

June 7, 2002

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

FEDERAL UPDATE

Bioterrorism Funds Released: Yesterday, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) Secretary Tommy Thompson announced the release of additional funds for public health and hospital preparedness. The release marked the second round of funding to states and localities that have submitted their plans for responding to public health emergencies. Attached are letters to Board Chairman Yaroslavsky and Dr. Jonathan Fielding, as well as the HSS press release, announcing the awards.

The County was one of three local governments to receive funding directly. An additional \$10,672,937 was released to the County yesterday for public health preparedness efforts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Another \$9 million will be released pending further discussions with the County on its plans to use the money to renovate a laboratory facility.

The County also received \$2,927,338 from HHS's Health Resources and Services Administration for hospital preparedness.

Both public health and hospital preparedness programs received supplemental appropriations late last year to bolster the capacity of state and local health agencies to detect and respond to outbreaks of disease, including those caused by bioterrorism. As reported to your Board earlier this week, Congress is expected to appropriate another round of funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2003.

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2002 Supplemental Appropriations: Yesterday, the Senate adopted its version of the FFY 2002 supplemental appropriations bill (S. 2551)

by a vote of 71-22. As reported to your Board earlier this week, the bill contains funding for first responders and election reform. The bill will now be reconciled with a House measure (H.R. 4775) which contains \$2 billion less in funding. The President has threatened a veto if the final bill is like the Senate bill whose total funding is \$4 billion more than he requested. Congress hopes to resolve the differences before the July 4th recess.

CALFED REAUTHORIZATION: This week, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee adopted by a vote of 18 to 5 a modified version of the CALFED reauthorization bill (S. 1768) sponsored by Senators Feinstein and Boxer. The bill addresses a variety of water issues confronting California. In order to reduce the concerns of other western Senators that the bill might take funding away from non-California projects, the new version reduces the length of the authorization from five to three years, as well as the amount of funding authorized from \$2.4 billion to \$1.63 billion. It also specifies which projects would be eligible for funding and strengthens congressional oversight. Included in S. 1768 is \$250 million for competitive grants to assist local agencies which the County would be eligible to apply for.

Despite the changes, the bill faces an uncertain future in the Senate. Senator Murkowski (R-AK), the ranking member of the Energy Committee, voted for the bill but stated that the bill would need considerable change before it could be taken up on the floor. The House Resources Committee cleared a similar bill (H.R. 3208) last November, but it too has generated opposition and has not been acted upon by the full House.

CHILD SUPPORT PENALTY RELIEF: Representative Matsui (D-Sacramento) introduced legislation (H.R. 4857) this week that would provide partial relief for the State and the County from the pending \$181 million Federal sanction for the State's failure to develop a statewide child support computer system. The effect of the bill's provisions would be to cut the sanction by half, and allow for the penalties to be reinvested in the child support program.

On a separate track, Senator Feinstein sent a letter to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Baucus (D-MT) recommending provisions for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization bill that his committee will consider this month. Senator Feinstein's letter urges that a provision be included to allow states to reinvest their penalties in their child support programs.

The issue's prospects are very uncertain. Representative William Thomas (R-Bakersfield), who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee which has jurisdiction over child support, opposes the Matsui bill, citing the need to maintain pressure on the State to

Each Supervisor
June 7, 2002
Page 3

develop its system. Only one other state, South Carolina, faces penalties for not meeting the 1997 deadline.

We will continue to keep you advised of any new developments.

DEJ:GK
RT:TJ:JR:md

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist