BUTTE COUNTY, CA

2021 REGIONAL FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Approved January 26, 2021
BUTTE COUNTY
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Jon Clark
Executive Director
OVERVIEW

Over the last several years, the communities of Butte County have experienced multiple declared federal disasters including droughts, floods, fires, and pandemics. Through all of this, the County continued to provide essential services to our residents including unfailing law enforcement and fire protection; supportive mental health, behavioral health, and public health services; dependable infrastructure construction and maintenance; and reliable building and community services. The large number of survivors and the need to provide housing in jurisdictions outside of the burn areas has led to populations in cities within Butte County growing to sizes not anticipated for another 10 years. While recovering from the disastrous events that are beyond our control remains one of the County’s top priorities, ensuring we continue to provide the essential services our residents rely on remains critical. Through the Regional Federal Legislative Platform, the County will advocate for federal assistance in five major areas, including:

Disaster Recovery
Commit to the mitigation, preparation, and recovery of our communities before and after natural disasters.

Public Safety
Provide reliable law enforcement, fire, and emergency management services.

Community Support
Provide our residents the resources they need to overcome challenges.

Land Use and Infrastructure
Support smart economic growth and reliable infrastructure.

Other Governmental Functions
Support our communities as a whole.
DISASTER RECOVERY

Over the past five years, the communities of Butte County have experienced several declared federal disasters, including a record-setting drought, the Oroville Dam Spillway Failure and related flooding from an “Atmospheric River”, and multiple wildfires including the Wall Fire, the Ponderosa Fire, the Wind Complex Fire, and the Camp Fire, the most destructive wildfire in the nation in the past 100 years. Then, in 2020, more disasters hit. Not only did Butte County respond to its communities and residents through unprecedented public health and economic turmoil caused by the world-wide coronavirus pandemic, but the County was hit with yet another devastating wildfire. The North Complex Fire destroyed 2,300 structures, including over 1,500 homes, and burned approximately 125,000 acres in Butte County. Impacts of these disasters, including unanticipated costs that could go on for years and reduced local revenues in the form of property taxes, sales taxes, transient occupancy taxes, and franchise fees, are only exacerbated as the multiple successive disasters layer upon each other.

Disaster Funding

• Support additional federal funding for agencies and programs to aid disaster recovery.
• Support legislation that waives the local share of cost of all emergency response and disaster recovery activities.
• Advocate for funding with minimal cost share for infrastructure projects destroyed, damaged, or impacted by natural disasters.
• Support changes to the 2020 Census to account for the impacts of disaster events where residents are temporarily residing in alternate locations to ensure federal funding is not lost.
• Advocate for allocation of economic stimulus and disaster relief funding related to the coronavirus pandemic directly to local governments, small businesses, community organizations, and special districts.
• Advocate for access to coronavirus relief funding for all local governments, regardless of size and population.
• Advocate for the use of coronavirus relief and economic stimulus funding for the loss of revenue caused by the pandemic.
DISASTER RECOVERY

Housing and Survivor Benefits

• Support funding that assists with expedient construction of diverse housing stock in Northern California.
• Advocate for funding for all displaced individuals, including those who lost access to housing due to secondary displacement.
• Advocate for access to full benefits for all evacuees, survivors, individuals, and businesses impacted by declared disasters.
• Support legislation and policies that allow survivors and other residents to rebuild homes safely while also maintaining access to affordable and fair homeowners' insurance.

Recovery and Response

• Support legislation to repair roads to pre-disaster condition.
• Support legislation that funds water quality monitoring in communities impacted by wildfires, flooding, or other natural disasters.
• Support legislation to fund end-market solutions for timber and greenwaste.
• Support funding to assist citizens with post traumatic stress disorder and other mental related illnesses stemming from the numerous disasters hitting our region.
• Support policies that require federal fire fighting agencies to coordinate directly with state and local fire fighting agencies to collectively respond to wildfire events in a coordinated manner.
PUBLIC SAFETY

Butte County endeavors to provide safe communities for its residents. To this end, the County focuses on ensuring that all communities are protected from public safety threats and have access to critical safety services. We also strive to ensure we support our residents in their everyday lives by providing reliable law enforcement, fire and emergency management services.

Forest Management

⦁ Support federal assistance for improved forest management and fuel reduction, including fire breaks, logging, biomass, biochar, reforestation and other creative solutions.
⦁ Pursue legislative and regulatory changes to address tree mortality on federal lands.
⦁ Support legislation and policies that assist local and state agencies in establishing fire mitigation activities, protocols, and programs.

Wild Fire Protection and Prevention

⦁ Monitor and track federal assistance opportunities for wildfire protection and prevention programs.
⦁ Support funding for the expansion of necessary evacuation routes throughout the County.
⦁ Support new emerging technologies that assist emergency managers with key decision making tools.

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Planning

⦁ Support legislation that provides funding for local emergency and disaster planning, response, and recovery planning and efforts.
⦁ Support legislation to broaden eligible mitigation projects and provide mitigation funding.
⦁ Support legislation and funding for expanding and increasing evacuation routes or evacuation points, especially for communities with only one way in and out.
⦁ Support funding for counties to maintain regularly needed critical services and to provide for higher demands on health, social services, and behavioral health departments in the aftermath of emergencies.
PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Safety Facilities, Equipment, and Personnel

⦁ Support funding for construction and rehabilitation of public safety facilities, including but not limited to: the jail, evidence storage, morgue, a forensic computer center, new Probation facility and fire stations.
⦁ Pursue funding for public safety equipment, technology, training, and personnel.

Incarceration Impacts

⦁ Support full funding for states and counties of costs associated with incarcerating undocumented aliens for the federal government.
⦁ Oppose legislation which imposes adverse actions for incarcerated undocumented individuals.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

One of Butte County’s goals is to ensure the way of life our residents love so much is not impacted by the challenges of today or the changes of tomorrow. We strive to ensure our residents have access to safe and affordable housing and are supported by a robust local economy and workforce. Butte County understands that many of our residents, including our youth, face a variety of challenges related to mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, and gangs. The County strives to provide our populations in high risk with the services they need to overcome these challenges.

Housing

- Support programs and funding to provide housing and support services for all populations.
- Support programs that provide for diverse housing, including but not limited to affordable, market rate, transitional, and treatment based housing.
- Support services for individuals who are experiencing homelessness.
- Support programs that connect housing to transportation, employment centers and educational institutions.

Health and Well Being

- Support affordable health care for all individuals.
- Monitor key provisions of the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act related to County programs.
- Support mental health, drug, and alcohol services for the County’s adult and youth populations in high risk environments.
- Support funding for regional mental health facilities.
- Advocate for funding of senior care and service programs including those authorized under the Elder Care Act.
- Support child welfare and child support programs that benefit the physical, mental, and financial well-being of children, including those in foster care.
- Pursue funding for juvenile justice programs for the County’s youth in high risk situations.
- Pursue funding for staff and operations of the Drug Endangered Children Program.
- Support funding for the development of regional med-psych and psychiatric facilities to assist individuals with severe mental illness.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Economic and Workforce Development

- Support federal tax incentive programs that encourage private investment in public facilities and projects.
- Support existing, comprehensive programs and pursue additional funding for workforce and economic development, and infrastructure improvements to serve business development and expansion in the County.

National Flood Insurance Program

- Monitor legislation pertaining to FEMA flood zone mapping and the reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Support policies that ensure the NFIP remains affordable for citizens and businesses.
LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Smart economic expansion, growth, and sustainability are priorities for Butte County. The County strives to enhance the local economy to support our residents today while providing them with new opportunities for the future. Regional planning provides a strategy that will lead to prosperity within the region for all local jurisdictions and helps provide for organized future growth and the public services that will need to be established to accommodate that growth. Upgrading and maintaining our roads, water supply, flood, and wastewater infrastructure not only helps the County provide basic services to our current residents, but it helps provide the foundation for future economic growth and business development. A large portion of Butte County is either located in the regulatory floodplain or is protected by public flood protection infrastructure. To ensure that residents remain protected, the status of the County’s flood control infrastructure remains a top priority.

**Transportation**

- Support funding for improvements to the Highway 70 corridor to enhance economic development and public safety.
- Support funding and programs for the maintenance and construction of local roads and transportation infrastructure, including emergency evacuation routes and a rail system that travels through our region.
- Support funding for the maintenance of the right of way of local roads to keep free of fire fuel sources.
- Support funding for maintenance of hall roads due to tree and debris removal from the fires.

**Water**

- Support funding and programs that improve wastewater infrastructure projects throughout the County.
- Support funding for water supply infrastructure projects and programs that naturally increase the reliability and efficiency of the County’s groundwater and surface water supplies.
- Support funding for projects and programs that naturally recharge of our basins.
- Support the preservation of water rights, area of origin, and local control of land use and water management.

**Flood Issues**

- Support the Sutter-Butte Flood Control Agency’s efforts to complete the construction of the West Feather River Levee Improvement Project.
- Support funding for the development of projects identified in the Mid-Upper Sacramento River Regional Flood Management Plan.
- Engage with Corps of Engineers on certification and maintenance of levees throughout the County.
- Support programs and funding to prepare and mitigate areas prone to seasonal flooding.
**LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### Planning
- Support approval and implementation of the Butte Regional Conservation Plan.
- Support funding for projects and programs included in the Northern Sacramento Valley and Upper Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.
- Support policies and regulations that streamline federal regulatory and environmental processes to expedite delivery of planning and construction projects in a way that does not compromise environmental laws.

### New License Process for the Oroville Project
- Engage the congressional delegation, relevant congressional committees, and the Administration supporting a new license process of the Oroville Project which addresses reimbursement of local costs associated with providing services to the Oroville Project, safety concerns, and recreation concerns as well as lost property tax revenue.

### Public Facilities, Parks, Museums, and Libraries
- Support funding for veteran facilities and programs including veteran’s memorial halls, 900 Esplanade, and the Veterans Memorial Park.
- Support funding for community facilities and programs throughout the County including parks, libraries, community centers, government support buildings, a new Emergency Operations Center, a new County Jail, and the County fairgrounds.

### Public Access to Federal Lands
- Support policies that preserve and enhance public access to federal lands for diverse purposes, such as off-road vehicle use, general recreational activities, wood cutting, dispersed camping and grazing rights.
- Support establishment of evacuation routes on federal lands.
- Support uniformity of rule application across national forests.
- Support least restrictive, versus most restrictive, rules to protect endangered species.

### Agriculture
- Oppose federal regulations and legislation that negatively impact the agricultural industry in Butte County.
- Support additional funding and track regulations for the detection and control of various invasive pests harmful to agriculture in California.
- Support changes to the National Flood Insurance Program that create regulatory relief for agricultural areas and rural communities located in the floodplain.

### Marijuana/Cannabis Related Issues
- Monitor and track legislation and policy related to commercial marijuana/cannabis activities and cultivation for personal use.
- Support federal policies that provide direction to federal agencies and local governments on the regulation of land use and environmental impacts associated with commercial marijuana/cannabis activities, including cultivation.
Butte County is also engaged in several other initiatives that have broad impacts to our communities and residents.

### Climate Change Impacts
- Support legislation that will provide emergency economic assistance to Butte County to address localized drought impacts.
- Oppose legislation that would result in changes to water right priorities and/or weakening of environmental standards in the Delta.
- Support funding for forest management and wildfire prevention.

### Communications and Broadband
- Support funding for public telecommunications, radio, and broadband infrastructure and technology, including advancements to increase the redundancy of public safety communications.
- Seek support for broadband funding for rural communities.
- Support legislation and policies that maintain local control of the deployment of telecommunication technologies.
- Support programs that expand the use of GIS and GPS technologies for community and emergency response planning.

### Tribal Issues
- Monitor and track policy initiatives and legislation pertaining to casino development on tribal lands.
- In order to address critical problems in the existing fee-to-trust process, support legislation to better define the roles of Congress and the executive branch, establish clear and specific congressional trust acquisition standards, and create a more transparent process.

### Election Reform
- Monitor and track legislation pertaining to local election regulations and processes.
- Support federal initiatives that provide funding for reform and equipment that bring efficiencies to the election process.
OTHER GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS

Cybersecurity

• Support funding and programs for cybersecurity services, training, and equipment.

Protection of Local Revenue

• Oppose any federal effort to borrow, defer, or take local discretionary revenue.
• Oppose the redirecting of existing revenues and/or the creation of additional unfunded mandates.
• Support efforts to generate new intergovernmental revenue and/or enhance existing revenue and reimbursement levels.
• Support programs and initiatives that offset the loss of revenue on publically managed lands including the Secure Rural Schools and Payment In Lieu of Taxes programs.