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April 1, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
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Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK AND PRIORITIES FOR 2011

This memorandum is to provide your Board with the Federal legislative outlook for 2011, which is the first year of the 112th Session of Congress. It also outlines the County's major Federal priorities that are being pursued based on this outlook and the County's needs, consistent with the County's existing Board-adopted Federal legislative policies, as discussed below:

Federal Legislative Outlook

The Federal legislative outlook for much of the two-year 111th Session of Congress, which began in January 2009, was positive for the County. This is because the County's Federal advocacy priorities in support of health care reform, state and local fiscal relief, and job creation also were priorities of the Obama Administration and Democrat-controlled Congress. Health care reform, fiscal relief, and jobs still are of major importance to the County. Health care reform not only will extend health coverage to most of the County's uninsured residents in 2014, but also has increased the amount of Federal Medicaid revenue that the County will receive under the State's Section 1115 Medicaid waiver.

State and local fiscal relief and job creation also continue to be critically important. Both California and the County have been hit harder by the economic downturn than the rest of the nation. Every month since August 2009, the State and County's unemployment

rate has exceeded 12 percent, while the rate for the rest of the nation never exceeded 10 percent. In February 2011, California's unemployment rate of 12.2 percent was the second highest of any state. The County's unemployment rate of 12.6 percent was even higher, far exceeding the national unemployment rate of 8.9 percent. California also still has the largest projected budget shortfall of any state, despite having enacted tens of billions of dollars in State budget cuts over the past three years.

While the County's need for Federal aid, job creation, and health care reform has not changed, the Federal legislative and budget outlook for 2011 has changed dramatically. Most notably, after a decade in which the Federal budget deficit ballooned from a net surplus to annual deficits exceeding a trillion dollars, reducing the Federal budget deficit has become a top priority for policymakers in Washington, D.C. Concern about controlling the budget deficit steadily grew over the course of last year though it did not stop Congress from enacting legislation which significantly increased the deficit by extending expiring tax cuts and unemployment insurance benefits and by delaying implementation of Medicare physician payment rate reductions. Of major importance to the County, Congress also extended the temporary increase in the Federal match rate ("FMAP") for Medicaid, Foster Care, and Adoption Assistance for an additional six months through June 30, 2011, though at a lower rate than provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

The new 112th Congress is far more serious about reducing the Federal budget deficit as evidenced in the current debate over the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 Continuing Resolution (CR). Unlike past short-term CRs, which historically have provided funding at the prior year's funding level, the two short-term CRs enacted this year include budget cuts, and Congressional Republicans are calling for a full-year FFY 2011 CR which reduces Federal funding by at least $61.5 billion below the prior year level.

Congressional debate over how to reduce the Federal budget deficit also will include debate over both entitlement and tax reform. This is because it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to significantly reduce the deficit without reducing entitlement spending and increasing tax revenue. Discretionary spending, which is set through annual appropriations bills, accounts for only about one-third of total Federal expenditures. In comparison, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid together alone account for roughly 40 percent of total Federal spending -- a percentage which will increase over time with the growing elderly and disabled population.

The future size of the Federal budget deficit also will be greatly affected by how Congress addresses the future of temporary Bush era and ARRA tax cuts, which will expire at the end of 2012 under current law. There also is considerable bipartisan interest in comprehensive tax reform, which includes simplifying the tax code by

reducing tax rates and tax deductions, credits, and other tax breaks. However, there is far less consensus on the "devil in the details" of tax reform -- especially over which specific tax breaks should be reduced or eliminated and how much, if at all, overall tax revenue should be increased or decreased.

In addition to the heightened interest in reducing the Federal budget deficit, another major change in the 112th Congress is the return to divided government -- one in which neither party controls the Presidency and both houses of Congress. In the mid-term November 2010 election, Republicans regained majority control of the House by a comfortable margin and also increased their representation in the Senate from 42 to 47 Senators. Also, fewer moderates from either party were elected to Congress, continuing the long-term trend of increased polarization between the two parties in Congress.

This increased polarization, combined with the increased use of filibusters and other delaying tactics in the Senate, which requires a 60-vote majority to overcome, has resulted in fewer and fewer Federal bills being enacted each year. It even has become increasingly difficult and less common for reauthorization and annual appropriations bills to be enacted. In FFY 2010, Congress appropriated a total of $290.8 billion for programs whose authorizations had expired under 250 separate authorization laws. This included appropriations for major state and local grant programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant, and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, which have not been reauthorized for many years. It also has become common for Congress to fund most Federal programs through an omnibus appropriations bill or full-year CR rather than enacting all 12 annual appropriations bills. For example, the annual Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill has been enacted only twice since FFY 1998.

With the major partisan differences in Congress and difficulty of securing the required 60-vote majority to overcome a filibuster in the Senate, it is highly unlikely that climate change or immigration reform legislation will be enacted this year. It similarly appears unlikely that Congress will enact multi-year legislation to extend major programs of County interest, which are up for reauthorization this year, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), WIA, and surface transportation ("SAFETY-LU") Programs. SAFETY-LU authorization originally expired on September 30, 2009. Since then, Congress has passed a series of short-term extensions for SAFETY-LU -- the latest one extending its authorization through the end of FFY 2011.

Prospects for the enactment of major changes in entitlement spending and/or taxes this year will largely depend on whether a FFY 2012 Budget Resolution with budget reconciliation instructions to reduce entitlement spending and/or increase tax revenues is adopted. This is important because budget reconciliation legislation cannot be filibustered in the Senate, which means that only a simple majority rather than 60-vote majority is needed to move such legislation on the Senate floor. Over the years, major tax and entitlement program changes have been made through budget reconciliation legislation, including last year's health care reform law, the 1996 welfare reform law, which created TANF, and the Bush Administration's major tax cuts.

Federal Priorities for the County

The County's overarching Federal priority this year will be to protect the County against Federal deficit reduction measures which would reduce the County's revenue or increase net County costs. The Federal budget climate has changed to one in which reductions in Federal aid to state and local governments are far more likely than increases in Federal aid – a dramatic change from a year ago. The County's top Federal budget priorities will include:

Medicaid: The single largest and most important source of Federal and State revenue to the County, by far, is Medicaid, which plays a key role in helping to finance medical care, mental health services, and In-Home Supportive Services which are provided by the County. Medicaid is especially important to counties in California, which are the health providers of last resort for their indigent residents under State law. Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the health care reform law enacted last year, Medicaid has become even more important to the County. This is because the ACA greatly expands Medicaid eligibility, increases Federal financial participation, and requires states to maintain their current eligibility standards and to not increase local governments' percentage share of non-Federal Medicaid costs as a condition of receipt of the enhanced FMAP for newly eligible Medicaid beneficiaries.

Medicaid will be a major target for deficit reduction because it is the third largest open-ended entitlement program and because its expenditures will grow significantly over the next ten years. According to Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates, under current law as amended by the ACA, Federal Medicaid expenditures will grow from $264.0 billion in 2012 to $587.0 billion by 2021. Governors are concerned about the high and rising state share of Medicaid costs and their limited flexibility to control these costs, especially under the ACA, which mandates Medicaid eligibility expansions while limiting the flexibility of states to reduce Medicaid costs by reducing eligibility or shifting costs to local governments.

The single biggest threat to the County is that Federal Medicaid expenditures would be significantly cut by replacing the current open-ended Medicaid entitlement with a state block grant in which Federal funding to states is capped. As an open-ended entitlement, Medicaid is a far more secure and growing source of Federal revenue than under a block grant. This is because, as an open-ended entitlement, Medicaid revenue automatically grows to match rising caseloads and costs and meet health care needs without requiring the enactment of new Federal legislation. This is especially important because health care costs are continually growing, not only due to overall population growth, but also due to increases in the cost of care and increases in the number of indigent aged and disabled individuals who require more costly care, including long-term care.

Open-ended Medicaid entitlement funding also importantly has enabled the County to leverage matching Federal Medicaid funds at no cost to the State by financing the non-Federal share of costs – an option which would be eliminated if Medicaid funding is block granted or otherwise capped. This has been especially important during economic downturns when it, otherwise, would be financially impossible for the State or County to finance the increased cost of providing health care services to the increased number of indigent and uninsured persons.

The amount of Federal cost savings from block granting Medicaid would be based on how much less funding than otherwise would be provided under current law to finance rising health costs and caseloads. Less Federal Medicaid funding also would mean less State Medi-Cal revenue for the County and other health providers because a block grant would enable the State to reduce its spending and to use Federal funds to supplant State General Fund costs. Moreover, to the extent that a Medicaid block grant would provide states with greater flexibility to determine eligibility, covered services, and payment rates, the State would be able to shift a greater share of health costs to the County and other health care providers. The County especially would be at risk of incurring increased costs resulting from reductions in Medicaid eligibility because counties are the provider of last resort for indigent persons under Section 17000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

A Medicaid block grant also would greatly disadvantage California because the State currently receives the least Federal Medicaid funding per recipient of any state. As a result, the State's initial base block grant funding would be low relative to all other states. Moreover, there is a major risk that a Medicaid block grant allocation formula will be inequitable for California for the very fact that its population alone exceeds the combined population of 21 states, which are represented by 42 Senators. This puts California at a major disadvantage when state allocation formulas are crafted in Congress.

For reasons such as those cited above, it has been a longstanding Board policy in the County's Federal Legislative Agenda to support maintaining Medicaid as an open-ended entitlement. The Board first adopted this policy in 1995 when a proposal to block grant Medicaid received serious attention when the Congress similarly was considering how to significantly reduce the Federal budget deficit. Consistent with that Board policy, one of the County's advocacy priorities this year will be to preserve Medicaid as an open-ended entitlement and oppose converting Medicaid into a state block grant.

If Medicaid is not block granted and remains an open-ended entitlement, Federal Medicaid expenditures could be cut by reducing Federal Medicaid match rates, allowable non-Federal matching funds, eligibility, covered services, or payments, such as Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments. Such Medicaid budget reductions would adversely affect the County by reducing the County's Medicaid revenue and/or increasing net County costs. Any reduction in Medicaid DSH funding especially would hurt the County because DSH funding is targeted at hospitals, such as the County's, which incur major uncompensated costs for serving indigent and uninsured patients. Moreover, the County's revenue under the State's Section 1115 Medicaid waiver also could drop if legislation to cut Federal Medicaid spending is cut. This is because the waiver's terms and conditions require its cost neutrality to the Federal government to be adjusted to reflect any changes in Federal law or regulations.

The County's Washington, D.C. advocates will seek to preserve the State's and County's Medicaid revenue, consistent with existing policies in the County's Federal Legislative Agenda, such as:

- Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health care services, such as proposals which would reduce the level of Medicaid payments, reduce the number of Medicaid eligible persons, and reduce the scope of Medicaid covered services; and

- Support for proposals which would increase California's Federal Medicaid match rate.

Health Care Reform: Congressional Republicans are pursuing the repeal of the entire health care reform law. While the likelihood of its repeal is nil because the President would veto such legislation, some of its provisions could be eliminated or amended – especially those affecting Federal spending. That is, the increased Federal spending resulting from the ACA, such as for Medicaid or health insurance subsidies, could be cut along with other Federal expenditures. In fact, a Medicaid block grant, in effect, would change ACA's Medicaid provisions as well as other Medicaid provisions in current law.

Provisions in the ACA, which are especially important to the County, include:

- Its Medicaid eligibility expansions, including to medically indigent adults who currently must rely on the County for health care under Section 17000 of the State's Welfare and Institutions Code;

- Its requirement that states maintain current Medicaid eligibility levels, procedures and methodologies, which prevents California from reducing Medicaid eligibility;

- Its requirement that states not increase local governments' percentage share of non-Federal Medicaid costs as a condition for receipt of the enhanced FMAP for newly eligible Medicaid individuals, beginning in 2014; and

- Its new Prevention and Public Health Fund, which can be used to fund either newly authorized or pre-existing prevention, public health and wellness activities above their FFY 2008 funding levels. The ACA appropriated $15.0 billion for the Fund through FFY 2019 and $2.0 billion a year thereafter.

Pursuant to existing Board policies, the County's Washington, D.C. advocates will seek to preserve the ACA, especially its provisions which expands health insurance coverage, provides the County with increased Federal and/or State resources with which to finance medical, mental health, public health, and other County-administered services, and protects the County from increased costs for such services.

Human Services Entitlements: Next to Medicaid, the County receives most of its Federal revenue through human services entitlement programs -- most notably, TANF and Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance. California receives over one-fifth of total Federal TANF and IV-E funding, and the County alone receives more TANF and IV-E funding than any state other than California and New York. The County also receives a sizable amount of State revenue pursuant to TANF state maintenance-of-effort and IV-E match requirements.

Neither TANF nor IV-E funding is expected at this time to be targeted for spending reductions to the extent that Medicaid will be targeted. This is largely because, unlike Medicaid, annual Federal TANF and IV-E foster care expenditures have been relatively flat, as a result of major Federal budget cuts enacted under the Federal 1996 welfare reform law, which was a budget reconciliation bill. Under that law, the open-ended Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) entitlement was replaced by the TANF block grant under which each state permanently receives an annual allotment equal to the amount that it previously received under AFDC. That same law reduced Federal IV-E expenditures by permanently linking Federal foster care and adoption assistance

eligibility to AFDC eligibility standards in effect in July 1996, which has resulted in a steady decline in the percentage of children eligible for Federal reimbursement.

Title IV-E is an open-ended entitlement for which, similar to Medicaid, Federal matching funds are automatically provided to states without requiring any Congressional action. TANF, however, is a capped entitlement, which must be reauthorized and funded by Congress beyond FFY 2011. Last year, Congress enacted a one-year extension of TANF, and it is expected that Congress will extend TANF for another year rather than to enact a multi-year TANF reauthorization bill. It is noteworthy that, since TANF was established in 1996, a multi-year TANF reauthorization bill has been only enacted once in 2005.

While we expect that Title IV-E and TANF will continue to be funded at their current level, the County's Washington, D.C. advocates will closely monitor proposals which could affect their funding levels. Besides possible TANF reauthorization legislation, this year, Congress could consider legislation to authorize the approval of new Section 1130 child welfare waiver demonstration projects. The County's current IV-E waiver was the last Section 1130 waiver approved before the authority to approve new waivers expired. Legislation is not required to renew any current Section 1130 waiver, including the County's waiver, which will expire on June 30, 2013.

Consistent with existing policies in the County's Federal Legislative Agenda, the County will support legislation to increase state and local flexibility under IV-E through either Section 1130 waiver authority or by extending the more flexible Section 1115 waiver authority, which currently is used under Medicaid, to IV-E. We will oppose any legislation which would limit state and local flexibility or hinder our ability to renew our IV-E waiver beyond its current sunset date.

Discretionary Spending: Funding levels for discretionary spending programs are set in annual appropriations bills. Congressional Republicans support reducing FFY 2011 discretionary spending by $61.5 billion below the prior year level as well as further cuts in FFY 2012 and future years in order to reduce the Federal budget deficit. Domestic discretionary programs and activities, which are being targeted for far deeper cuts than defense spending account for only about one-eighth of total Federal spending. In the current Federal budget climate, even programs, which historically have had strong bipartisan support, are vulnerable to major budget reductions. For example, H.R. 1, the House-passed full-year FFY 2011 Continuing Resolution, would eliminate all funding for WIA formula grants even though WIA funding historically has had strong bipartisan support. In fact, WIA was enacted in 1998 when Republicans controlled both houses of Congress.

Consistent with the County's existing Federal Legislative Agenda (Attachment), which includes funding priorities for appropriations bills, priority is given to pursuing funding for programs which provide the County with a greater share of total funding and greater flexibility over the use of funds. In addition, the Federal Legislative Agenda also includes two overall Federal policies which are especially relevant to annual appropriations issues facing the County:

- Support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding; and

- Oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County.

The policy to oppose proposals which would finance increased funding for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County was added after it became common for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), which provides a relatively high share of total funding to the County, to be targeted for cuts to fund increases in other state and local grants through which the County receives a far smaller share of total funding.

Besides SCAAP, other Federal programs, which are longstanding County priorities because the County receives a relatively high share of total funding, include: Urban Area Security Initiative Grants, Ryan White HIV/AIDS Emergency Assistance, Public Health Preparedness Grants, Hospital Preparedness Grants, WIA formula grants, Community Development Block Grants, Section 8 Housing, and Public Housing. Under each of these programs, the County either receives direct formula grants or mandatory pass-through funds through state formula grants.

As, in past years, the County's Washington, D.C. advocates will support funding for state and local formula grants over competitive grants because California and the County typically receive a far higher percentage share of total formula grant funding than competitive grant funding. This is because formula grants are allocated primarily based on each state's and/or local jurisdiction's percentage share of U.S. total population and/or other need-based allocation factors. In contrast, competitive grants typically do not take into account relative need, and also have maximum limits, which are very low relative to size of the County's population – a population larger than that of all but eight states.

The County also would support eliminating or reducing funding for small competitive grant programs in order to maintain or increase funding for state and local formula grant programs which are County priorities, such as SCAAP and WIA. It is noteworthy that SCAAP directly competes for appropriations under the Office of Justice Program's State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account, which includes 40 programs which received a combined total of $1.35 billion in FFY 2010 funding, excluding $185.0 million used to fund Congressional earmarks. Except for County-supported SCAAP, Justice Assistance Grant, Southwest Border Prosecutor Initiative, Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant, and John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment formula grant funding, all of the other programs are small categorical grants.

There is strong bipartisan support for eliminating all Congressional earmarks, and the leadership of both houses have indicated that no funds will be appropriated for earmarks in either FFY 2011 or 2012. Because small population states and localities receive far more earmarked funding per capita than more populous states and localities, California and the County are better off if earmarked funding is eliminated as an alternative to deeper reductions in formula grants, which allocate funds based on relative need.

Other Issues: As noted earlier, Congressional activity this year will be focused on the Federal budget, and the County's overarching priority will be to protect against Federal budget cuts which would reduce the County's revenue or increase net County costs. It appears highly unlikely that Congress will enact legislation of County interest, such as climate change, immigration reform, or major multi-year reauthorization bills, such as TANF, WIA, WRDA, and SAFETY-LU. If major Federal issues or opportunities arise, we will advise your Board and pursue them, based on the County's existing Federal Agenda, which is attached, and other Federal policies adopted by your Board.

We believe that the existing Federal Agenda is sufficiently comprehensive to enable the County's Washington, D.C. advocates and County departments to take positions on any Federal issues that may arise this year. The Federal Agenda differs from the County's State Legislative Agenda in so far as the Federal Agenda includes broad overall Federal principles and policies. The overall Federal principles are as follows:

1. Maximize Federal revenues.

2. Secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds.

3. Lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs and decision-making authority.

The overall Federal policies are as follows:

1. Support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding.

2. Support proposals which would provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of Federal funds, and which provide for direct grants or mandatory pass-through allocations to large urban counties.

3. Oppose proposals which would impose new unfunded mandates on the County.

4. Oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County.

5. Support proposals to reduce or relax match requirements which hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.

6. Support Federal fiscal relief for financially distressed state and local governments.

7. Oppose Federal preemption of State and local government authority.

These overall Federal principles and policies replaced the need to include more repetitive policies affecting each Federal program, policy, or issue area. For example, the principle of securing greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds replaced the need to have numerous statements supporting greater flexibility under dozens of programs through which the County currently receives or may receive Federal funding. These overall Federal principles and policies also enable the County to respond quickly to new emerging issues and to submit comments on proposed Federal regulations, which have review and comment periods as short as 30 days.

WTF:RA
MT:sb

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

County of Los Angeles

FEDERAL AGENDA

The Federal Agenda contains principles and policies that serve as the basis for the development and advocacy of positions on Federal legislative, administrative, and budget issues. This document consists of overall principles and policies applicable to all Federal issues, funding priorities in Federal appropriations bills, and more specific policies addressing Federal issues of major County interest.

I. OVERALL FEDERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Maximize Federal revenues.

2. Secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds.

3. Lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs and decision-making authority.

II. OVERALL FEDERAL POLICIES

1. Support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding.

2. Support proposals which would provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of Federal funds, and which provide for direct grants or mandatory pass-through allocations to large urban counties.

3. Oppose proposals which would impose new unfunded mandates on the County.

4. Oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County.

5. Support proposals to reduce or relax match requirements which hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.

6. Support Federal fiscal relief for financially distressed state and local governments.

7. Oppose Federal preemption of State and local government authority.

III. COUNTY FUNDING PRIORITIES IN APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

The County's funding priorities in individual appropriations bills are outlined below. Within each appropriations bill, priority is given to pursuing funding for programs which provide the County with a greater share of total funding and greater flexibility over the use of funds. These priorities do not include health and welfare entitlement programs, such as Medicaid, for which funding levels are not determined through annual appropriations bills. Board policies on Medicaid and other entitlement programs are included in the section, entitled "IV. Federal Legislative Policies Addressing Issues of Major County Interest."

1. Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Bill

a. Reimbursement of Criminal Alien Costs: Support increased funding to reimburse the County's criminal justice costs associated with criminal aliens, including increased funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program and the Southwest Border Prosecutor Program.

b. County Justice/Law Enforcement Activities: Support increased funding for justice and law enforcement activities, such as the Justice Assistance Grant, anti-gang, technology improvements, prosecutions, prevention, corrections, forensic science, student loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders, training, and activities addressing special populations, such as juveniles, mentally ill, and homeless persons.

c. Immigration and Naturalization Activities: Support increased funding for activities such as border enforcement, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents assigned to the County's jails, automated fingerprint identification systems to track criminal aliens, prosecution of criminal aliens and alien smugglers, naturalization assistance, and processing of naturalization and immigration applications.

2. Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill

a. Ryan White HIV/AIDS Programs: Support increased funding of Ryan White HIV/AIDS programs.

b. Public Health Funding: Support increased funding for public health activities, such as bioterrorism, early detection surveillance, immunizations, tuberculosis, maternal and child health, family planning, sexually transmitted disease, childhood lead poisoning, violence and injury prevention programs, food safety, and chronic disease programs.

c. Other Health Funding: Support Federal reimbursement of the costs of emergency medical care provided to undocumented immigrants and funding for emergency preparedness and response, trauma care, and other health services.

d. Substance Abuse and Mental Health: Support increased funding for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grants, including substance abuse and mental health block grants, the Children's Mental Health Services Program, and other substance abuse, mental health, and supportive services and training grants.

e. Social Services Block Grant: Support increased funding for this block grant, which provides states with considerable flexibility over the use of funds.

f. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs: Support full funding of WIA programs and other employment and training programs.

g. Older Americans Act Programs: Support increased funding for Older Americans Act programs.

h. Refugee Assistance: Support increased funding to provide cash and medical assistance, employment services, and other supportive services to refugees.

i. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): Support increased funding for CSBG, which provides assistance to states, localities, and community-based organizations to reduce poverty, revitalize low income communities, and assist low income persons.

3. Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill

a. Water Quality and Reliability: Support funding for the improvement of water quality and reliability, including grants for projects that would expand the use of recycled water, and for the protection of water supplies against terrorist acts.

b. Marina del Rey: Support funding for the development and implementation of long-term solutions for shoaling problems, including the safe disposal of contaminated sediment and construction of improvements in Ballona Creek and the entrance of Marina del Rey.

c. Beach Erosion/Replenishment: Support funding for developing and implementing coastal management plans, including beach stabilization and replenishment projects.

4. Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill

a. Transportation Projects: Support funding for projects to build, improve, repair, and maintain highways and other transportation infrastructure in Los Angeles County.

b. Airport and Seaport Security: Support increased and multi-year funding to improve security at airports, seaports, and harbors in Los Angeles County, including funding for Coast Guard operations to protect coastal areas of the County.

c. Environmental Improvements: Support funding for initiatives to protect and enhance communities through projects promoting public safety and environmental improvements.

d. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, Section 108 Loan Guarantees, and Homeless Assistance: Support increased funding for CDBG, HOME, Section 108 Loan Guarantee, and homeless assistance grants, and oppose efforts to increase set asides.

e. Public and Assisted Housing: Support increased funding for the public housing and Section 8 programs, including the Section 8 Family Unification program, and Shelter Plus Care renewal projects.

5. Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill

a. Help America Vote Act (HAVA): Support full funding of HAVA grants to help state and local governments meet new election requirements established under HAVA.

6. Interior Appropriations Bill

a. Land and Water Conservation Fund: Support full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund as well as funding for improvements in the Santa Monica Mountains, parks, environmental restoration of coastal watersheds and wetlands, and beach projects in Los Angeles County.

b. Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) Program: Support increased funding for park and open space acquisition and development under the UPARR.

7. Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

a. Homeland Security Activities: Support increased funding for local homeland security activities, such as emergency preparedness and response, training, equipment, and improved communications systems.

b. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Support funding for FEMA to reimburse all unpaid disaster claims and for earthquake preparedness, disaster mitigation, and emergency management.

c. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program: Support increased funding for SAFER, which provides financial assistance to hire firefighters.

IV. FEDERAL POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

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FEDERAL POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

1. Health/Mental Health

a. Support reform of Medicaid financing and provider payments to increase Medicaid payments, including disproportionate share hospital payments, to health safety net providers.

b. Support reform of Medicaid payments to providers to encourage efficient use of resources and expand ambulatory care services to low-income patients without jeopardizing total available Medicaid funds.

c. Support a more equitable allocation of Federal Medicaid funds to reduce the current disparity under which some states, such as California, receive far less Federal Medicaid funds per Medicaid recipient than other states.

d. Support proposals which would increase California's Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), the Federal matching rate used under the Medicaid and Title IV-E Foster Care programs.

e. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health care services, such as proposals which would reduce the level of Medicaid payments, reduce the number of Medicaid eligible persons, and reduce the scope of Medicaid covered services, such as by eliminating Medicaid reimbursement of graduate medical education costs and by narrowing the definition of rehabilitative services and targeted case management services that are eligible for Medicaid funding.

f. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and health insurance coverage to more persons, such as the uninsured, persons in State or local detention facilities, and minors whose health needs, otherwise, must be met by the County.

g. Support proposals which would increase net Federal reimbursement of the County's undocumented immigrant emergency medical costs under the reimbursement program established under the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, including by more equitably allocating funds among states, expanding the definition of allowable costs, and simplifying the reimbursement process.

h. Support proposals to extend health insurance to more persons aged 55 to 64, such as by making Federal employee health benefit plans available to them.

i. Support proposals to increase Medicare payments for graduate medical education to assist public teaching hospitals, which play a critical role in training residents, and to increase funding for graduate medical education programs in preventive medicine under Medicare or other programs.

j. Support proposals and funding to enhance the nation's public health infrastructure and the capacity of local public hospitals, mental health departments, and health departments to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism and other medical and public health emergencies.

k. Support proposals which provide increased funding for trauma care services.

l. Support proposals which provide funding for capital improvements to public hospitals, public health facilities, and clinics.

m. Support proposals and funding which would promote and market the availability of County health and mental health services, which expand and improve access to health and mental health services for the uninsured, women, and other populations with special needs, and which decrease health and mental health disparities among ethnic and cultural groups.

n. Support proposals which provide funding for urban telemedicine programs in medically underserved areas, and which would reimburse physicians in urban areas for telemedical consultations.

o. Support proposals which would expand or improve mental health and substance abuse coverage under public and private health insurance programs and which would fund and integrate mental health and substance abuse prevention, treatment, and services as part of a continuum of services under substance abuse, mental health, health, human services, and other public programs.

p. Support proposals which would allow Medicaid reimbursement for patients at institutions for mental disease (IMDs), which are hospitals, nursing facilities, or other institutions with more than 16 beds that are primarily engaged in the diagnosis, treatment, or care of persons with mental diseases.

q. Support proposals which would increase Medicaid reimbursement of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) costs, including allowing Medicaid payments to be made to IHSS providers who are responsible relatives of recipients.

r. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid coverage to include the evaluation and diagnosis of learning disabilities.

s. Support proposals requiring prior notification to state and local governments by licensed health facilities granted protection under Federal bankruptcy laws to ensure maintenance of appropriate patient care.

t. Support proposals which allow public hospitals and other County facilities and programs which purchase prescription drugs to access discounted pharmaceutical pricing schedules available to the Federal government.

u. Support proposals and funding which would increase the education, training, supply, recruitment, and retention of nurses, physicians, laboratory personnel, and other health professionals, especially for work in medically underserved areas.

v. Support proposals and funding to enhance cultural and linguistic competence in health education and delivery.

w. Support legislation to reauthorize Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration programs, which would provide increased funding to California and the County, and support proposals that would provide for a more equitable allocation of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funds, such as by increasing the statutory cap on the cost of service factor that adjusts block grant allotments for the relative differences in the cost of providing substance abuse services among states.

x. Support proposals and increased funding for preventive health, public health, and mental health services, such as immunizations, early detection and diagnostic services, interconception and prenatal care, well-person care, nutrition, tobacco cessation, and health/mental health education activities.

y. Support proposals which would provide for the treatment and care of current and former Armed Services members with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries at the Rancho Los Angeles National Rehabilitation Center under a contract with the Federal government.

2. State Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) which maintains or increases annual overall funding levels and California's share of total funding, and which would allow the State to expend or retain more of its SCHIP allotments without being subject to reallocation to other states.

b. Support proposals that would provide states with greater flexibility over the use of SCHIP funds, including to expand eligibility to cover parents and legal immigrants, expand the scope of covered services, and use community-based delivery systems without requiring Federally approved waivers.

3. HIV/AIDS Programs

a. Support proposals that would increase funding for HIV/AIDS programs and activities, including Ryan White programs, HIV/AIDS screening, prevention, treatment, care, and research activities.

b. Support proposals that would increase the County's share of available funding.

c. Support preservation of direct grants to heavily impacted areas, such as the County.

d. Support proposals which would allow funds to be used to provide a more comprehensive, integrated continuum of care and services and which would increase local flexibility over the use of funds in addressing locally determined needs and priorities.

e. Support maintaining the current statutorily required roles and responsibilities of planning councils under Ryan White programs.

f. Support proposals which would increase the availability of and access to routine HIV screening and HIV/AIDS care, treatment, prevention, research, and education programs.

4. Health and Human Services Reform

a. Support proposals which would increase the number of indigent County residents who are eligible to receive Federally-funded assistance while ensuring that sponsors meet their financial obligations.

b. Support maintaining Medicaid, Food Stamps, and child support enforcement as open-ended entitlement programs.

c. Support open-ended entitlements for Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance and other funding models that promote higher priorities such as increased State and local flexibility in the expenditure of Federal funding and support achievement of better outcomes for children.

d. Support sufficient funding for health and human services reforms commensurate with any increase in services or administrative responsibilities needed to implement the reforms.

e. Support proposals and funding for welfare-to-work activities.

f. Support proposals and funding for services to non-custodial parents that strengthen their earning power, promote the payment of child support, and promote more effective parenting and greater involvement in the lives of their children.

g. Support proposals and funding to improve health and human services information technology and to implement and make improvements to automated data and management information systems for Federal programs administered by state and local governments.

h. Support proposals which would simplify the administration of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Food Stamps, and other public assistance programs.

i. Oppose proposals that would reduce Federal or State financial participation in health and human services programs, especially when it could result in a reduction in services or shift costs to the County.

j. Support proposals to hold state and local governments harmless from fiscal penalties when the Federal government did not provide additional funding commensurate with the cost of meeting new Federal requirements, or when the failure to meet Federal requirements resulted from factors beyond their control, such as the lack of clear program instructions.

k. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health and human services, such as reducing Federal funding or denying Federally-funded benefits to indigent County residents who will remain eligible for County-funded services.

l. Support proposals which would enhance the County's ability to utilize Federal funds to coordinate and integrate service delivery, including, but not limited to, the sharing of costs and client information across Federal programs.

m. Oppose new administratively imposed requirements, such as performance or quality control standards, that are not accompanied by additional Federal funding.

n. Support proposals that would increase state and local flexibility under Section 1115 waivers, including by extending Section 1115 waiver authority to Title IV-B Child and Family Services, Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, and Title XX Social Services.

o. Support maintaining the flexibility of states to terminate demonstration projects and state options in health and human services programs.

p. Support proposals and funding that would promote home and community-based care for persons who, otherwise, would require institutionalization.

q. Support proposals to increase Federal child support enforcement funding.

r. Support proposals and funding to assist ex-offenders become self-sufficient through employment and training.

s. Support proposals which would increase nutrition education, provide consumers with more nutritional information on foods, and discourage the marketing of non-nutritious foods and beverages to children.

5. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

a. Support legislation which maintains or increases annual TANF Block Grant funding levels and state and local flexibility over the use of funds, provides for an equitable allocation of funds to California, and preserves or increases the current state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirement to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the needs of low income children and their families.

b. Support preservation of the current scope of allowable activities and populations served.

c. Support expanding the work activities that states may count towards the TANF work participation rate, and support the elimination of the separate two-parent work requirement.

d. Support proposals which provide incentives to states to move families toward self-sufficiency, such as providing credit toward a state's work participation rate for moving recipients into employment.

e. Support proposals which would waive fiscal penalties on states that failed to meet Federal work participation rate requirements despite increasing expenditures on work-related activities or which would allow a state to pay its penalty by increasing its TANF work-related expenditures by an amount equal to the penalty.

f. Support proposals which would increase the flexibility of states to draw down their TANF allotments.

g. Support proposals which would strengthen TANF's role in reducing child poverty.

h. Support proposals to increase state and local flexibility under TANF, especially over welfare-to-work activities.

i. Support proposals which would reduce potential increased costs or fiscal penalties for states and counties under TANF, including those that otherwise would result from increased Federal requirements.

6. Food Stamp Program

a. Support the continued authorization of funding for the Food Stamp Program.

b. Support proposals which would simplify the administration of the Food Stamps Program, including telephone interviews with applicants, one-step benefit calculations, and streamlining of Food Stamps work and training requirements.

c. Support proposals to reform the Food Stamp quality control (QC) system, such as by setting more reasonable error rate targets, placing greater emphasis on rewarding good performance rather than penalizing poor performance, and allowing states to reinvest any QC fiscal penalty as an alternative to payment.

d. Support proposals which improve coordination between the Food Stamps and TANF programs, including providing states with the option to use the TANF definition of household under the Food Stamps Program.

e. Support the restoration of Food Stamps eligibility to all legal non-citizens with deeming provisions for sponsored immigrants.

7. Children and Family Services

a. Support proposals which would provide a subsidy for legal guardian relative caregivers who have assumed full time care and responsibility for abused and neglected children and avoid foster care placement for such children, including through Federal financial participation under Title IV-E.

b. Support proposals and funding which would promote income security, housing, health care, and education and vocational opportunities for youth emancipating from foster care, and which would lower the age provision of the Independent Living Program to 14 years.

c. Support proposals which would expand Title IV-E eligibility to more abused and neglected children.

d. Support proposals which would increase funding for foster care, adoption assistance, independent living, family preservation, child protective services, and other services to promote the safety and well being of abused and neglected children.

e. Support proposals and funding which would implement a Child Health and Education Passport System in Los Angeles County.

f. Support proposals which would enhance legal permanence for foster children by expanding family finding programs and streamlining and/or supporting adoption and legal guardianship programs.

g. Support proposals and funding which would improve and increase the training of child welfare, mental health, health, and other workers who provide services to children in the child welfare system.

h. Support proposals to expedite the implementation of a comprehensive statewide automated child support system in California, mitigate the State's fiscal liability for not meeting Federal child support automation requirements, and allow fiscal penalties imposed on the State to be reinvested in the child support program.

i. Support legislation that requires Federal agencies to update their records within five days of receipt of information from state Title IV-D child support agencies.

j. Support proposals and funding to promote and increase intervention, prevention, training, technical assistance, research, and education in the areas of domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse, including through the reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

k. Support proposals which would provide for the flexible use of Federal funding to provide services to abused and neglected children and their families.

l. Support enactment of tax credits for individuals who provide in-home care to elderly parents or other family members.

m. Support proposals which provide funding for state and local governments for before and after-school programs.

n. Support proposals to provide states with increased financial incentives to pass through child support arrearages to children who receive welfare benefits.

o. Support proposals and funding for state and local governments to increase the availability and quality of affordable child care and development services to more children and families.

p. Support proposals and funding to local school districts and child care and development programs to implement locally determined programs to help educate children with limited English proficiency.

q. Support legislation to reauthorize the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program, which maintains or increases California's percentage share of total CSBG funding, and which retains the current requirement that states pass through block grant funds to local communities.

r. Support proposals that would provide child welfare agencies, juvenile courts, and court-appointed advocates with access to educational records on children who they are serving.

s. Support proposals that would fully fund special education.

t. Support proposals and funding to expand mentoring services and after-school recreation activities for at-risk youth.

8. Employment and Training

a. Support programs that provide special training, remedial education, job placement, career enhancement, and other employment services to low-income persons, at-risk youth, and displaced workers so that they may enter the competitive job market.

b. Support providing local elected officials greater control and flexibility over the administration, planning, and implementation of employment and training programs.

c. Support the pass-through of Federal employment and training funds to local areas based on relative need as measured by factors such as unemployment, poverty, and the number of welfare recipients and displaced workers.

d. Support legislation which allows persons from the military to obtain credit for their training, and promotes the transfer of such skills to the private sector and other government agencies to avoid the time and cost of retraining.

e. Support proposals which permit the full implementation of the County's Living Wage Ordinance.

9. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act, which provides separate adult, youth, and dislocated worker formula grants for workforce development activities to states with the mandatory pass-through of funds to local workforce areas.

b. Support proposals to provide local elected officials with greater flexibility over the administration, planning, and use of WIA funds, including the flexibility to serve more in-school youth and foster youth and to administer stand-alone summer youth programs.

c. Support proposals which would expand and improve the effectiveness of the one-stop workforce delivery system, including providing greater flexibility in forming local partnerships and in sharing information and costs among programs and entities participating in the one-stop system.

d. Support WIA performance measurement system reforms which would promote local flexibility in setting performance goals, and which would ensure that local areas are not penalized for having a high unemployment rate or for targeting services at hard-to-employ persons or persons with special needs, such as foster youth or the homeless.

e. Support proposals which would equitably allocate WIA funds to states and substate areas, based solely on relative need using the latest available data.

f. Oppose proposals that would include Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs in a "super waiver" covering multiple Federal employment and education programs, which could reduce the amount of funds available to the County for locally determined workforce services.

g. Support proposals which would establish a streamlined funding mechanism for sharing one-stop infrastructure costs among partner programs in a manner that ensures County-administered partner programs will not incur a disproportionately high share of infrastructure costs.

10. Older Americans Act Programs

a. Support increased funding for Older Americans Act (OAA) programs.

b. Support proposals that would increase flexibility, including by allowing Family Caregiver Program funds to be used to serve grandparents under age 60 who are raising children.

c. Support proposals that would reduce non-Federal match requirements and expand what can be counted as a matching contribution.

d. Support proposals which would provide for the more equitable allocation of OAA funds to states and substate areas, based solely on relative need using the latest available data.

11. Homeland Security

a. Support funding for local homeland security activities, such as emergency preparedness and response, planning, training, equipment, personnel, and improved communications systems.

b. Support proposals and funding to enhance the nation's public health infrastructure and the capacity of local public hospitals and health departments to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism and other medical and public health emergencies.

c. Support proposals which would more effectively target homeland security, first responder, bioterrorism, and firefighting funds based on relative need, population, and threat levels.

d. Support funding to improve the security of critical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, flood control, water resources, hospitals, public buildings, and transportation facilities.

e. Support funding to ensure an adequate supply of vaccine, antidotes, medications, and other medical supplies to respond to a health emergency or terrorist threat.

f. Support the direct allocation or the pass-through of an equitable share of state block grant funds to counties for first responder, bioterrorism, interoperable communications, and other homeland security activities.

g. Oppose match or cost-sharing requirements which would hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.

h. Support greater local flexibility over the use of first responder, bioterrorism, and other homeland security funding, including the flexibility to use funds to pay for personnel.

i. Support proposals which would clarify that the Federal government rather than state and local public health departments or their employees is financially liable for any claims arising from the administration of a vaccine as part of their involvement in a Federal vaccination campaign.

j. Support proposals which would facilitate interagency information sharing and coordination on emergency management, law enforcement, public safety, and health matters relating to homeland security.

k. Support proposals and funding for human relations agencies to combat terrorism and related hate violence by helping to enhance communication, trust, and cooperation between law enforcement and impacted communities, and for the nation's human relations infrastructure to prepare for, prevent, and respond to hate violence, prejudice, and damage to intergroup relations that may arise from terrorist attacks or threats.

l. Support the concept of multi-year Federal grant funding to improve security at seaports and harbors in Los Angeles County.

m. Support proposals which would promote a regional approach to homeland security and emergency preparedness.

n. Support proposals and funding which would increase fire prevention and fire safety, and which would enhance the capabilities of fire departments to provide fire and other public safety services.

o. Support proposals and funding which would strengthen the cyber security of the information technology and network infrastructure of state and local governments.

12. Justice/Anti-Crime

a. Support the allocation of Justice Assistance Grant, juvenile justice, and other anti-crime block grant funds to local governments based on their relative need and responsibility for criminal justice activities, as measured by crime rates and criminal justice expenditures including, but not limited to, jails, courts, prosecution, incarceration, probation, and indigent defense.

b. Support direct grants (or the pass-through of an equitable share of state block grant funds) to counties for the development, refurbishment, or operation of correctional facilities.

c. Support the elimination of local match requirements under anti-crime and other justice assistance programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services program, for financially distressed local governments.

d. Support proposals to allow the County to count its unreimbursed criminal alien incarceration costs as matching funds towards any match requirement for Federal anti-crime funds.

e. Support increased Federal resources to assist County justice agencies with crime laboratory improvements and backlog reduction, drug laundering intervention, jail automation, and tracking of criminal aliens.

f. Support increased funding for probation under Federal community policing programs, but not at the expense of currently financed law enforcement activities.

g. Support proposals which would facilitate information sharing and coordination between Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

h. Support proposals to promote community prosecution programs and increase prosecutions, including gun-related crimes and identity theft.

i. Support increased Federal involvement and funding to reduce gang-related crimes, and increased Federal funding for juvenile justice programs which promote a balance of funding between punitive intervention efforts and prevention investments.

j. Support proposals that make mental health intervention a component of law enforcement and the administration of justice, including training law enforcement personnel in dealing with the mentally ill, and support funding for mental health courts.

k. Support legislation which expands Federal jurisdiction to prosecute hate crimes based on gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

l. Support legislation which seeks to reduce discrimination and hate crimes, increase human relations education and training, and enhance communities' capacity to effectively address intergroup relations issues.

m. Support proposals which allow for an intercept of Federal tax refunds of probationers who owe restitution.

n. Support legislation and funding which would provide for the cancellation of student loans for public defenders and prosecutors.

o. Support proposals and funding to expand drug courts, mental health courts, and their related treatment programs as an alternative to incarceration.

p. Support proposals to prohibit the unauthorized use, manufacture, wearing, sale, or transfer of any official public agency badge or photographic identification card.

q. Support proposals which would increase the County's share of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding, provide direct JAG funding to the County in a timely manner, and increase the County's decision-making authority and flexibility over the use of funds.

13. Immigration and Refugees

a. Support proposals which would reduce the County's criminal justice costs associated with criminal aliens, such as by providing increased Federal reimbursement of County costs or by increasing the identification, apprehension, deportation, or Federal prosecutions of criminal aliens.

b. Support proposals which would reduce backlogs of naturalization and immigration adjustment of status cases and which eliminate barriers faced by aged and disabled legal immigrants in becoming naturalized citizens.

c. Support an extension of Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which allows immigrants to adjust their immigration status without leaving the country if they pay a $1,000 penalty fee, and support using the fee revenues to expand immigration and naturalization activities and reimburse criminal alien costs in the districts where the fees are collected.

d. Support legislation to authorize and provide funding for Refugee Act programs that ensure that newly arrived refugees will receive cash and medical assistance, employment and training, social services, and other needed services.

e. Support a more equitable allocation of Refugee Social Services and Targeted Assistance funds, and support proposals which provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of funds, including the flexibility to serve refugees who have been in the U.S. over five years.

f. Oppose proposals which would restrict the eligibility of refugees for other Federal programs, such as TANF and Medicaid, or which would shift costs of providing cash and medical assistance to refugees from the Federal government to state and local governments.

g. Support proposals and funding which would reimburse the County for costs resulting from Federal immigration policies.

14. Community Development

a. Support programs and initiatives providing community development, economic development, and housing for low and moderate income persons to improve their living conditions and the economic health and infrastructure of their communities.

b. Support proposals which provide increased flexibility over the use of Federal community development and housing funds to local officials.

c. Support retention of the current direct allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to large urban counties and current CDBG and HOME state/local allocation formulas, and oppose proposals that would decrease funding to Los Angeles County.

d. Support continued funding for the Section 108 loan guarantee program, which is an important source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, and other physical development projects.

e. Oppose policies which would allow private commercial development and the transfer of land to private entities at the Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Healthcare Center.

f. Support proposals which would increase resources available to local jurisdictions to clean up and redevelop Brownfields.

g. Oppose proposals which would increase fees for Small Business Administration loans.

h. Support proposals which would increase funding for asbestos and lead-based paint removal programs.

i. Support proposals and funding which would promote small business development, including high technology companies.

15. Housing and Homeless Assistance

a. Support proposals to maintain or increase funding to public housing authorities (PHAs), such as for capital improvements, operating subsidies, resident services, administration, and anti-crime programs in public housing.

b. Support proposals which would provide local officials with greater flexibility over the administration and use of housing funds, including over HOME funds, capital funds, Section 8 administrative fees, Section 8 vouchers, the implementation of asset management, the membership of the governing body of the PHA, and Section 8 voucher performance measurement system.

c. Support the continued administration of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program by local PHAs, and oppose proposals which would reduce local decision-making authority or convert the Section 8 program into a block grant to states.

d. Support sufficient funding to renew all existing Section 8 vouchers at reasonable rents for the jurisdictions served.

e. Support proposals which would simplify program administration and ease reporting requirements for public housing authorities.

f. Support proposals, tax incentives, and funding which would increase home ownership and rental housing opportunities for low and moderate income individuals and families and increase the supply of affordable housing.

g. Support proposals which provide additional resources for meeting the housing and related supportive service needs of special populations, including elderly, disabled, and mentally ill persons.

h. Support the reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and proposals which would increase local discretion over the use of homeless assistance

funds, increase funding for homeless assistance programs, including supportive housing, supportive services, emergency services, and the Homeless Management Information System, more equitably distribute funds based on relative need, and fund the renewal of contracts for permanent supportive housing from a separate homeless program account rather than Section 8 funds.

i. Support proposals and funding that would increase fair housing activities.

j. Support proposals to provide funding to collect data on the number and characteristics of the homeless population in Los Angeles County.

k. Support proposals that would impede predatory lending practices.

l. Oppose proposals which would restrict the authority of public housing authorities to administer housing programs, including over the selection and eviction of tenants, or which would impose costly new requirements that are not accompanied by additional resources to implement them.

m. Support proposals that would enhance the ability of public housing authorities (PHAs) to prevent fraud and collect unpaid rents, such as the creation of a central database which would allow PHAs to receive information on tenants and applicants who owe money or committed fraud on another PHA program and the sharing of information between HUD and other Federal means-tested benefit programs.

n. Support the creation of a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data base that would contain information on all participants in HUD-assisted programs to ensure proper and timely assistance.

o. Support proposals and funding which would enable more homebuyers to avoid foreclosures, mitigate the negative impacts of foreclosures, and stabilize impacted neighborhoods, such as through housing counseling programs, the restructuring of loan terms for borrowers at risk of foreclosure, rehabilitation of foreclosed properties, and increased flexibility over the use of Federal funds.

16. Transportation

a. Support funding for County transportation projects.

b. Support proposals to provide local officials with greater flexibility over the use of transportation funds.

c. Support regional alternatives to the expansion of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), including the use of tax and fee incentives for airlines to expand the number of flights at underutilized regional airports.

d. Support funding for clean fuel buses and for bus maintenance facility improvements.

e. Support efforts to work collaboratively with regional transportation agencies to secure funding for transportation projects in Los Angeles County.

f. Support funding to state and local agencies to construct highway-rail grade separations in order to relieve traffic congestion and improve public safety.

g. Support proposals and funding which would improve the efficient movement of goods from ports to other regions and reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

17. Surface Transportation Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize surface transportation programs, which would maintain or increase overall annual funding, provides for a more equitable allocation of funds to California and the County, funds demonstration projects in the County, and enhances the role of local officials over the planning and use of funds.

b. Support proposals which would increase the share of Federal transportation funds received by California relative to Federal taxes collected from California.

c. Support proposals to increase funding for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, which funds transportation projects that lower emissions to assist states in meeting Federal air quality standards, targets a greater share of CMAQ funds to urban areas with the worst air quality, and increases local flexibility over the use of CMAQ funds in improving air quality.

d. Support proposals which would increase state and local control over the use of funds by increasing the share of total funding allocated, by formula, to states rather than through Congressionally-earmarked projects.

e. Support proposals to streamline and expedite the transportation planning and development process.

18. Air, Water, and Resources

a. Support proposals which would permit greater local flexibility in dealing with potential contamination and pollution from storm water runoff, and oppose changes in Federal law and policy which restrict the ability of the County to maintain facilities so they can function as designed.

b. Support proposals and funding for research and development of technologies to improve water quality with respect to brackish water, chromium 6, perchlorate, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), arsenic, radon, and disinfection byproducts.

c. Support proposals which would improve the reliability, quality, quantity, and security of water supplies for Los Angeles County.

d. Support amendments to the Clean Water Act which would authorize Federal funding or cost-sharing for implementing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) standards, or which would exempt from its provisions those routine operation and maintenance activities on existing publicly-owned facilities and the construction of publicly owned water quality enhancement facilities.

e. Support legislation which repeals the mandated use of oxygenated fuel additives, such as MTBE.

f. Oppose proposals that would shift liability for the cost of cleaning up pollution caused by fuel additives, such as MTBE, from the private sector to state and local governments.

g. Support proposals which provide funding to states and local governments to reduce emissions from mobile and fixed sources through efforts such as the conversion of vehicle fleets to alternative fuels.

h. Support proposals which provide funding or tax credits for projects to improve air quality, such as by reducing toxic particulate matter emissions from diesel engines through voluntary scrap programs and the replacement or retrofit of diesel-powered vehicles and equipment, or to promote the use of sustainable building practices that reduce resource consumption, energy consumption, and release of pollutants and wastes, such as through the use of solar energy and water reclamation.

i. Support proposals which provide funding to state and local governments for environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, land acquisition, open space, and improvements to parks, beaches, and other recreational areas.

j. Support proposals to fund the operation and maintenance of watershed or multi-use projects.

k. Support proposals and funding for flood protection, water conservation, pollution control activities, storm drain improvements, replacement of septic systems in the County, stormwater management, and low impact development practices.

l. Oppose proposals which would reduce the amount of funds available to state and local governments from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

m. Support proposals to fully fund the Los Angeles County segment of the Army Corps of Engineers' Coast of California study and the development of long-term management plans for sediments in the Los Angeles region.

n. Support the use of a portion of funds from the Outer Continental Shelf Royalty Fund for sand replenishment, sewage treatment, urban runoff programs, and the environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, and oppose initiatives to renew offshore drilling.

o. Support proposals which would authorize Federal cost-sharing of local development and rehabilitation projects as well as operations and maintenance at Federally owned and constructed flood control facilities used for regional recreation.

p. Support funding for pest prevention and eradication efforts, weed and wildlife management efforts, enhanced pesticide use enforcement and monitoring, increased surveillance of pests at ports of entry in California, and for the Sterile Insect Release program in the Los Angeles area to prevent Medfly infestations.

q. Support funding for weights and measures inspection and enforcement.

r. Support proposals that provide public agencies with immunity from liability to encourage development of multiuse watershed management, environmental restoration, open space, and recreation projects within flood protection and water conservation facilities.

s. Support proposals and funding that would assist local park agencies in their efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and activities that address the problem of obesity.

t. Support proposals and funding for partnerships between local school districts and park agencies to promote or expand after-school programs.

u. Support proposals that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, including from solid waste landfills, and that would increase the use of landfill gases as an energy source for generating electricity or heat.

19. Waste Management and Superfund

a. Support proposals which protect local governments from liability for hazardous waste cleanup and which provide funding to local governments to clean up hazardous waste sites.

b. Support proposals and funding for the immediate clean up of hazardous materials at closed military bases to ensure the prompt reuse of those bases for new purposes.

c. Support proposals which establish a redemption value on paint cans to promote recycling of leftover paint.

d. Support development of long-term markets for recycled materials and other end-use products.

e. Support proposals which would increase the recycling of televisions and computer monitors that are toxic due to their lead content, such as requiring manufacturers, retailers, and end users to share the financial burden of recycling them.

f. Support the development of alternative technologies, other than landfilling, for the management of residual waste after diversion activities.

g. Oppose proposals which would allow transport of nuclear waste through the County.

h. Support proposals that would provide for the safe collection and disposal of medical waste materials, such as medical needles.

20. Disaster Assistance

a. Support proposals which would increase the amount of Federal disaster aid available to the County, such as by authorizing Federal reimbursement of straight-time labor costs for emergency response work, and oppose proposals that would reduce Federal disaster aid or increase the proportion of disaster aid or hazard mitigation costs which must be borne by state or local governments.

b. Support proposals and funding to improve the capacity of state and local governments to plan, prepare, and respond to emergencies, including those involving acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and public health emergencies.

21. Utilities and Energy

a. Support efforts to ensure reasonable wholesale rates for electricity, and oppose proposals which would restrict state and local government efforts to solve energy problems.

b. Support proposals to require refunds to consumers and utilities for rates charged in excess of just and reasonable levels.

c. Support efforts to establish electric utility reliability standards.

d. Oppose proposals which would restrict the ability of public agencies to use tax-exempt financing for electric co-generation.

e. Oppose proposals which would preempt state or local authority over the siting or zoning of power plants, power lines, or other utility-related infrastructure.

f. Support funding which would assist local governments in reducing energy consumption, shifting energy usage to non-peak hours, promoting energy efficiency, using renewable resources, and developing local energy strategies.

22. Communications

a. Support proposals and funding that would enable County public safety agencies to upgrade their communications systems, utilize additional radio spectrum, implement or expand interoperable communications systems, use new communications technologies, and meet increasingly complex communications requirements.

b. Support proposals to provide local agencies with waivers from Federal mandates to convert from broadband to narrow band communications technologies unless sufficient funding is provided to comply with the mandates.

c. Support proposals which would assign additional radio spectrum to public safety agencies.

d. Oppose proposals which preempt local government authority over telecommunications services, such as the franchising and regulation of local cable television services, zoning of television, radio, and other telecommunications broadcast towers, emergency alert communications systems, and protection of consumers relating to telecommunication services.

e. Support proposals which encourage competition among communications providers for the full range of telephone, cable, video, internet, and broadband services.

f. Support Federal proposals which prohibit "slamming" and "cramming" of telecommunications services, and which limit the financial liability of affected consumers.

g. Support proposals which protect consumers from unsolicited commercial electronic mail ("spamming").

h. Oppose proposals which preempt the authority of local government to adopt policies on use of Internet services and equipment funded by the Federal E-rate telecommunication discount program.

i. Support proposals to provide consumers with a callback number that would lift the identity block used by marketers in telephone solicitations.

j. Support proposals to provide all public libraries with lower rates for telecommunications services, including access to the Internet.

k. Support proposals that promote and fund nationwide availability of 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral to human services and for other purposes.

l. Support proposals that promote universal and affordable access to a wide range of telecommunication services, including voice, video, data, and the Internet.

m. Support proposals that provide local governments with no-cost access to media to distribute information to residents by such methods as Public, Educational, and Government access channels.

23. Tobacco Settlement

a. Support proposals which reimburse local governments for indigent and employee health care costs attributable to tobacco products, reduce youth access to tobacco products, and promote community-based tobacco prevention and intervention efforts.

b. Oppose proposals which weaken the ability of local government to sue the tobacco industry, preempt the ability of local government to regulate tobacco products, and weaken the ability of the Federal Food and Drug Administration to regulate nicotine, unless part of an overall settlement which is beneficial to the County.

c. Support proposals which prevent the Federal government from taking proceeds from settlements between the tobacco industry and state and local governments.

d. Oppose proposals which limit the ability of individuals to sue the tobacco industry for tobacco-related damages.

24. Census and Federal Data

a. Support proposals which promote accurate, unbiased and inclusive census counts, and support the use of scientifically sound sampling methods to augment the direct count to ensure that accurate data will be available with which to equitably allocate funds among states and localities.

b. Support the use of the most current available Federal demographic data in allocating Federal formula grant funds to assure that areas, such as the County, whose population is growing faster than the national average, receive an equitable share of funds.

c. Oppose the use of small state minimums which provide states with small populations with more Federal aid relative to need than more populous states, such as California.

25. Federalism

a. Support proposals which ensure the input of state and local governments before implementing any Executive Order relating to the powers of state and local governments.

b. Oppose proposals which preempt local land use decision-making authority, exempt certain categories of land use from zoning requirements, or limit the ability of local governments to determine appropriate uses of property within their jurisdiction.

c. Support proposals which would expedite Federal review of waiver requests submitted by state and local governments, especially requests for waiver extensions or waivers similar to those approved in other jurisdictions.

d. Oppose proposals which would result in a net cost increase or tax revenue loss to state and local governments without providing them with offsetting Federal revenue.

e. Oppose proposals which would result in the downsizing and/or closure of the Los Angeles Air Force base.

f. Support preservation of the Federal tax deductibility of state and local income and property taxes and the Federal tax-exempt status of state and local bonds.

g. Support the repeal of a new Federal mandate which, otherwise, will take effect on January 1, 2011, that will require state and local governments to withhold three percent of nearly all payments to contractors or vendors for payment to the Federal government for Federal tax collection purposes.

h. Oppose proposals that jeopardize local revenues resulting from the provision of voice (telephone), video (cable) and data (Internet) services.

i. Support proposals which would provide state and local governments with the option of using Federal supply schedules to acquire goods and services.

26. Retirement/Pension Programs

a. Oppose proposals which mandate Social Security and Medicare coverage of state and local government employees.

b. Support proposals which would increase the portability of government pension and deferred income plans, including by allowing Section 457 transfers to purchase retirement service credits, and relax limits on contributions to and benefits from such plans.

c. Support proposals to repeal or reduce the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision which reduce the amount of Social Security benefits received by many Federal, state, and local government retirees and their spouses.

27. Voting

a. Support legislation which permits registrars to remove names from voting rolls when unable to confirm residency, permits the use of Social Security numbers on voter registration affidavits, establishes a system for local elections officials to ascertain and determine the status of Federal felons on probation or parole, and permits the U.S. Postal Service to return undeliverable official elections materials without charge to elections officials.

b. Support proposals and funding to help state and local governments upgrade their voting equipment to a more technologically advanced system that produces accurate and expeditious election results without imposing uniform nationwide standards.

28. Cultural/Libraries/Arts Education

a. Support increased Federal funding for arts education research and for cultural and educational agencies, including museums, which promote and sustain the arts, arts education, the humanities, and the sciences.

b. Support funding of the Library Services and Technology Act at the full amount authorized by law.

c. Support funding for the Federal Depository Library Program, which makes government publications accessible at public libraries throughout the country.

d. Oppose closures and service reductions at Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regional and special libraries which support environmental research by members of the public and EPA staff.

e. Support legislation to include the arts as core curriculum under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

29. Consumer Affairs

Support proposals to prohibit unsolicited credit checks currently being marketed by credit card companies.