



# Board Agenda Item 19.1

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DATE: August 21, 2018

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Ernest Buddy Mendes, District 4, County of Fresno  
Nathan Magsig, District 5, County of Fresno

SUBJECT: Letters of Support for the FY 2019 Interior-Environment Appropriations Bill

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

**Authorize Board members to execute letters of support for funding included in the FY 2019 Interior-Environment Appropriations bill.**

The Interior-Environment appropriations bill includes funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes, U.S. Forest Service, and the National Park Service. In addition, the House version repeals Waters of the U.S. regulation. The recommended letters to Fresno County's Legislative Delegation outline the County's support for key items addressed in the bill.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may opt to not approve the recommended action.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action.

DISCUSSION:

The FY 2019 Interior-Environment Appropriations bill was passed by the House on July 19, 2018 and by the Senate on August 1, 2018. The bill includes key items of importance to the County as follows:

- **Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding:** The PILT program provides payments to counties to offset lost property tax revenues due to the presence of non-taxable federal lands within their jurisdictions.
- **U.S. Forest Service (USFS) funding:** Given the devastating impacts of the wildfires throughout California and with approximately 1.5 million acres of forest lands in Fresno County, USFS funding is vital to address wildfires risks and improve safety.
- **National Park Service funding:** Portions of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are in Fresno County and Yosemite National Park is adjacent to Fresno County. The bill provides necessary funding for the National Park Service.
- **Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS):** As owners, users and regulators of water resources and

infrastructure, counties have been directly impacted by the 2015 definition of WOTUS, which has been fraught with legal challenges. The House bill fully repeals the WOTUS regulation originally finalized in 2015. The Senate version does not repeal WOTUS.

Where the funding levels are different, the letters request support of the higher funding levels and the repeal of WOTUS in conference.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Letters of Support