

**ALAMEDA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION/LEGISLATION
COMMITTEE**

Monday, February 3, 2014
1:30 P.m.

Supervisor Keith Carson, Chair
Supervisor Wilma Chan

Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers – Room 512 5th floor
County Administration Building
1221 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

Supervisor Keith Carson called the meeting to order.

I. Federal Legislative Update

The House and Senate are both in session this week.

The House will consider the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act (H.R. 3964). Proponents of the bill argue that implementation of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1992 (CVPIA) and state and federal environmental laws have compounded the impact of drought on water deliveries; the bill is designed to remedy these effects. However, Senators Feinstein and Boxer are opposed to the legislation and have said it undermines state law related to Bay Delta restoration and endangered species.

The Senate plans on taking up the farm bill and will send to the president for his signature. The House passed the bill last week. The Senate also may vote again to temporarily restore unemployment benefits that expired in December.

Debt Ceiling

Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew has said the United States will reach its borrowing limit by late February. Several Senate Republicans have stated they hoped to gain cuts in federal spending or long-term debt reduction in exchange for a vote to raise the federal debt ceiling, however it is unclear how such a strategy would work as Democrats have stated they would only support a clean bill to raise the debt ceiling.

Immigration

There has been no concrete action by Congress in 2014 on an immigration bill. Speaker Boehner said that fellow Republicans must deal with immigration reform, stating a piecemeal approach to immigration reform would help build confidence among Republicans. The Leadership released a one-page “standards for immigration reform” document, which offered few details but called for some legal status for the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants, with possible citizenship for those who arrived as children. The plan also calls for “specific enforcement triggers” for border security and interior enforcement measures before undocumented immigrants can attain legal status and before any expansion of guest worker programs.

Farm bill

The House passed the Farm Bill on January 29, 2014. The Alameda County delegation did not support the bill due to cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Senate plans to vote on the bill on Tuesday. The legislation will generate approximately \$23 billion in 10-year savings with a third of

those cuts being attributed to the nutrition title in the legislation.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP)

The farm bill cuts approximately \$8.6 billion from the SNAP program over 10 years and uses some of those savings for a number of pilot programs to test new ideas to help unemployed beneficiaries receive training and find employment, as well as provide additional funds to food banks. Below are some of the specific provisions impacting SNAP:

- The conference agreement authorizes appropriations for SNAP through FY18 – the full length of the farm bill.
- The cuts to SNAP come from the “Heat and Eat Program,” which sets a minimum threshold requiring states to at least distribute \$20 in fuel aid to qualify for the utility allowance. The change to the program would reduce, but not eliminate, SNAP payments based on heat-and-eat eligibility.
- The House bill required all able-bodied adults to meet applicable work requirements by eliminating the ability of the Secretary to grant waivers for states in areas of high unemployment.
- The House bill restricted categorical eligibility for SNAP to only those households receiving cash assistance through other low-income assistance programs.
- The conference report does include language that would disqualify individuals convicted of specified federal crimes (including murder, rape, certain crimes against children), and state offenses determined by the Attorney General to be substantially similar, from receiving SNAP. *These restrictions will apply to individuals with convictions after date of enactment of the farm bill, and to only those individuals who are not in compliance with the terms of their sentence.*

Unemployment Insurance Extension

The Senate may bring up a three-month temporary extension of unemployment insurance benefits this week. Senator Majority Leader Harry Reid said that he is close to getting 60 votes needed to overcome filibuster efforts.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request PAL Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other: Federal legislative update**

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

II. State Legislative Update

Last week was the deadline to move all two-year bills out of their house of origin. This is one of the few firm deadlines, but exceptions to this deadline are granted for urgency bills, tax bills, and Constitutional amendments. Over the next few weeks the Capitol activity will be slow as the new legislation must be introduced by February 21, 2014. There will be several informational hearings held, the most significant of which will be the Senate Budget Committee’s hearing on the Governor’s Cap & Trade proposal, and a Senate Transportation & Housing hearing of reforming Caltrans.

Covered California

Open enrollment for insurance coverage under Covered California ends March 31st, 2014. The Exchange Board offered enrollment data for the first three months of activity at their last meeting, breaking enrollment

numbers down by region, race, and age. Total enrollment as of December 31st was 500,108, 86% of the total number expected by March 31st.

Drought Relief

Senate President Pro Tem Steinberg is working on amendments to SB 731 that will expedite the appropriation of Proposition 84 funds, remaining Proposition 1E funds, and some cap & trade revenue for drought relief projects. The proposal directs the Department of Water Resources to expedite the granting of \$200 million of integrated regional water management grants, \$50 million in Prop 84 and Prop 1E funds for multi-benefit flood management projects that are consistent with the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan, and \$20 million is cap & trade auction revenue for projects that improve water efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A copy of draft language is attached.

Transportation Initiative on Hold

Transportation California and the California Alliance for Jobs have decided not to proceed at this time with their initiative proposal to impose a vehicle license fee dedicated to transportation projects. In November, the backers submitted a proposal to phase in a 1% VLF charge that would be dedicated to transportation and transit capital projects, which would generate up to \$4 billion annually. After polling, voter approval is unlikely. Both Transportation California and the Alliance for Jobs will continue to work with stakeholders to find a long-term solution to our transportation funding needs.

State Smart Transportation Initiative

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) released the findings and recommendation of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI). SSTI is an independent management auditing organization consisting of transportation policy experts from across the country. SSTI made several recommendations for CalTrans operations. In addition, the CalSTA established the California Transportation Infrastructure Priorities Workgroup (CTIP) last year. The CTIP Workgroup consists of over 50 transportation related representatives, which have been meeting regularly over the past year. The initial report from the CTIP Workgroup is expected to be released this week. The report is expected to prioritize state transportation needs for the near and long term.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request PAL Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other: State legislative update**

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

Request for Legislation Position – Action Item

- i. AB 135 (Buchanan) School employees: child abuse: reporting
*Recommendation: **Support:** Alex Briscoe, Director, Health Care Services Agency*

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request PAL Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Recommendation from PAL Committee: Approve. Move to the full Board of Supervisors.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Board of Supervisors' Committees agendas are available via Internet at: www.acgov.org

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