



LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM
State and Federal Priority Areas
Kings County Board of Supervisors

February 2017

2017 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES Kings County, California

The Kings County Board of Supervisors has identified a number of priority areas for legislative action and monitoring in the current year. These topics have immediate and lasting impacts to the County, to the health and safety of our residents, and to a variety of constituents who are reliant upon local government's effectiveness and representation to yield best outcomes for the local, state, federal and global economies we influence.

- **High Speed Rail – High Priority**

Oppose any state funding or support of the California High Speed Rail project.

Oppose using any State Cap-and-Trade funds on the California High-Speed Rail project. This funding stream varies widely and ends in 2020 unless renewed by the Legislature which it has, to date, refused to do. It is designed to fund short-term projects that will reduce greenhouse gases. High Speed Rail will not be operational until at least 2025, if ever.

Oppose any legislation that attempts to modify a voter-approved state general obligation bond measure without gaining voter approval for the modification.

Support legislation which is designed to ensure that taxes and fees collected in the State Highway Account are used to repair the State's crumbling streets, highways and roads, and ensure that the taxes and fees collected are not used by the High Speed Rail Authority to pay off Prop 1A bond debt.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **California Drought Declaration – High Priority**

Find solutions for dealing with water shortages. California has the unfortunate characteristic of being prone to prolonged and severe droughts at any time, and farmers in Kings County routinely have to take steps to prepare for continued severe reduction in water during the summer months. In addition to having negative impacts to jobs and the food supply for this State and the Nation, for every crop dollar lost, \$3.50 will be lost in the economy. Kings County, with 87% of its land in agricultural use, ranks 8th in agricultural value among all counties in California, which is the number one agricultural producing state in the nation.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Water**

Without increased water storage, the demands placed on our water resources will not be achieved for food and fiber, urbanized growth, energy needs, or habitat restoration. At present, an estimated 40% of Kings County's water use comes from groundwater. Because of Endangered Species Act-related court rulings and ongoing historic drought conditions, water has become extremely limited in Kings County and groundwater levels are at historic lows.

Much of the Kings County economy is based on agribusiness. Accordingly, when farmers are unable to obtain water to produce crops, laborers cannot find work. The result is that neither essential component of our County's workforce can conduct business and contribute to our local economy. Prolonging the planning or delaying the funding for water storage/reservoir/hydropower projects is counterproductive to the demands that population growth places upon our region, as well as our State. Bringing badly needed water to our communities is essential.

Support legislation that modifies the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA of 2014) to authorize early funding to groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) in high priority basins. These agencies were required under the Act to comply two years earlier than other water and land use agencies subject to SGMA. Such funding is necessary to undertake GSA administration, Groundwater Sustainability Planning efforts, and development of policies, programs and regulations.

Kings County continues to work on groundwater sustainability planning, and has been awarded a State Sustainable Groundwater \$500,000 grant to develop a baseline groundwater model that includes policy, programs, and regulations to name some examples.

Kings County is a member of the newly developed Joint Powers Authority, the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority, which is made up of five counties, two cities (including a disadvantaged community), two water agencies, one tribal council, and one member at large. Its mission is to seek funding for water infrastructure improvement projects, such as, but not limited to local surface storage projects, groundwater recharge projects and construction starting with the Temperance Flat Dam project.

Contact: Colleen Carlson, County Counsel, (559) 852-2448

- **Public Safety**

Provide new resources on sustaining and funding local gang prevention and enforcement activities. Resources will offer additional routes to sustaining local youth and gang violence prevention efforts. Kings County's Gang Task Force and law enforcement agencies drew a total of 310 major investigation cases in 2016.

Support funding to implement the Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015, which will require the Sheriff's peace officers to annually report to the Attorney General data on all stops conducted by the Sheriff's peace officers, and require that data to include specified information, including the time, date, and location of the stop, and the reason for the stop. The new data collection requirements will reduce the patrol time in the community due to the amount of time it will take to fill out forms and report data.

Contact: David Robinson, Sheriff, (559) 852-2795

- **Inmate Detentions**

Support legislation that would allow a court to require the appearance of a defendant held in any state, county, or local facility within the county on felony or misdemeanor charges to be conducted by two-way electronic audio-video communication between the defendant and the courtroom in lieu of the physical presence of the defendant in the courtroom for noncritical portions of the trial.

Oppose legislation that would require in-person visitation in local detention facilities. Kings County has two State approved and funded jail expansion projects that did not require by the State in-person visiting, and implementing now would be nearly impossible, and would cripple the County. Kings County will be setting up visitations from a remote location. This will increase safety of the facility, and will make visitations more accessible.

Support funding to implement the Truth Act, which will require the Sheriff's Office, prior to an interview between ICE and an individual in custody, to provide a written consent form (translated into seven languages) that would explain the purpose of the interview, that it is voluntary, and that the individual may decline the interview.

Contact: David Robinson, Sheriff, (559) 852-2795

Support legislation that expands Medi-Cal eligibility to allow counties to receive any available federal financial participation for medical services performed for adult and juvenile inmates that occur on the grounds of the correctional institute.

Contact: Rebecca Campbell, Assistant County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2379

- **Video Recording**

Amend Government Code Section 26202.6 which governs the retention of video recordings that are made for “routine monitoring” purposes, so that recordings are only needed to be retained for 60-90 days versus the one year requirement now. Annual retention of routine monitoring is extremely costly for counties and is discouraging the use of video cameras in various operations.

Contact: Rebecca Campbell, Assistant County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2379

- **Capital Projects**

Support legislative efforts which would reduce the voter approval requirement for local taxes and bonds from a 2/3rd vote to 55% for purposes of authorizing and issuing local infrastructure bonds and public safety tax increases. Seek and support bond funding for the construction of new or the renovation of existing public libraries and criminal justice facilities. The County tried twice in 2016 to pass a local public safety tax. The results were close, but a 2/3 supermajority is insurmountable.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Voting Rights Act**

Oppose legislation that makes preclearance Statewide as well as singling out Kings, Monterey, and Yuba Counties.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Voting Centers**

Support legislation that allows for the use of voting centers in place of polling centers. Voting centers offer accessibility for voters, and have potential cost savings.

Contact: Kristine Lee, Assessor, (559) 852-2501

- **State Responsibility Areas**

Repeal the State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Prevention Benefit Fees, and cooperate with counties in modifying the current criteria for designating SRAs. Mutually acceptable and enforceable agreements should be provided for the State and counties that would benefit both agencies to cover costs of wild land fire protection.

Contact: Clay Smith, Fire Chief (559) 852-2880

- **Williamson Act Program funding**

Seek legislative support for positive modifications to the agricultural land conservation program. Reduction of the Williamson Act Subvention funding has financially strapped our rural County. Losing the subvention funds has had a negative impact to the County as well as the landowners within the County. Legislative support to re-establish reimbursements to participating counties is essential to agricultural preservation in the State.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Agricultural Commissioner State Organic Program Fees**

Oppose legislation that imposes State Organic Program (SOP) registration requirements and fee based

enforcement activities, as there are already adequate regulations and reporting required by the National Organic Program. An SOP would be a duplication of services.

Contact: Tim Niswander, Agricultural Commissioner-Sealer, (559) 852-2833

- **Military and Veterans Code**

Support efforts to educate the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the public on the importance and value of the County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs). The eventual goal is to fully fund CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d).

California is home to approximately two million veterans. Currently, the state budget allocates \$5.6 million in funding to the County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO) in 58 California counties. CVSOs are the first contact for most veterans and are historically able to bring in \$100 of federal veterans benefits for every \$1 spent by the state. Without full funding, California's veterans will not get the government benefits which they earned through their military service.

Support legislation that would require state agencies to coordinate with CALVET to improve state services provided to veterans. There are many services that are offered to veterans. Many state agencies are involved in administering these services. Improved coordination between agencies would allow veterans to more easily access these services, and would also allow the CVSOs to better assist the veteran. An example would be for the CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to collect data on incarcerated veterans and provide that data to CALVET. CALVET could then provide that data to the CVSOs who could then provide assistance to those incarcerated veterans.

Contact: Scott Holwell, Veterans Service Officer, (559) 852-2659

- **Human Services**

Oppose the elimination of the In Home Supportive Services Maintenance of Effort with the State that shifts the responsibility to counties. Realignment growth has not kept up to cover the IHSS costs shifted to counties should the IHSS MOE be eliminated. It is projected that Kings County would need approximately \$3 Million to cover the costs.

Maintain funding for Medi-Cal Administrative Funding in order to face the increased workload and information technology issues related to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Support legislative cleanup, and allocating additional funding and start-up funds for the implementation of the foster parent recruitment and retention program changes. Partnerships with Behavioral Health organizations will need to be made in order to strengthen the access to mental health for the youth in foster care. Kings County currently has over 400 youth in the foster care program.

Support increased funding for rapid rehousing activities for homeless CalWORKs families. Current funding levels do not meet demand.

Contact: Sanja Bugay, Director Human Services Agency, (559) 852-2200

- **Health and Behavioral Health**

Maintain sufficient health realignment funding to ensure that Kings County has the resources to meet its obligations to fulfill its statutory public health and indigent health care mandates.

Support policies addressing the prevention of chronic disease and promotion of wellness.

Support policies that seek to reduce health disparities and inequities by working to eliminate barriers to good health for Kings County's diverse population.

Support State funding of home visitation programs. In these programs, support is provided to vulnerable families with children from birth to age five. Many studies show that early intensive support to high risk families can have a significant impact on long range family functioning. This results in earlier identification of children with developmental delays and other health issues; children ready to learn and excel in school, more resilient parents and families and lower incidents of child maltreatment.

Urge that the State develop a realistic plan for providing hospital care to seriously ill children in the event of an influenza pandemic. During a pandemic, children will likely be disproportionately affected. The current planning model does not insure that adequate pediatric surge capacity will be available. The solution entails having the State take the lead in developing a pediatric surge plan that is population-based. The proposed approach would recognize that the need for pediatric surge capacity will require: 1) recognition that baseline pediatric capacity is markedly less than adult capacity and the baseline pediatric capacity is concentrated in relatively few jurisdictions in the state; and 2) the plan for pediatric surge capacity can not be based on the local jurisdiction "Operational Area" model. No child in the state should be disadvantaged because of his/her county of residence.

Support funding for Valley Fever vaccine and treatment research and development.

Support maintaining the current minimum level of Proposition 99 Tobacco Control Program funding to each county.

Maintain State General Fund support to counties for pandemic influenza preparedness.

Contact: Keith Winkler, Public Health Director, (559) 852-2625

Support legislation that allows Mental Health Services Act funding to be used for behavioral health court expenses. These could be used to enhance and expand, not supplant, court models such as drug court, veteran's court, and collaborative court.

Seek additional funding for Substance Use Disorder treatment. Access to treatment has become increasingly burdened and limited with the response to AB 109 and Proposition 47 in small counties. Providers are at a premium and treatment providers have to answer to the courts and Probation as a first line of defense. People in need of help that are not part of the court system may be pushed to the end of the line due to the lack of funding and/or ballooning need for treatment.

Support legislation that includes additional funding for Mental Health program implementation of Continuum of Care – Foster Care Reform.

Contact: Mary Anne Ford Sherman, Behavioral Health Director, (559) 852-2382

- **Transportation Reform**

Oppose legislation that would increase weight limitations on vehicles. Increasing weight loads on trucks would cause county maintained roads to crumble and county maintained bridges are not rated for such weight increases.

Kings County will continue to advocate for at least \$3 billion in new ongoing funding for local streets and roads to be allocated to counties by formula with maximum flexibility for local transportation maintenance and improvements to roads and supporting infrastructure, including bridges and complete

streets. Advocacy on new transportation funding also includes the return of the new Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA) revenues attributable to Off Highway Vehicles (OHV), watercraft, and agricultural vehicle fuel sales to counties, cities, and the State as intended under the transportation Tax Swap, the return of weight fee revenues back to transportation projects, and repayment of all existing transportation loans.

Explore Road User Charge Policy Options. Work with other responsible agencies on mileage-based user charges as an eventual replacement for the gasoline excise tax. As improvements in the fuel efficiency of vehicles reduces gas tax revenue per mile travelled and inflation continues to erode the purchasing power of the excise tax revenues, alternatives to the gas tax must be seriously considered by all transportation stakeholders.

Support California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining for infill projects including the infrastructure necessary to support that development, especially as opportunities present themselves in transportation special session or in the continued discussion of proposals to streamline the development of housing for families of all income levels.

Support legislation that would simplify the collection of the Monument Preservation Fund Fee.

Contact: Kevin McAlister, Public Works Director, (559) 852-2700

- **Community Development**

Oppose efforts aimed at the continued compounding of environmental regulatory requirements as part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) process as qualifiers in maintaining local eligibility for critically needed transportation funds.

Provide cost considerations that may restrict business attraction as the California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board adopts regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Contact: Greg Gatzka, Community Development Agency Director, (559) 852-2680

- **Economic Development Incentives**

With the elimination of Redevelopment Agencies and the Enterprise Zone, Counties and cities with high unemployment and high poverty rates find it more difficult to compete for business expansion and location with more affluent areas. Disadvantaged communities are unable to afford the public infrastructure needed to create the jobs to boost or sustain their economies. What is needed is a targeted incentive package, aimed at cities or Counties that have an average unemployment rate and poverty level of 125% of the statewide average for the preceding year. These designated zones would allow a more advantageous new employee hiring credit and possibly other economic development and public infrastructure incentives to help even the competitive field of business development.

Contact: John Lehn, Job Training Office Director, (559) 585-3536

- **Employee Orientations**

Oppose legislation that causes unrealistic requirements on the new employee orientation process. Unrealistic examples include mandatory visits by all union representatives and on site work location requirements.

Contact: Leslie McCormick Wilson, Human Resources Director, (559) 852-2512

2017 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Kings County, California

This document offers summary information on a number of legislative priority areas for legislative action and monitoring in the current year. Each item includes a contact person to be reached for any additional supporting information or to alert in the event of pending legislative action, remedy or resolution.

- **High Speed Rail – High Priority**

Oppose any federal funding for or support to the California High Speed Rail Project. Additionally, stop American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funding to the California High Speed Rail project. The project is in an impossible race to meet ARRA grant funding requirements and deadlines. The Authority's agreement with the administering agency, the Federal Railroad Administration, has been amended numerous times to accommodate shortfalls by the Authority in frantically trying to meet its obligations under the agreement, including the lack of dollar for dollar matching funds; the lack of agreements with Union Pacific and BNSF Railroad; the failure to complete environmental review for all 300 miles of the proposed initial operating segment; and the shabby environmental review for the two project segments to date. The Authority has taken shortcuts that undercut the safety, quality and expectations of the public it will serve and has created an example of how not to implement high speed rail. Haste makes waste and creates concern for safety, the environment and the tax paying ridership.

Oppose any efforts to have federal agency decisions supercede the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for any projects in California, including High Speed Rail.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **California Drought Declaration – High Priority**

Find solutions for dealing with water shortages. California has the unfortunate characteristic of being prone to prolonged and severe droughts at any time, and farmers in Kings County are taking steps to prepare for continued severe reduction in water during the summer months. In addition to having negative impacts to jobs and the food supply for the state and nation, for every crop dollar lost, \$3.50 will be lost in the economy. Kings County, with 87% of its land in agricultural use, ranks 8th in agricultural value among all counties in California, which is the number one agricultural producing state in the nation.

Kings County is the home to Lemoore Naval Air Station. Severe drought causes increased bird strikes on the aircraft because of the increase of prey birds are seeking out due the farmland not being able to be cultivated because of the lack of water. This puts our nation's air fleet and security at severe risk.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Water**

Without increased water storage, the demands placed on our water resources will not be achieved for food and fiber, urbanized growth, energy needs, or habitat restoration. At present, an estimated 40% of Kings County's water use comes from groundwater.

Support efforts to amend the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) in a manner that increases allocation to Central Valley Project water contractors, and oppose any legislation that impacts such contractual allocation. Because of ESA-related court rulings and ongoing historic drought conditions, water has become extremely limited in Kings County and groundwater levels are at historic lows.

Much of the Kings County economy is based on agribusiness. Accordingly, when farmers are unable to obtain water to produce crops, laborers cannot find work. The result is that neither essential component of our County's workforce can conduct business and contribute to our local economy. Prolonging the planning or delaying the funding for water storage/reservoir/hydropower projects is counterproductive to the demands that population growth places upon our region, as well as our State. Bringing badly needed water to our communities is essential.

Kings County continues to work on groundwater sustainability planning, and has been awarded a \$500,000 State Sustainable Groundwater grant to develop a baseline groundwater model that includes policy, programs, and regulations, to name some examples.

Support any funding that enhances water storage expansion efforts. Kings County is a member of the newly developed Joint Powers Authority, the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority, which is made up of five counties, two cities (including a disadvantaged community), two water agencies, one tribal council, and one member at large. Its mission is to seek funding for water infrastructure improvement projects, such as, but not limited to local surface storage projects, groundwater recharge projects, and construction starting with the Temperance Flat Dam project.

Kings County supports pending House and Senate drought-relief legislation (HR 23 Rep. Valadao) designed to address the underlying policy failures that contribute to increasingly severe drought conditions, and would provide additional water deliveries to the parched Central Valley. The bill would also address water reliability, expansion of infrastructure and storage, and water rights protection.

Contact: Colleen Carlson, County Counsel, (559) 852-2448

- **Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore**

With the siting of the F-35C Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter squadrons at NAS Lemoore in Kings County, California, steps should be taken to ensure that adequate facilities, services, and infrastructure are in place on and off base to handle the increase of more than 3,231 families and single sailors. Additional barracks, schools, and housing are just a few of the needs for the influx of people arriving to the community.

Contact: Rebecca Campbell, Assistant County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2379

- **Fee-to-Trust Reform/Indian Gaming**

Support federal legislation that would provide an incentive for counties and tribes to enter into judicially enforceable agreements when tribes are permitted to engage in economic development activities, including gaming. Agreements should fully mitigate local impacts from a tribal government's business activities and fully identify the governmental services to be provided by the county to that tribe. In cases in which a county and tribe are unable to reach a local mitigation agreement, federal legislation should require the Secretary of the Interior to certify that all anticipated off-reservation impacts have been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable. Kings County has an enforceable agreement in place, but is supportive of legislative reforms that would protect the county's interests in case of a possible future expansion or new development.

Contact: Larry Spikes, County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2375

- **Public Safety**

Kings County's Gang Task Force and local law enforcement agencies drew a total of 310 major investigation cases in 2016, and many of those cases involve higher level narcotics investigations. Support legislation and appropriations for County efforts directed at: programs that recognize the extent of the gang and narcotics problems in our County and in the San Joaquin Valley; prevention programs

that educate youth about drugs and gangs; treatment programs; and tougher penalties for methamphetamine-related crimes.

Provide adequate funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), which partially reimburses Kings County for the significant costs of incarcerating undocumented criminals. Due to cuts in the appropriation for SCAAP, along with an increasing number of jurisdictions applying for the program, Kings County's SCAAP allocation has fluctuated in recent years. Additionally, Congress should approve legislation that provides a long-term reauthorization of the SCAAP program. To follow are Kings County's SCAAP allocations for the past several fiscal years: FY 2014: \$30,193; FY 2015: \$44,260; FY 2016: \$65,815.

Contact: Dave Robinson, Sheriff, (559) 852-2795

Support funding for key federal discretionary grant programs. Kings County currently has applications in for the Second Chance Act Reentry Program for Adults with Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Disorders Grant; the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program Grant; and the Fire SAFER Grant. The County is awaiting the request for application of the COPS Hiring Grant. For small counties like Kings, these grant program dollars provide vital support to the community.

Contact: Rebecca Campbell, Assistant County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2379

- **Telecommunications/Interoperability/Broadband**

Support funding for first responder infrastructure upgrades and/or repair, such as repeater site restoration and upgrades. Dedicated funding has not been set aside since 2007 with the Public Safety Interoperability Communications grant, and systems are aging with no replacement funds in site. Categorical funding, such as Homeland Security funding, is allocated in one-time amounts that are not sufficient to completely convert our local systems.

Support funding for Department of Commerce broadband infrastructure and planning grants. Communities and outlying areas are in great need of broadband infrastructure to bring and enhance much needed services in the area of education, public safety, economic development, and for medical purposes. Broadband connection rates need to be reasonable in order to be competitive for local government use.

Support legislative efforts to maintain current levels of funding for the implementation of universal service and library connectivity discount provisions E-Rate (Telecommunications Act of 1996).

Contact: Rebecca Campbell, Assistant County Administrative Officer, (559) 852-2379

- **Human Services**

Support legislation that would retain the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance programs and eliminate the outdated rules that base the child's eligibility for funds on parental income and circumstances. Support updating the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in which assistance is based on and is currently tied to 1996 levels under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Support maintaining the Title IV-E Foster Care and Child Welfare services program as an open entitlement. The Child Welfare Services caseload in Kings County currently totals 387 children.

Continue to fully fund the Social Services Block Grant, which funds child protective services.

Support legislation that includes additional funding for programs impacted by the *Affordable Care Act*. Maintain federal funding in order to phase out programs at a slower pace.

Contact: Sanja Bugay, Director Human Services Agency, (559) 852-2200

- **Health**

Maintain funding for the following programs:

- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) feeding program. Kings County currently has over 8,000 participants in this program.
- Title V Maternal and Child Health Program.
- The 317 Immunization grant program, which supports children's vaccines and influenza vaccines for the uninsured in Kings County.

Maintain funding for the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program and the Hospital Preparedness Program.

Oppose efforts to block grant Medicaid. A capped amount of funding to the state will shift costs to Kings County for increased enrollment or increased health care costs. A limited amount of federal funds may force the state to restrict eligibility, cut benefits, and reduce payments to health care providers.

Oppose legislation that would reduce or otherwise reverse the recent federal expansion of health care coverage for those with low incomes. According to the California Department of Health Care Services, as of November 2016, 45,131 Kings County residents were enrolled in Medi-Cal, which is 20,356 more than four years earlier (prior to the Medi-Cal coverage expansion).

Support establishing a national center for excellence for coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever). Valley Fever is an orphan disease. The affected areas of the country, including counties in California, Arizona, and elsewhere that are endemic for this disease, could work together to develop the needed resources. There would be two immediate benefits for Kings County: an authoritative source for educating providers and the community; and, a national warmline for provider consultation.

Contact: Keith Winkler, Public Health Director, (559) 852-2625

- **Military and Veterans Code**

Support legislation that would provide increased access for County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO) to VA information systems (i.e. VBMS, VACOLS, SHARE, MAPD, etc.) for use in developing and monitoring claims submitted on behalf of veterans. County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs) are local government agencies responsible for assisting veterans, their dependents and survivors in obtaining benefits to which they may be entitled. As such CVSOs need maximum possible access, regardless of VA Power-of-Attorney (POA), to VA client and claims databases. Enhancing this access will result in better and timelier services to claimants and reduce the workload in VA call centers.

Support legislative, regulatory, and/or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the VA veteran's claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans. VA has expressed the belief that one important way to reduce the unacceptable claims backlog is the initial submission of more fully completed claims packages. Individual claimants are unfamiliar with the requirements of the VA claims system. Accordingly, it is necessary to have competent, trained intermediaries, such as County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO), participate in the preparation and submission of claims. Many CVSOs do not have the resources to do the community outreach that would enable them to reach the maximum possible number of benefit claimants. Federal/state/local

partnerships will enable State and County veterans service programs to reach and assist more claimants thus helping to reduce the chronic VA claims backlog.

Contact: Scott Holwell, Veterans Service Officer, (559) 852-2659

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

Provide maximum funding for the CDBG program. Kings County utilizes these program funds with increasing success to develop unincorporated communities and provide better housing conditions and opportunities to Kings County residents. CDBG funding has typically been used for first-time home buyers' loans since the late 1990's, as well as owner-occupied rehabilitation projects in locations in remote communities within the County since the mid-1970's.

Allow continued use of the CDBG program income for continued operational costs without risking the ability to apply for future grants.

Contact: Chuck Kinney, Deputy Director-Planning, (559) 852-2674

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs**

Support full funding for local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs.

In the first full year of WIOA implementation, Kings County is projecting a decreased allocation of \$115,000, representing a funding loss of 6% from the previous fiscal year. This comes at the same time increased WIOA administrative requirements and costs are being absorbed. We encourage the Administration to allow the bipartisan WIOA to unfold and prove its value before further cuts are considered. This business-led local effort is our best hope at improving local economies and to regional growth industries, including the attraction of manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

Contact: John Lehn, Job Training Office Director, (559) 585-3536

- **Franchise Business Model**

Oppose the National Labor Relations Board's efforts at forcing franchise companies to assert total control over the daily operations of the independently owned franchised restaurants, such as human resource management, controls over scheduling, pay rates, benefits, and working conditions, to name a few. This change will add an increased financial burden to small employers in the County.

Contact: Doug Verboon, Board of Supervisor, (559) 852-2362

- **Transportation**

Farm-to-Market Roads – Support legislation to rehabilitate 240 miles of rural roads that are impacted due to use by, among others, Kings County farms, dairies, and processing plants.

Work to ensure that California counties are well-positioned to utilize environmental review streamlining opportunities available from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act implementation. Continue to educate Congress and the new Administration about the need to further streamline the federal process to reduce costs and improve project delivery.

Take advantage of opportunities to educate Congress and the new Administration about the need for new federal funding for transportation in advance of the next reauthorization effort.

Contact: Kevin McAlister, Public Works Director, (559) 852-2700

Seek funding to assist with the movement of goods on State Route 198. Normal highway traffic rates are 15-18%, and SR 198 has a higher rate of use at 38%. In 2017, an influx of new military related personnel started to arrive and will be staying in the area due to the basing of the new F-35C Lightning II Strike Fighter squadrons and two relocated F-18 Super Hornet squadrons. Widening approximately 20

miles of SR 198 will assist with goods movement to Lemoore Naval Air Station Lemoore, as well as the Central Valley of California.

Contact: Joe Neves, Board of Supervisor, (559) 852-2370

- **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Funding**

Continue Federal support for grants and funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Elimination of such funding will jeopardize the \$16 million the California State library receives in federal funds, money that also funds the Braille and Talking Book library. The Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) is exclusively for libraries and is administered through IMLS. LSTA funds, in which the California State Library receives \$16 million, is where the Kings County Library has benefited. The Kings County Library successful programs were funded by receiving LSTA grant funds. Programs such as Veterans Connect @ the Library, Career Online High School, The Family Place Library, Brainfuse Online Homework Help, Book-To-Action, and Touchpoints in Libraries Training are an example.

Contact: Natalie Rencher, Library Director, (559) 852-4005