



Board Agenda Item 5

DATE: March 17, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Nerland, County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Fresno County State Legislative Platform Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Adopt recommended changes to the Fresno County State 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 State Legislative Delegation, Sacramento lobbyists, and/or other necessary parties to support, or oppose, legislation in accordance with the Platform.**

The State Legislative Platform (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 the Legislature and State 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 recommendations or language in the Platform.
2. Postpone updates to the Platform.
3. Choose not to make changes and continue to work off the existing Platform, last updated and approved on March 25, 2025.

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 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 State Legislative lobbyists, and interested citizens. Your Board last updated the Platform on March 25, 2025. This is the annual update to the Platform.

For letters of support or opposition, the Platform serves as a guide for departments to easily identify if State issues they are working on fall within the Platform. Consistent with Administrative Policy 21, any specific State 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. It should be noted, if an individual Board

member wishes to submit a letter of support or opposition that is consistent with the Platform, they may do so under their Office, however, they may also utilize your Board's letterhead.

The proposed Platform contains three sections:

- I. **Introduction** - an explanation of the purpose of the 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; Child Support Services; Criminal Justice and Public Protection; Economic Development and Workforce Investment; Elections; Energy/Air Quality; Environmental Quality/Natural Resources; General Government and Finance; Housing and Homelessness; Labor Relations and Employee Benefits; Land Use; Library; Public Health, Mental Health, and Health Care Services; Social Services; Transportation; and Water.

The primary recommended changes to the Platform are as follows:

Major Legislative Issues:

- Add bullet to support sufficient State funding and resources to counties based on the impacts of H.R. 1, including but not limited to, increased costs based on indigent medical care, individuals losing medical coverage, and unfunded administrative and staffing costs based on double eligibility checks and additional review of work requirements. Also, support additional flexibility for counties to manage these impacts.

Elections:

- Add language to existing bullet to support legislation to assist counties in effective implementation of changes made by statewide voter initiatives.
- Reorganization of bullets to bring attention to upcoming likely funding challenges, as well as to match your Board's general stance on election priorities.

General Government and Finance:

- Add bullet to oppose legislation that reduces governmental immunities from liability and support legislation that increases governmental immunities from liability.
- Revise bullet to support legislative reforms to establish reasonable caps on non-economic damages for civil filings against entities, instead of previous language which was to support initiatives to introduce reasonable caps on non-economic damages for civil filings against public entities.

Housing and Homelessness:

- Revise bullet to support increases in State funding that expand the County's capacity and local flexibility to address homelessness and housing instability, allowing resources to be tailored to the unique needs of each community, instead of previous language which was to expand the ability of counties to address needs of individuals and families who are or at risk of homelessness.
- Add bullet to ensure Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) credit is attributed to the County for affordable housing for extremely low-income households (0-30% of local area median income) when County funding, programs, or land support units developed within incorporated cities.

Labor Relations and Employee Benefits:

- Add bullet to support anti-garnishment law reform, allowing government employers to automatically enroll employees in deferred compensation plans.
- Add bullet to implement enhanced oversight of the Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) appeals process to deter the submission of fraudulent claims by physicians.

Public Health, Mental Health, Substance Use, and Health Care Services

- Add language specifically addressing kratom epidemic in existing bullet mentioning opioid and fentanyl epidemics.

Social Services:

- Add bullets to:
 - Support efforts that reduce administrative barriers for qualifying individuals to obtain and maintain participation in the CalFresh and Medi-Cal programs.
 - Support efforts and sufficient funding to engage CalFresh and Medi-Cal clients who are required to complete certain activities, such as work or proof of exemption, in order to maintain benefits.
 - Support statistically sound and equitable cost-sharing methodologies for CalFresh payment errors.
 - Support efforts to address structural funding issues of administering the CalFresh program as a result of H.R. 1, which decreased federal share of cost from 50% to 25%.
- Revise bullet to support efforts to measure CalWORKs program outcomes based on family stability and well-being instead of work participation rate, replacing previous language because program is no longer a pilot and this language aligns to the Federal Legislative Platform.

Approval of the recommended actions will adopt the updated State 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 Platform was developed with the cooperation of and input from the County's State lobbyists.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #11, March 25, 2025

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Fresno County 2026 State Legislative Platform
Fresno County 2026 State Legislative Platform - Redline

CAO ANALYST:

Sevag Tateosian