



# Board Agenda Item 5

DATE: February 1, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Nerland, County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Fresno County Federal Legislative Platform Updates

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Adopt recommended changes to the Fresno County Federal Legislative Platform;**
- 2. Authorize the Chairman to execute letters of support, or opposition, in accordance with the platform; and**
- 3. Authorize the County Administrative Office to work with the County's Federal Congressional Delegation, federal advocates, and/or other necessary parties to support or oppose, legislation in accordance with the platform.**

The Legislative Platform is a statement of the goals and priorities of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors and establishes the basis for its advocacy efforts with Congress and Federal agencies. The Platform is also used as a guide for support letters related to grant applications. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

1. Make changes to the recommendations or language in the Federal Legislative Platform.
2. Postpone updates to the Federal Legislative Platform.
3. Choose not to make changes and continue to work off the existing federal Legislative Platform, last updated and approved on February 23, 2021.

If your Board chooses to postpone or not make updates to the platform, staff will need to bring items that are not currently included in the platform to your Board to be addressed on an individual basis.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions.

DISCUSSION:

The Federal Legislative Platform is used by County officials and staff as policy guidelines for legislative action and to facilitate timely responses to requests from the County's Federal Congressional Delegation, the County's federal advocates, and interested citizens. The Board last updated the Federal Legislative Platform on February 23, 2021. This is the annual update to the Legislative Platform. All County departments had the opportunity to review and recommend changes to the platform.

For letters of support or opposition, the platform serves as a guide for departments to easily identify if Federal issues they are working on fall within the County's Federal Platform. Consistent with Administrative Policy 21, any specific federal issues falling outside of the platform and any letter requesting the signature of

all five Board members would require an agenda item for presentation to your Board.

The proposed platform contains three sections:

- I. **Introduction** - an explanation of the purpose of the legislative platform.
- II. **Major Legislative Issues** - identifies significant issues for the County.
- III. **General Principles** - provides positions that will guide County actions and advocacy efforts in specified categories of Agriculture; Community and Workforce Investment; Criminal Justice and Public Protection; Economic Development; Elections; Energy/Air Quality; Environmental Quality/Natural Resources; Federal Lands and Installations; General Government and Finance; Human Resources; Library; Public Health, Mental Health, and Health Care Services; Social Services; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Water.

The primary recommended changes to the Federal Legislative Platform are highlighted in the second attachment and include the following:

**Major Legislative Issues:**

- Revised the bullet related to Federal funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to delete *“enhanced Federal matching”* and add *“increased spending flexibilities for Federal Covid-19 funding.”*

**Criminal Justice and Public Protection:**

- Added *“reauthorization and”* to the bullet to support continued Federal funding for the Violence Against Women Act.
- Added a bullet to support victims of crime at the Federal, state, and local level by maintaining sufficient fiscal appropriations that fund Victim Witness Assistance programs, and ensure any proposed legislative changes protect and uphold victims’ rights.
- Added a bullet to support Federal funding to combat technology facilitated child sexual exploitation and internet crimes against children.
- Added a bullet to support Federal funding for agencies with crime laboratories to process DNA samples and prevent backlogs.

**General Government and Finance:**

- Simplified the bullet regarding support for restoring the deduction of State and Local Income Taxes (SALT) by adding *“efforts to”* and deleting *“full Federal.”*

**Public Health, Mental Health and Health Care Services:**

- In the bullet to support increased Federal funding for essential public health functions added *“expansion of communicable disease investigation and prevention capacity”* and revised maternal and child health to *“maternal, child and adolescent health.”*
- In the bullet to support full funding for health care and services added *“physical”* to health care and added *“substance abuse disorder care.”*
- Deleted bullet regarding funding for substance abuse treatment programs as this area was combined with the bullet on health care to place treatment for substance use disorder care in parity with other health conditions.

### **Social Services:**

- Added a bullet to support full appropriations for the Elder Abuse Act to support state and county adult protective services programs.
- Added a bullet to oppose actions which reduce funding used to provide in-home supportive services for elderly and disabled persons, or to coordinate services to children with disabilities.
- Added a bullet to support legislation or regulatory guidance to enable states and counties to gradually phase in eligibility redeterminations and renewals for Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for a period of time after the expiration of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Added a bullet to oppose efforts to reduce or limit Federal funding for Medicaid administration or benefits, or the state's ability to leverage funds.
- Added a bullet to support by regulation or legislation a provision to exempt Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) from the Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) exclusion which prohibits Medicaid reimbursement in facilities of more than 16 beds.
- Added a bullet to support increased Federal funding to recruit, retain and support foster families.
- Deleted bullet regarding substance abuse and mental health services as this area is covered in the Public Health, Mental Health and Health Care Services section.
- In bullet supporting reauthorization of the TANF program updated the expiration date to "*February 18, 2022.*"
- Added a bullet to support Federal efforts to align with state CalWORKs goals to better meet the needs of individual families.
- Deleted bullet to support efforts to align state CalWORKs requirements with the Federal TANF program as the wording for this issue was updated in the prior noted added bullet.

### **Transportation & Infrastructure:**

- Added a bullet to support increases in Federal funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME investment Partnership Program to provide essential infrastructure and housing funds for low- and moderate-income rural communities and residents.
- Deleted bullet to ensure the Congressional Delegation is aware of the County's priorities for the upcoming transportation reauthorization bill as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law approved in November 2021 included reauthorization of these programs.

### **Water:**

- Added "*to increase water supply availability and address local and regional water quality issues*" to the bullet supporting legislation, regulations and policy that provide for the development of local and regional water resource management activities with the County.
- Added the term "*projects*" to the bullet supporting legislation that would fund and expedite the construction of surface water storage.
- Added "*water conveyance facilities*" to the bullet supporting legislation to provide funding for building, repairing, upgrading, and maintaining levee and flood control systems in the County.
- Revised bullet regarding supporting funding for community potable water systems to delete "*renewal*" and replace it with "*development.*"
- Revised bullet regarding local water/wastewater programs to replace the word "*Federal*" with "*legislation*" and added "*support implementation*" of these programs.
- Deleted "*and the California Department of Water Resources*" from the bullet supporting reinitiation of consultation on long-term coordinated operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project with Federal agencies since this is not applicable in the Federal Platform.

Approval of the recommended actions will adopt the updated Federal Legislative Platform, authorize the Chairman to execute letters of support or opposition in accordance with the platform, and allow the County Administrative Office to express your Board's position on legislation in accordance with the platform.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

The legislative platform was developed with the cooperation and input of County departments and the County's Washington lobbyist.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #7, February 23, 2021

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Fresno County Federal Legislative Platform  
Fresno County Federal Legislative Platform - Redline

CAO ANALYST:

Jeannie Z. Figueroa