County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
http://cao.co.la.ca.us

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
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Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
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AS AMENDED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON FEBRUARY 8, 2005

February 1, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

FEDERAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 109TH CONGRESS (3-VOTES)

This letter recommends updated Federal goals and policies for the first session of the 109th Congress. These goals and policies, together with other positions previously adopted by your Board, would guide our Federal advocacy efforts this year. They have been developed in coordination with County Departments, the Legislative Strategist, and our Washington, D.C. advocates.

THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Approve the updated overall Federal goals and policies for the year, which seek to maximize our Federal revenues, secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds, lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs, and also approve funding priorities for individual appropriations bills identified in Attachment I and specific legislative policies presented in Attachment II.

2. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer, affected departments, the Legislative Strategist, and the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to work with our congressional delegation, other state and local governments, and interest groups to pursue the goals and policies in this Federal Agenda.

INTRODUCTION

The 109th Congress convened in early January 2005. For the first time since the start of the 104th Congress, the County is entering a new session of Congress in which there is a substantial risk of major Federal spending cuts in many programs which are important sources of revenue for the State and County. Just as in 1995, there is a strong interest in Washington to reduce the huge Federal budget deficit without raising taxes.

Federal aid to state and local governments, which totaled $387 billion in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 will be especially vulnerable to budget cuts. This is because, except for Medicare, all of the other major categories of Federal spending -- Social Security, defense, and interest on the national debt – are less likely to be cut. While one of the Administration's priorities is to reform Social Security, none of the major options under consideration would affect Social Security expenditures in the near term. The continuing costs of the war in Iraq and concerns about homeland security also make it less likely that defense would be significantly reduced. Moreover, the kinds of Medicare cuts that Congress is likely to consider this year are reductions in payments to providers that would affect public as well as private health care providers.

To reduce the Federal budget deficit, the Administration and Congress will likely propose freezing or cutting spending for domestic "discretionary" programs for which funding is set through the annual appropriations process. The County will face major challenges to preserve its current discretionary Federal revenue, let alone increase its revenue. Just as in recent years, state and local law enforcement programs, such as the State Criminal Alien Assistance program (SCAAP), will be especially vulnerable to budget cuts because they are funded through an appropriations bill, which mainly funds Federal activities of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, and the Federal judiciary, including the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Bureau of Prisons, and U.S. court system, which have growing needs and costs. Similarly, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs will be vulnerable because they compete for limited funding with Veterans Affairs (VA) programs and benefits in the VA/HUD appropriations bill.

The Administration and Congress also are likely to propose cuts in entitlement programs in order to reduce the Federal budget deficit. "Entitlement" (mandatory) spending refers to expenditures required by authorizing law and, therefore, not subject to the annual appropriations process. Some entitlement programs, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are authorized for a fixed time period and are "capped," meaning that there is a fixed annual dollar limit on available funding. Other entitlement programs, such as Medicaid and Title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance, are permanently authorized and are "open-ended," meaning that the Federal government must pay its share of eligible costs without any dollar limits.

Besides considering legislation to cut open-ended entitlement spending, Congress may consider converting open-ended entitlements, such as Medicaid, into capped entitlements. Open-ended entitlement expenditures for Medicaid, Title IV-E, and child support enforcement have been growing at a far faster rate than discretionary and capped entitlement expenditures, in part, because open-ended entitlements allow state and local governments to secure increased Federal matching funds without having to secure any changes in Federal law. When the State has faced major budget shortfalls, the State and County have used a Federal revenue maximization strategy to secure

increased revenue through Federal entitlement programs to help pay for many health and human services, including medical care, mental health, In-Home Supportive Services, adult protective services, foster care, and juvenile probation services.

Open-ended Medicaid entitlement funding is especially important to the County because non-state funds can be used to draw down open-ended Federal Medicaid matching funds. Most significantly, intergovernmental transfers (IGTs) from counties have been used to finance the non-Federal share of the County's Section 1115 Medicaid demonstration project and Medicaid payments under the Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) and the Selective Provider Contracting Program (SPCP), all of which have been critically important to the County's health system. Therefore, preserving the use of IGTs and open-ended Medicaid entitlement funding will be among the County's top Federal advocacy priorities.

Social Security and tax reform are Federal issues that could have major implications for California and the County. To help reduce long-term unfunded Social Security liabilities, proposals may be considered to raise Social Security revenue by mandating the participation of all state and local government employees in Social Security. Such a proposal would require the County and its employees to pay Social Security payroll taxes.

Just as in 1986 when the last major tax reform was enacted, eliminating the tax-exempt status of state and local bonds and deductibility of state and local income and property taxes will be considered as options for offsetting the added cost of reducing tax rates and simplifying the tax code. The loss of tax-exempt bond status would increase the County's borrowing costs while eliminating the deductibility of state and local income and property taxes would disproportionately hurt Californians who receive a far greater tax benefit from such deductions than residents of any other state. California already is the biggest "donor" state, paying far more in Federal taxes than it receives in Federal spending. Eliminating the deductibility of state and local taxes, as well as mandating Social Security participation for state and local employees, would make this imbalance even worse.

In 2005, other major Federal issues for the County will include legislation to reauthorize TANF, Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Older Americans Act (OAA), Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, all of which are important sources of revenue for the County. In addition, the County will work to ensure that the Los Angeles Air Force Base/Space and Missile Systems Center is not slated for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as that process begins later this year.

OVERALL FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

Federal revenues account for about one-fourth of total County revenues and much of our State revenues are determined by Federal policies which govern programs, such as Medicaid, CalWORKs, and foster care. County costs also are affected directly by Federal mandates and indirectly by Federal policies on immigration, the economy, health, and welfare. Under State law, the County is mandated to provide General Relief and medical assistance to indigent residents who are ineligible for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, TANF, and other Federal public assistance programs.

In light of the State's continuing budget deficit, maintaining or increasing Federal funding for the State and County is even more critical. However, increased efforts by the Administration and Congress to reduce the Federal budget deficit will make it more difficult to secure additional Federal revenue to offset State and local revenue losses. It, therefore, will be even more important that California receive a more equitable share of available Federal resources.

As noted earlier, California is the biggest donor state, paying far more in Federal taxes than it receives in Federal spending. One contributing factor is that California receives the least amount of Medicaid funding per recipient of any state. If the IGTs are restricted, the State will receive even less Medicaid funding per recipient relative to other states, which make less use of IGT financing of non-Federal Medicaid costs. Inequitable program allocation formulas, especially under homeland security and TEA-21 programs, also hurt California.

Accordingly, the County's Federal Agenda will focus on the following principles:

- Maximize Federal revenues
- Secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds
- Lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs and decision-making authority

The County will pursue these principles in the context of a Federal budget climate where it continues to be difficult to preserve the base level of Federal revenue to the County, let alone increase revenues. Adoption of these overall legislative policies will allow the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to respond quickly to legislation and proposals that could significantly affect the County.

To achieve these overall principles, the County will pursue the following legislative positions:

1. Support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding.

2. Support proposals which would provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of Federal funds, and which provide for direct grants or mandatory pass-through allocations to large urban counties.

3. Oppose proposals which would impose new unfunded mandates on the County.

4. Oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County.

5. Support proposals to reduce or relax match requirements which hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.

6. Support Federal fiscal relief for financially distressed state and local governments.

SPECIFIC POLICIES ON FEDERAL ISSUES OF COUNTY INTEREST

County funding priorities for individual appropriations bills, which fund discretionary programs, are identified in Attachment I. These funding priorities include programs, such as SCAAP and the Ryan White CARE Act, in which the County receives a relatively high share of total funding. They also include programs which help the County meet its responsibilities for providing essential services, such as public safety, homeland security, health, mental health, social services, employment and training, transportation, housing, community development, and elections.

Specific legislative policies for Federal authorization and reform legislation of County interest are identified in Attachment II. Therefore, besides covering legislation to reauthorize the TANF, TEA-21, Ryan White CARE Act, WIA, OAA, and SAMHSA programs through which the County receives Federal funding, the policies also cover major issues, such as Medicaid, child welfare, homeland security, housing, community development, and Social Security, that may be addressed by Congress this year.

Legislative policies are included that support proposals to preserve or increase overall funding for programs of importance to the County, and increase the County's share of available funding. Policies also have been added to oppose administratively imposed requirements, such as performance or quality control standards, that are not accompanied by additional resources with which to implement them. In recent years, there has been a growth in such requirements that, in effect, impose major new unfunded mandates on state and local governments.

The recommended policies also reaffirm many existing Board policies and are consistent with the County's overall Federal legislative goals and principles, including those supporting greater flexibility over the use of funds.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The proposed goals and policies in this Federal Agenda are consistent with the County's Strategic Plan Goals, specifically Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Responsibility. Adoption of the proposed Agenda will allow the CAO and the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to respond quickly to legislation and proposals that could significantly affect the County, such as potential new mandates and changes in program funding or local flexibility over the use of Federal funds. In addition, adoption will allow pursuit of legislation and support of proposals, related to specific program areas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of County programs.

CONCLUSION

The recommended policies contained in this letter and in Attachments I and II are submitted for your Board's consideration as the guiding principles for our advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C. during the first session of the 109th Congress. The policies and goals contained in this package are in addition to, and are not intended to be exclusive of, other positions your Board has adopted or may adopt. As in the past, the Federal Agenda will be updated to reflect any subsequent actions taken by your Board.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

DEJ:GK
MAL:MT:ib

Attachments

c: County Counsel
All Department Heads

ATTACHMENT I

COUNTY FUNDING PRIORITIES IN APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

This attachment outlines the County's funding priorities in individual appropriations bills that the County's Washington, D.C. advocates will pursue in the 109th Congress, consistent with existing Board policies. Within each appropriations bill, the advocates will give priority to pursuing funding for programs which provide the County with a greater share of total funding and greater flexibility over the use of funds. These priorities do not include health and welfare entitlement programs, such as Medicaid, for which funding levels are not determined through annual appropriations bills. Recommended Board policies on Medicaid and other entitlement programs are included in Attachment II.

1. Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary Appropriations Bill

a. Reimbursement of Criminal Alien Costs: Support increased funding to reimburse the County's criminal justice costs associated with criminal aliens, including increased funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program and the Southwest Border Prosecutor Program.

b. County Justice/Law Enforcement Activities: Support increased justice and law enforcement funding for the Justice Assistance Grant and to assist County justice agencies with technology improvements, prosecutions, prevention, corrections, crime laboratory/forensic science, training, and activities addressing special populations, such as juveniles, mentally ill, and homeless persons.

c. Immigration and Naturalization Activities: Support increased funding for activities such as border enforcement, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents assigned to the County's jails, automated fingerprint identification systems to track criminal aliens, prosecution of criminal aliens and alien smugglers, naturalization assistance, and processing of naturalization and immigration applications.

2. Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill

a. Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act Funding: Support increased funding of CARE Act programs.

b. Public Health Funding: Support increased funding for public health activities, such as bioterrorism, early detection surveillance, immunizations, tuberculosis, maternal and child health, family planning, sexually transmitted disease, childhood lead poisoning, violence and injury prevention programs, food safety, and chronic disease programs.

c. Other Health Funding: Support Federal reimbursement of the costs of emergency medical care provided to undocumented immigrants and funding for emergency preparedness and response, trauma care, and health care for the uninsured.

d. Substance Abuse and Mental Health: Support increased funding for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grants, including substance abuse and mental health block grants, the Children's Mental Health Services Program, and other substance abuse, mental health, and supportive services and training grants.

e. Social Services Block Grant: Support increased funding for this block grant, which provides states with considerable flexibility over the use of funds.

f. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs: Support full funding of WIA programs, especially youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs.

g. Older Americans Act Programs: Support increased funding for Older Americans Act programs, especially nutrition services and the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

h. Refugee Assistance: Support increased funding to provide cash and medical assistance, employment services, and other supportive services to refugees.

i. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): Support increased funding for CSBG, which provides assistance to states, localities, and community-based organizations to reduce poverty, revitalize low income communities, and assist low income persons.

3. Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill

a. Water Quality and Reliability: Support funding for the improvement of water quality and reliability, including grants for projects that would expand the use of recycled water, and for the protection of water supplies against terrorist acts.

b. Marina del Rey: Support funding for the development and implementation of long-term solutions for shoaling problems, including the safe disposal of contaminated sediment and construction of improvements in Ballona Creek and the entrance of Marina del Rey.

c. Beach Erosion/Replenishment: Support funding for developing and implementing coastal management plans, including beach stabilization and replenishment projects.

4. Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Bill

a. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, Section 108 Loan Guarantees, and Homeless Assistance: Support increased CDBG, HOME, Section 108 Loan Guarantee, and homeless assistance funding levels, and oppose efforts to increase set asides.

b. Public and Assisted Housing: Support increased funding for the public housing and Section 8 programs, including the Section 8 Family Unification program, and Shelter Plus Care renewal projects.

5. Interior Appropriations Bill

a. Land and Water Conservation Fund: Support full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund as well as funding for improvements in the Santa Monica Mountains, parks, environmental restoration of coastal watersheds and wetlands, and beach projects in Los Angeles County.

b. Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) Program: Support increased funding for park and open space acquisition and development under the UPARR.

6. Transportation, Treasury, and General Government Appropriations Bill

a. Highway Projects: Support funding for projects to improve, repair, and maintain highways in Los Angeles County.

b. Airport and Seaport Security: Support increased and multi-year funding to improve security at airports, seaports, and harbors in Los Angeles County, including funding for Coast Guard operations to protect coastal areas of the County.

c. Environmental Improvements: Support funding for initiatives to protect and enhance communities through projects promoting public safety and environmental improvements.

d. Help America Vote Act (HAVA): Support full funding of HAVA grants to help state and local governments meet new election requirements established under HAVA.

7. Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

a. Homeland Security Activities: Support increased funding for local homeland security activities, such as emergency preparedness and response, training, equipment, and improved communications systems.

b. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Support funding for FEMA to reimburse all unpaid disaster claims and for earthquake preparedness, disaster mitigation, and emergency management.

c. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program: Support increased funding for SAFER, which provides financial assistance to hire firefighters.

ATTACHMENT II

RECOMMENDED FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

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RECOMMENDED FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

1. Health/Mental Health

a. Support reform of Medicaid financing and provider payments to increase Medicaid payments, including disproportionate share hospital payments, to health safety net providers.

b. Support reform of Medicaid payments to providers to encourage efficient use of resources and expand ambulatory care services to low-income patients without jeopardizing total available Medicaid funds.

c. Support a more equitable allocation of Federal Medicaid funds to reduce the current disparity under which some states, such as California, receive far less Federal Medicaid funds per Medicaid recipient than other states.

d. Support proposals which would increase California's Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), the Federal matching rate used under the Medicaid and Title IV-E Foster Care programs.

e. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health care services, such as those which would reduce the level of Medicaid payments and the scope of Medicaid covered services and persons.

f. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and health insurance coverage to more persons, especially the uninsured and minors whose health needs, otherwise, must be met by the County.

g. Support proposals which provide states with greater flexibility over the use of SCHIP funds, including to expand eligibility to cover parents and legal immigrants, expand the scope of covered services, and use community-based delivery systems without requiring Federally approved waivers. Also, support proposals which would allow California to expend or retain more of its SCHIP allotments which, otherwise, would be subject to reallocation to other states under current law.

h. Support legislation to extend health insurance to more persons aged 55 to 64, such as by making Federal employee health benefit plans available to them.

i. Support proposals to increase Medicare payments for graduate medical education to assist public teaching hospitals, which play a critical role in training residents.

j. Support proposals and funding to enhance the nation's public health infrastructure and the capacity of local public hospitals and health departments to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism and other medical and public health emergencies.

k. Support proposals which provide funding for trauma care services.

l. Support proposals which provide funding for capital improvements to public health facilities and clinics.

m. Support proposals which provide funding to promote and market the availability of County health services and which improve access to health care services for the uninsured, women, and other populations with special needs.

n. Support proposals which provide funding for urban telemedicine programs in medically underserved areas, and which would reimburse physicians in urban areas for telemedical consultations.

o. Support proposals which would expand or improve mental health and substance abuse coverage under public and private health insurance programs.

p. Support proposals which would allow Medicaid reimbursement for patients at institutions for mental disease (IMDs), which are hospitals, nursing facilities, or other institutions with more than 16 beds that are primarily engaged in the diagnosis, treatment, or care of persons with mental diseases.

q. Support proposals which would increase Medicaid reimbursement of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) costs, including allowing Medicaid payments to be made to IHSS providers who are responsible relatives of recipients.

r. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid coverage to include the evaluation and diagnosis of learning disabilities.

s. Support proposals requiring prior notification to state and local governments by licensed health facilities granted protection under Federal bankruptcy laws to ensure maintenance of appropriate patient care.

t. Support proposals which allow public hospitals to access discounted pharmaceutical pricing schedules available to the Federal government.

u. Support proposals which would increase the supply of nurses, especially registered nurses.

v. Support proposals and funding for laboratory personnel education and training.

w. Support legislation to reauthorize Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, which would provide increased funding to California and the County.

x. Support proposals that would provide for a more equitable allocation of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funds, such as by increasing the statutory cap on the cost of service factor that adjusts block grant allotments for the relative differences in the cost of providing substance abuse services among states.

y. Support proposals that would increase funding for preventive health services.

2. Ryan White CARE Act Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize Ryan White CARE Act programs that will ensure adequate appropriations and equitable distribution of resources.

b. Support proposals that would increase available funding for the County.

c. Support preservation of existing CARE Act programs, including Title I emergency assistance grants to heavily impacted areas, such as the County.

d. Support language that would allow funds to be used to provide a more comprehensive, integrated continuum of care and services that is locally determined and responsive to the needs of all individuals in need of CARE Act funded services.

3. Health and Human Services Reform

a. Support proposals which would increase the number of indigent County residents who are eligible to receive Federally-funded assistance while ensuring that sponsors meet their financial obligations.

b. Support maintaining Medicaid, Food Stamps, and child support enforcement as open-ended entitlement programs.

c. Support open-ended entitlements for Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance and other funding models that promote higher priorities such as increased State and local flexibility in the expenditure of Federal funding and support achievement of better outcomes for children.

d. Support sufficient funding for health and human services reforms commensurate with any increase in services or administrative responsibilities needed to implement the reforms.

e. Support proposals and funding for welfare-to-work activities.

f. Support proposals and funding for services to non-custodial parents that strengthen their earning power, promote the payment of child support, and promote more effective parenting and greater involvement in the lives of their children.

g. Support funding to implement and make improvements to automated data and management information systems for Federal programs administered by state and local governments.

h. Support proposals which would simplify the administration of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and Food Stamps.

i. Oppose proposals that would reduce Federal or State financial participation in health and human services programs, especially when it could result in a reduction in services or shift costs to the County.

j. Support proposals to hold state and local governments harmless from fiscal penalties when the Federal government did not provide additional funding commensurate with the cost of meeting new Federal requirements, or when the failure to meet Federal requirements resulted from factors beyond their control, such as the lack of clear program instructions.

k. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health and human services, such as reducing Federal funding or denying Federally-funded benefits to indigent County residents who will remain eligible for County-funded services.

l. Support proposals which would enhance the County's ability to utilize Federal funds to coordinate and integrate service delivery, including, but not limited to, the sharing of costs and client information across Federal programs.

m. Oppose new administratively imposed requirements, such as performance or quality control standards, that are not accompanied by additional Federal funding.

n. Support proposals that would increase state and local flexibility under Section 1115 waivers, including by extending Section 1115 waiver authority to Title IV-B Child and Family Services, Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, and Title XX Social Services.

o. Support maintaining the flexibility of states to terminate demonstration projects and state options in health and human services programs.

p. Support proposals and funding that would promote home and community-based care for persons with disabilities who, otherwise, would require institutionalization.

4. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant which maintains or increases annual funding levels and state and local flexibility over the use of funds, provides for an equitable allocation of funds to

California, and preserves or increases the current state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirement to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the needs of low income children and their families.

b. Support preservation of the current scope of allowable activities and populations served.

c. Support expanding the work activities that states may count towards the TANF work participation rate, and support the elimination of the separate two-parent work requirement.

d. Support proposals which provide incentives to states to move families toward self-sufficiency, such as providing credit toward a state's work participation rate for moving recipients into employment.

e. Support proposals which would waive fiscal penalties on states that failed to meet Federal work participation rate requirements despite increasing expenditures on work-related activities or which would allow a state to pay its penalty by increasing its TANF work-related expenditures by an amount equal to the penalty.

f. Support proposals which would increase the flexibility of states to draw down their TANF allotments.

g. Support proposals which would strengthen TANF's role in reducing child poverty.

5. Food Stamps

a. Support proposals which would simplify the administration of the Food Stamps Program, including telephone interviews with applicants, one-step benefit calculations, and streamlining of Food Stamps work and training requirements.

b. Support proposals to reform the Food Stamp quality control (QC) system, such as by setting more reasonable error rate targets, placing greater emphasis on rewarding good performance rather than penalizing poor performance, and allowing states to reinvest any QC fiscal penalty as an alternative to payment.

c. Support proposals which improve coordination between the Food Stamps and TANF programs, including providing states with the option to use the TANF definition of household under the Food Stamps Program.

d. Support the restoration of Food Stamps eligibility to all legal non-citizens with deeming provisions for sponsored immigrants.

6. Children and Family Services

a. Support proposals which would provide a subsidy for legal guardian relative caregivers who have assumed full time care and responsibility for abused and neglected children and avoid foster care placement for such children.

b. Support proposals and funding which would promote income security, housing, health care, and education and vocational opportunities for youth emancipating from foster care, and which would lower the age provision of the Independent Living Program to 14 years.

c. Support proposals which would expand Title IV-E eligibility to more abused and neglected children.

d. Support proposals which would increase funding for foster care, adoption assistance, independent living, family preservation, child protective services, and other services to promote the safety and well being of abused and neglected children.

e. Support proposals and funding which would implement a Child Health and Education Passport System in Los Angeles County.

f. Support proposals which would enhance legal permanence for foster children by streamlining and/or supporting adoption and legal guardianship programs.

g. Support proposals and funding which would improve and increase the training of child welfare, mental health, health, and other workers who provide services to children in the child welfare system.

h. Support proposals to expedite the implementation of a comprehensive statewide automated child support system in California, mitigate the State's fiscal liability for not meeting Federal child support automation requirements, and allow fiscal penalties imposed on the State to be reinvested in the child support program.

i. Support legislation that requires Federal agencies to update their records within five days of receipt of information from state Title IV-D child support agencies.

j. Support proposals and funding to promote and increase intervention, prevention, training, and education in the areas of domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse.

k. Support proposals which would provide for the flexible use of Title IV-E funding to provide services to abused and neglected children and their families.

l. Support enactment of tax credits for individuals who provide in-home care to elderly parents or other family members.

m. Support proposals which provide funding for state and local governments for before and after-school programs.

n. Support proposals to provide states with increased financial incentives to pass through child support arrearages to children who receive welfare benefits.

o. Support proposals which provide funding for state and local government to increase access and availability of child care for working and low-income families, promote systems to monitor the quality of child care, and support the development and creation of child care facilities, including by allowing a portion of Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to be used to build child care facilities in areas with a shortage of licensed child care.

p. Support legislation to provide funding to local school districts to implement locally determined programs to help educate public school students with limited English proficiency.

q. Support legislation to reauthorize the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program, which maintains or increases California's percentage share of total CSBG funding, and which retains the current requirement that states pass through block grant funds to local communities.

7. Employment and Training

a. Support programs that provide special training, remedial education, job placement, career enhancement, and other employment services to low-income persons, at-risk youth, and displaced workers so that they may enter the competitive job market.

b. Support providing local elected officials greater control and flexibility over the administration, planning, and implementation of employment and training programs.

c. Support the pass-through of Federal employment and training funds to local areas based on relative need as measured by factors such as unemployment, poverty, and the number of welfare recipients and displaced workers.

d. Support legislation which allows persons from the military to obtain credit for their training, and promotes the transfer of such skills to the private sector and other government agencies to avoid the time and cost of retraining.

e. Support proposals which permit the full implementation of the County's Living Wage Ordinance.

8. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act, which provides separate adult, youth, and dislocated worker formula grants for workforce development activities to states with the mandatory pass-through of funds to local workforce areas.

b. Support proposals to provide local elected officials with greater flexibility over the administration, planning, and use of WIA funds, including the flexibility to serve more in-school youth and foster youth and to administer stand-alone summer youth programs.

c. Support proposals which would expand and improve the effectiveness of the one-stop workforce delivery system, including providing greater flexibility in forming local partnerships and in sharing information and costs among programs and entities participating in the one-stop system.

d. Support WIA performance measurement system reforms which would promote local flexibility in setting performance goals, and which would ensure that local areas are not penalized for having a high unemployment rate or for targeting services at hard-to-employ persons or persons with special needs, such as foster youth or the homeless.

e. Support proposals which would equitably allocate WIA funds to states and substate areas, based solely on relative need using the latest available data.

f. Oppose proposals that would include Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs in a "super waiver" covering multiple Federal employment and education programs, which could reduce the amount of funds available to the County for locally determined workforce services.

g. Support proposals which would establish a streamlined funding mechanism for sharing one-stop infrastructure costs among partner programs in a manner that ensures County-administered partner programs will not incur a disproportionately high share of infrastructure costs.

9. Older Americans Act Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize Older Americans Act (OAA) programs at increased funding levels.

b. Support proposals that would increase flexibility, including by allowing Family Caregiver Program funds to be used to serve grandparents under age 60 who are raising children.

c. Support proposals that would reduce non-Federal match requirements and expand what can be counted as a matching contribution.

d. Support proposals which would provide for the more equitable allocation of OAA funds to states and substate areas, based solely on relative need using the latest available data.

10. Homeland Security

a. Support funding for local homeland security activities, such as emergency preparedness and response, planning, training, equipment, personnel, and improved communications systems.

b. Support proposals and funding to enhance the nation's public health infrastructure and the capacity of local public hospitals and health departments to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism and other medical and public health emergencies.

c. Support proposals which would more effectively target homeland security, first responder, bioterrorism, and firefighting funds based on relative need, population, and threat levels.

d. Support funding to improve the security of critical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, flood control, water resources, hospitals, public buildings, and transportation facilities.

e. Support funding to ensure an adequate supply of vaccine, antidotes, medications, and other medical supplies to respond to a health emergency or terrorist threat.

f. Support the direct allocation or the pass-through of an equitable share of state block grant funds to counties for first responder, bioterrorism, and other homeland security activities.

g. Oppose match or cost-sharing requirements which would hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.

h. Support greater local flexibility over the use of first responder, bioterrorism, and other homeland security funding, including the flexibility to use funds to pay for personnel.

i. Support proposals which would clarify that the Federal government rather than state and local public health departments or their employees is financially liable for any claims arising from the administration of a vaccine as part of their involvement in a Federal vaccination campaign.

j. Support proposals which would facilitate interagency information sharing and coordination on emergency management, law enforcement, public safety, and health matters relating to homeland security.

k. Support proposals and funding for human relations agencies to combat terrorism and related hate violence by helping to enhance communication, trust, and cooperation between law enforcement and impacted communities, and for the nation's human relations infrastructure to prepare for, prevent, and respond to hate violence, prejudice, and damage to intergroup relations that may arise from terrorist attacks or threats.

l. Support the concept of multi-year Federal grant funding to improve security at seaports and harbors in Los Angeles County.

m. Support proposals which would promote a regional approach to homeland security and emergency preparedness.

11. Justice/Anti-Crime

a. Support the allocation of Justice Assistance Grant, juvenile justice, and other anti-crime block grant funds to local governments based on their relative need and responsibility for criminal justice activities, as measured by crime rates and criminal justice expenditures including, but not limited to, jails, courts, prosecution, incarceration, and probation.

b. Support direct grants (or the pass-through of an equitable share of state block grant funds) to counties for the development, refurbishment, or operation of correctional facilities.

c. Support the elimination of local match requirements under anti-crime and other justice assistance programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services program, for financially distressed local governments.

d. Support proposals to allow the County to count its unreimbursed criminal alien incarceration costs as matching funds towards any match requirement for Federal anti-crime funds.

e. Support increased Federal resources to assist County justice agencies with crime laboratory improvements and backlog reduction, drug laundering intervention, jail automation, and tracking of criminal aliens.

f. Support increased funding for probation under Federal community policing programs, but not at the expense of currently financed law enforcement activities.

g. Support proposals which would facilitate information sharing and coordination between Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

h. Support proposals to promote community prosecution programs and increase prosecutions of gun-related crimes and identity theft.

i. Support increased Federal involvement and funding to reduce gang-related crimes, and increased Federal funding for juvenile justice programs which promote a balance of funding between punitive intervention efforts and prevention investments.

j. Support proposals that make mental health intervention a component of law enforcement and the administration of justice, including training law enforcement personnel in dealing with the mentally ill, and support funding for mental health courts.

k. Support legislation which expands Federal jurisdiction to prosecute hate crimes based on gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

l. Support legislation which seeks to reduce discrimination and hate crimes, increase human relations education and training, and enhance communities' capacity to effectively address intergroup relations issues.

m. Support proposals which allow for an intercept of Federal tax refunds of probationers who owe restitution.

n. Support legislation which would provide for the cancellation of student loans for public defenders and prosecutors.

o. Support proposals and funding to expand drug courts and other drug treatment programs as an alternative to incarceration.

p. Support proposals to prohibit the unauthorized use, manufacture, wearing, sale, or transfer of any official public agency badge or photographic identification card.

12. Immigration and Refugees

a. Support proposals which would reduce the County's criminal justice costs associated with criminal aliens, such as by providing increased Federal reimbursement of County costs or by increasing Federal prosecutions of deported criminal aliens who unlawfully reenter the country.

b. Support proposals which would reduce backlogs of naturalization and immigration adjustment of status cases and which eliminate barriers faced by aged and disabled legal immigrants in becoming naturalized citizens.

c. Support an extension of Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which allows immigrants to adjust their immigration status without leaving the country if they pay a $1,000 penalty fee, and support using the fee revenues to expand INS activities and reimburse criminal alien costs in the districts where the fees are collected.

d. Support legislation to reauthorize Refugee Act programs that ensure that newly arrived refugees will receive cash and medical assistance, employment and training, social services, and other needed services.

e. Support a more equitable allocation of Refugee Social Services and Targeted Assistance funds, and support proposals which provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of funds, including the flexibility to serve refugees who have been in the U.S. over five years.

f. Oppose proposals which would restrict the eligibility of refugees for other Federal programs, such as TANF and Medicaid, or which would shift costs of providing cash

and medical assistance to refugees from the Federal government to state and local governments.

13. Community Development

a. Support programs and initiatives providing community development, economic development, and housing for low and moderate income persons to improve their living conditions and the economic health and infrastructure of their communities.

b. Support proposals which provide increased flexibility over the use of Federal community development and housing funds to local officials.

c. Support retention of the current direct allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to large urban counties and current CDBG and HOME state/local allocation formulas, and oppose proposals that would decrease funding to Los Angeles County.

d. Support continued funding for the Section 108 loan guarantee program, which is an important source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, and other physical development projects.

e. Oppose policies which would allow private commercial development and the transfer of land to private entities at the Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Healthcare Center.

f. Support proposals which would increase resources available to local jurisdictions to clean up and redevelop Brownfields.

g. Oppose proposals which would increase fees for Small Business Administration loans.

h. Support proposals which would increase funding for asbestos and lead-based paint removal programs.

14. Housing and Homeless Assistance

a. Support proposals to maintain or increase funding to public housing authorities (PHAs), such as for capital improvements, operating subsidies, resident services, administration, and anti-crime programs in public housing.

b. Support proposals which would provide local officials with greater flexibility over the administration and use of housing funds, including greater flexibility over the use of HOME funds, Section 8 administrative fees, Section 8 vouchers, and the membership of the governing body of the PHA.

c. Support the continued administration of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program by local PHAs, and oppose proposals which would reduce local decision-making authority or convert the Section 8 program into a block grant to states.

d. Support sufficient funding to renew all existing Section 8 vouchers at Fair Market Rent levels.

e. Support proposals which would simplify program administration and ease reporting requirements for public housing authorities.

f. Support proposals and funding which would increase home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income families and increase the supply of affordable housing, such as by extending the use of mortgage revenue bond proceeds for homeownership activities.

g. Support proposals which provide additional resources for meeting the housing and related supportive service needs of special populations, including elderly, disabled, and mentally ill persons.

h. Support the reauthorization of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and proposals which would increase local discretion over the use of homeless assistance funds, increase funding for homeless assistance programs, including supportive housing, supportive services, emergency services, and the Homeless Management Information System, and more equitably distribute funds based on relative need.

i. Support creation and funding of a national plan to end homelessness and which also addresses the needs of the homeless mentally ill.

j. Support proposals that would impede predatory lending practices.

k. Support proposals to improve the HUD public housing performance measurement system, including through involving PHAs in the development of performance measures.

l. Oppose proposals which would restrict the authority of PHAs to administer housing programs, including over the selection and eviction of tenants, or which would impose costly new requirements that are not accompanied by additional resources to implement them.

15. Transportation

a. Support funding for County transportation projects.

b. Support proposals to provide local officials with greater flexibility over the use of transportation funds.

c. Support regional alternatives to the expansion of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), including the use of tax and fee incentives for airlines to expand the number of flights at underutilized regional airports.

d. Support funding for clean fuel buses and for bus maintenance facility improvements.

e. Support efforts to work collaboratively with regional transportation agencies to secure funding for transportation projects in Los Angeles County.

16. Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21) Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) which maintains or increases overall annual funding, provides for a more equitable allocation of funds to California and the County, funds demonstration projects in the County, and enhances the role of local officials over the planning and use of TEA-21 funds.

b. Support proposals which would increase the share of Federal transportation funds received by California relative to Federal taxes collected from California.

c. Support proposals to increase funding for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, which funds transportation projects that lower emissions to assist states in meeting Federal air quality standards, targets a greater share of CMAQ funds to urban areas with the worst air quality, and increases local flexibility over the use of CMAQ funds in improving air quality.

d. Support proposals which would increase state and local control over the use of funds by increasing the share of total funding allocated, by formula, to states rather than through Congressionally-earmarked projects.

e. Support proposals to streamline and expedite the transportation planning and development process.

17. Air, Water, and Resources

a. Support measures which permit greater local flexibility in dealing with potential contamination and pollution from storm water runoff, and oppose changes in Federal law and policy which restrict the ability of the County to maintain facilities so they can function as designed.

b. Support proposals and funding for research and development of technologies to improve water quality with respect to brackish water, chromium 6, perchlorate, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), arsenic, radon, and disinfection byproducts.

c. Support proposals which would improve the reliability, quality, and security of water supplies for Los Angeles County.

d. Support amendments to the Clean Water Act which would authorize Federal funding or cost-sharing for implementing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) standards, or which would exempt from its provisions those routine operation and maintenance activities on existing publicly-owned flood control and water conservation facilities.

e. Support legislation which repeals the mandated use of oxygenated fuel additives, such as MTBE.

f. Oppose proposals that would shift liability for the cost of cleaning up pollution caused by fuel additives, such as MTBE, from the private sector to state and local governments.

g. Support proposals which provide funding to states and local governments for compliance with regulations to reduce emissions from mobile and fixed sources through efforts such as the conversion of vehicle fleets to alternative fuels.

h. Support proposals which provide funding or tax credits for projects to improve air quality, such as by reducing toxic particulate matter emissions from diesel engines through voluntary scrap programs and the replacement or retrofit of diesel-powered vehicles and equipment.

i. Support proposals which provide funding to state and local governments for environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, land acquisition, open space, and improvements to parks, beaches, and other recreational areas.

j. Support legislation to fund the operation and maintenance of watershed or multi-use projects.

k. Support proposals and funding for pollution control activities, storm drain improvements, and the replacement of septic systems in the County.

l. Oppose proposals which would reduce the amount of funds available to state and local governments from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

m. Support proposals to fully fund the Los Angeles County segment of the Army Corps of Engineers' Coast of California study and the development of long-term management plans for sediments in the Los Angeles region.

n. Support the use of a portion of funds from the Outer Continental Shelf Royalty Fund for sand replenishment, sewage treatment, urban runoff programs, and the environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, and oppose initiatives to renew offshore drilling.

o. Support proposals which would authorize Federal cost-sharing of local development and rehabilitation projects as well as operations and maintenance at Federally owned and constructed flood control facilities used for regional recreation.

p. Support funding for pest prevention and eradication efforts, weed and wildlife management efforts, enhanced pesticide use enforcement and monitoring, increased surveillance of pests at ports of entry in California, and for the Sterile Insect Release program in the Los Angeles area to prevent Medfly infestations.

q. Support funding for weights and measures inspection and enforcement.

r. Support proposals that provide public agencies with immunity from liability to encourage development of multiuse watershed management, environmental restoration, open space, and recreation projects within flood protection and water conservation facilities.

18. Waste Management and Superfund

a. Support measures which protect local governments from excessive and unjustified liability for hazardous waste cleanup.

b. Support proposals and funding for the immediate clean up of hazardous materials at closed military bases to ensure the prompt reuse of those bases for new purposes.

c. Support proposals which establish a redemption value on paint cans to promote recycling of leftover paint.

d. Support development of long-term markets for recycled materials and other end-use products.

e. Support proposals which would increase the recycling of televisions and computer monitors that are toxic due to their lead content, such as requiring manufacturers, retailers, and end users to share the financial burden of recycling them.

f. Support the development of alternative technologies, other than landfilling, for the management of residual waste after diversion activities.

g. Oppose proposals which would allow transport of nuclear waste through the County.

19. Disaster Assistance

a. Support proposals which would increase the amount of Federal disaster aid available to the County, such as by authorizing Federal reimbursement of straight-time labor costs for emergency response work, and oppose proposals that would reduce Federal disaster aid or increase the proportion of disaster aid or hazard mitigation costs which must be borne by state or local governments.

b. Support proposals and funding to improve the capacity of state and local governments to plan, prepare, and respond to emergencies, including those involving acts of terrorism as well as natural disasters.

20. Utilities

a. Support efforts to ensure reasonable wholesale rates for electricity, and oppose proposals which would restrict California's efforts to solve its energy problems.

b. Support proposals to require refunds to consumers and utilities for rates charged in excess of just and reasonable levels.

c. Support efforts to establish electric utility reliability standards.

d. Oppose proposals which would restrict the ability of public agencies to use tax-exempt financing for electric co-generation.

21. Communications

a. Support proposals and funding that would enable County public safety agencies to upgrade their communications systems, utilize additional radio spectrum, implement or expand interoperable communications systems, use new communications technologies, and meet increasingly complex communications requirements.

b. Support proposals to provide local agencies with waivers from Federal mandates to convert from broadband to narrow band communications technologies or with funding to comply with the mandates.

c. Support proposals which would assign additional radio spectrum to public safety agencies.

d. Oppose measures which preempt local government authority over zoning of television, radio, and telecommunications broadcast towers.

e. Support proposals which encourage competition between local telephone companies and long distance carriers, in order to reduce costs to consumers.

f. Support Federal legislation which prohibits "slamming" and "cramming" of telecommunications services, and which limits the financial liability of affected consumers.

g. Support proposals which protect consumers from unsolicited commercial electronic mail ("spamming").

h. Oppose measures which preempt the authority of local government to adopt policies on use of Internet services and equipment funded by the Federal E-rate telecommunication discount program.

i. Support legislation to provide consumers with a callback number that would lift the identity block used by marketers in telephone solicitations.

j. Support proposals to provide all public libraries with lower rates for telecommunications services, including access to the Internet.

k. Support proposals that promote and fund nationwide availability of 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral to human services and for other purposes.

22. Tobacco Settlement

a. Support proposals which reimburse local governments for indigent and employee health care costs attributable to tobacco products, reduce youth access to tobacco products, and promote community-based tobacco prevention and intervention efforts.

b. Oppose proposals which weaken the ability of local government to sue the tobacco industry, preempt the ability of local government to regulate tobacco products, and weaken the ability of the Federal Food and Drug Administration to regulate nicotine, unless part of an overall settlement which is beneficial to the County.

c. Support proposals which prevent the Federal government from taking proceeds from settlements between the tobacco industry and state and local governments.

d. Oppose proposals which limit the ability of individuals to sue the tobacco industry for tobacco-related damages.

23. Census and Federal Data

a. Support proposals which promote accurate, unbiased and inclusive census counts, and support the use of scientifically sound sampling methods to augment the direct count to ensure that accurate data will be available with which to equitably allocate funds among states and localities.

b. Support the use of the most current available Federal demographic data in allocating Federal formula grant funds to assure that areas, such as the County, whose population is growing faster than the national average, receive an equitable share of funds.

c. Oppose the use of small state minimums which provide states with small populations with more Federal aid relative to need than more populous states, such as California.

24. Federalism

a. Support proposals which ensure the input of state and local governments before implementing any Executive Order relating to the powers of state and local governments.

b. Oppose proposals which preempt local land use decision-making, exempt certain categories of land use from zoning requirements, or limit the ability of local governments to determine appropriate uses of property within their jurisdiction.

c. Support proposals which would expedite Federal review of waiver requests submitted by state and local governments, especially requests for waiver extensions or waivers similar to those approved in other jurisdictions.

d. Oppose proposals which would result in a net cost increase or tax revenue loss to state and local governments without providing them with offsetting Federal revenue.

e. Oppose proposals which would result in the downsizing and/or closure of the Los Angeles Air Force base.

f. Support preservation of the Federal tax deductibility of state and local income and property taxes and the Federal tax-exempt status of state and local bonds.

25. Retirement/Pension Programs

a. Oppose proposals which mandate Social Security and Medicare coverage of state and local government employees.

b. Support proposals which would increase the portability of government pension and deferred income plans, including by allowing Section 457 transfers to purchase retirement service credits, and relax limits on contributions to and benefits from such plans.

c. Support proposals to repeal or reduce the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision which reduce the amount of Social Security benefits received by many Federal, state, and local government retirees and their spouses.

26. Voting

a. Support legislation which permits registrars to remove names from voting rolls when unable to confirm residency, permits the use of Social Security numbers on voter registration affidavits, establishes a system for local elections officials to ascertain and determine the status of Federal felons on probation or parole, and permits the U.S. Postal Service to return undeliverable official elections materials without charge to elections officials.

b. Support proposals and funding to help state and local governments upgrade their voting equipment to a more technologically advanced system that produces accurate and expeditious election results without imposing uniform nationwide standards.

27. Cultural/Libraries

a. Support increased Federal funding for cultural and educational agencies, including museums, which promote and sustain the arts, arts education, the humanities, and the sciences.

b. Support funding of the Library Services and Technology Act at the full amount authorized by law.

c. Support funding for the Federal Depository Library Program, which makes government publications accessible at public libraries throughout the country.

28. Consumer Affairs

Support legislation to prohibit unsolicited credit checks currently being marketed by credit card companies.