety issues while investigating reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly and disabled.

**Action:** Support an amendment of Vehicle Code to include County APS Social Services Workers (SSW) in the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Confidential Records Program.

**Background:** Vehicle Code Section 1808 provides enhanced confidentiality of DMV records for specified public employees and their families. Specified public employees does not include APS SSWs.

With a growing elderly and disabled population and an increased prevalence of financial abuse, among other related issues, while investigating reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly and disabled, APS SSWs frequently encounter abusers who are hostile, violent, and unstable due to mental illness or substance abuse. In addition to experiencing threats and physical assaults, there have been incidents of alleged abusers photographing the personal vehicles and

license plate numbers of APS SSWs. Adding APS SSWs to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Confidential Records Program will provide greater protections from alleged abusers who may seek out the home addresses of SSWs for nefarious purposes.

## SNAP BENEFITS FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

**Issue:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility requirements have an unintended negative impact to the Former Foster Youth (FFY) and AB 12 Non-Minor Dependents (NMD) population preventing them access to valuable and needed food assistance.

**Action:** Support the request of the federal government to waive requirements tied to SNAP eligibility for FFY ages 18 – 26, including AB 12 NMDs, making this population categorically eligible for maximum SNAP (CalFresh) allotments.

**Background:** The FFY and NMD population are some of the most vulnerable youth in our communities. FFY are provided categorical eligibility to the Medicaid (Medi-Cal) program until age 26 but do not have the same categorical access to the Cal Fresh program. Providing these youths with enhanced food access would improve food security and self-sufficiency as well as improve health outcomes for this vulnerable population.

## CHILDREN SERVICES – COLLABORATIVE, TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE FOR YOUTH

**Issue:** County child welfare agencies continue to face barriers in meeting the needs of youth who have experienced trauma.

**Action:** Support legislation that creates or enhances the collaboration of youth service agencies, placement alternatives and response systems in support of youth and caregivers to provide timely, flexible, and trauma informed service arrays.

**Background:** Children who experienced an adverse childhood experience are more likely to have experienced additional traumatic events and experiences. Multiple traumatic and toxic stress has lasting impacts on health and well-being of children. Early identification and intervention, particularly for youth in the foster care system, is critical in improving well-being outcomes and to avoid undesired outcomes including juvenile justice involvement.

The challenge to counties are particularly acute when caring for youth who enter care with severe traumatic experiences or multiple co-occurring needs (ex.

substance abuse, mental health, developmental disabilities). Success in caring for these youth who are in the care of counties is dependent upon all child-serving agencies at the state and local levels working together to provide trauma-informed care to jointly meet the needs of children and families.

Notwithstanding, current systems lack the necessary infrastructure and services to identify, intervene and ameliorate traumatic experiences for youth. Meaningful coordination needs to improve across state or local levels systems to support youth and their families impacted by traumatic experiences.



*Riverside University Health System*

## PRESERVE ACCESS TO CARE

- ❖ Preserve Medicaid expansion and ensure any new policies preserve access and include adequate funding for safety nets.
- ❖ Preserve funding and access for federally qualified health centers.
- ❖ Pursue designation for rural hospital health provider.
- ❖ Repeal the prohibition of medical insurance coverage for inmates. When a person enters jail, their insurance coverage is suspended and the county is responsible for the cost of care. The county supports similar legislation like, H.R. 4201 (2015) - Restoring the Partnership for County Health Care Costs Act by Rep. Hastings, [D-FL-20].

## SUPPORT HEALTH PROMOTION, DISEASE PREVENTION, INNOVATION AND GME

- ❖ Effect federal legislation that would allow teaching institutions to be reimbursed for percentage of Medicaid patients (not just Medicare)
- ❖ Protect 340B federal drug program from legislative or administrative reductions.
- ❖ Promote new (Medicaid) PRIME Waiver.

## OPPOSE REFORM PROPOSALS OR POLICIES THAT NEGATIVELY IMPACT SERVICES

- ❖ Delay cuts to DSH and supplemental payments.
- ❖ Oppose CHIP reductions or shift of funds.
- ❖ Oppose efforts to reduce Medicaid and Medicare funding.



## *Veterans*

## ADDITIONAL LOCAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING (STATE)

**Issue:** California Veterans Service Officers funding

**Action:** Support efforts to educate the Governor’s Office, the Legislature, and the public on the importance and value of County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs). The eventual goal is to fully fund CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d). Current State funding is now at \$5.6 million annually.

**Background:** Current funding rests at \$5.6 million, the eventual goal is to fully fund CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d). Following the Great recession funding dropped below \$3 million annually. Riverside County is the proud home of 132,228 veterans, according to the latest federal and state data. Of those veterans: 21,829 reside in the First District, 19,041 in District 2, 34,951 in District 3, 29,522 in District 4 and 26,885 in District 5. Riverside County has the third highest veteran population in the state and is the host of two major military installations, various National Guard and federal & state reserve facilities and installations.

## VETERAN’S RESOURCE CENTERS (STATE)

**Issue:** Funding for veteran’s resource centers

**Action:** Support legislation that would help fund state-sponsored veteran’s resource centers at state community colleges and universities (CSU and UC systems)

**Background:** The Veterans Resource Centers help incoming Veteran students transition from soldiers to scholars. In addition, Veterans, Active Duty, Reservists, and their dependents are assisted with accessing their VA education benefits when pursuing an eligible AA/AS, Certificate, or Transfer Program for a BA/BS. The VRC also directs students to campus resources that would help them succeed in their educational goals.

## ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO VETERAN MILITARY SERVICE RECORDS (FEDERAL/STATE)

**Issue:** Increase access for County Veterans Service Officers to United States Department of Veterans affairs information systems.

**Action:** Support legislation that would provide increased access for CVSOs to USDVA information systems (i.e., VBMS, VACOLS, SHARE, MAPD, etc.)

**Background:** Records access was reduced following a hacking/ electronic security breach. Enhancing this access will result in better, timelier services to claimants and reduce the workload in USDVA call centers.

## MEANS TEST USDVA MEDICAL CARE (FEDERAL)

**Issue:** Income limitations excluding Veterans from medical care.

**Action:** Support legislation that would eliminate the Means Test for veterans to qualify for USDVA medical care.

**Background:** These income limitations have excluded some veterans, who would otherwise qualify for enrollment, from obtaining their primary healthcare through the USDVA.

## ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES (FEDERAL)

- ❖ Support legislation that would include “Blue Water Navy” veterans into the set of veterans with presumed exposure to Agent Orange.
- ❖ Support legislation that would provide for payment of Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) for all military retirees, regardless of the percentage of their service-connected disabilities.
- ❖ Support legislation that would eliminate Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)-Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset.
- ❖ Support legislation that would eliminate the requirement for war-time service as an eligibility requirement for non-service connected and death pension.