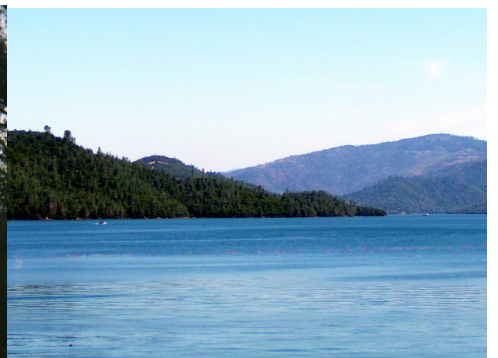


# Butte County 2012 Legislative Platform



**BUTTE COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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District 1**

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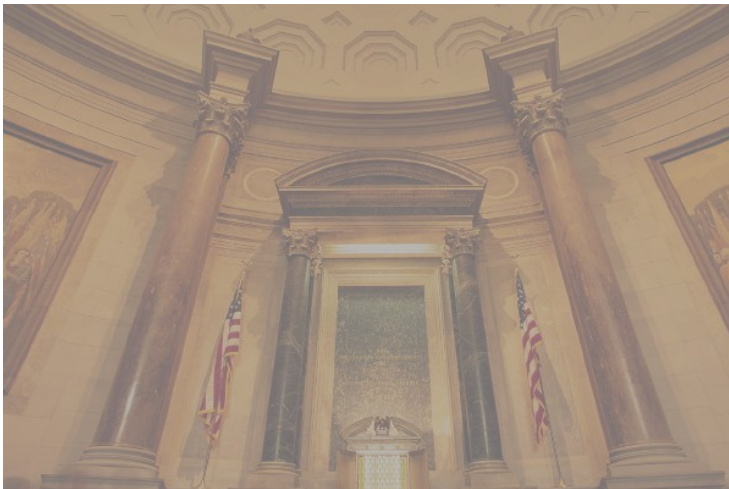
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# GENERAL GUIDELINES

The mission of the County of Butte, including the Board of Supervisors and its employees, is to provide quality service with dignity, integrity and respect. The County's vision is:

- To ensure basic health, safety and protection of people;
- To facilitate commerce and trade in order to promote a high quality of life;
- To promptly resolve issues in an honest and consistent manner; and
- To provide useful and effective service utilizing both public and private means.

To support its mission and vision, the Butte County Board of Supervisors adopts the following general guidelines to assist County staff and legislative advocates in evaluating legislation and executive and regulatory actions.

- **Fiscal Stability**

Support efforts to generate new intergovernmental revenue and/or enhance existing revenue and reimbursement levels. Oppose the loss or redirecting of existing revenues and/or the creation of additional unfunded mandates to the County.

- **Efficient Service Delivery/Operations**

Support efforts to streamline processes and promote operational enhancements relevant to the County's services. Oppose legislation that creates undue fiscal and operational burdens on departments with little or no benefit to the public.

- **Local Control**

Ensure local authority and control over governance issues, land use policies and the delivery of services, including flexibility and customization in designing and implementing policies and services that are responsive to local preferences and needs.

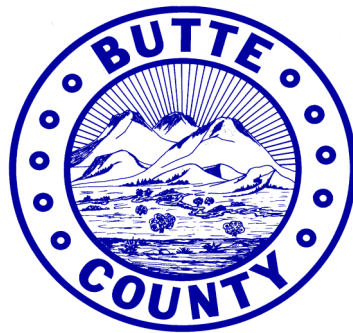
- **Economic Expansion**

Support efforts to facilitate orderly economic expansion and growth, including regional approaches. Support preservation and enhancement of the agricultural-related economy in Butte County. Oppose legislation that creates undue burdens on businesses and curtails economic growth opportunities.

- **Collaboration**

Partner with neighboring jurisdictions on infrastructure and other large-scale projects, when possible. Support the advocacy efforts of organizations the County holds membership in. Collaborate with public and private sector entities on mutually beneficial issues.

# 2012 Federal Legislative Platform



## FUNDING PRIORITIES (in alphabetical order)

<b>PROJECT/ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>900 Esplanade Restoration Project</b>	Pursue funding for restoration of 900 Esplanade, a unique historical building in Chico, California.
<b>Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Bridge Repair</b>	Pursue funding for environmental review and planning of the repair and/or replacement of BLM bridges located at Doe Mill Road and Jordan Hill Road.
<b>Butte Basin 3B's Project</b>	Pursue authorization in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and funding for design and construction of the 3B's flood management project.
<b>Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Program</b>	Pursue funding for staff and operations of the Drug Endangered Children Program.
<b>Emergency Operations Center</b>	Pursue funding for construction of a new County Emergency Operations Center.
<b>Fire Facilities</b>	Pursue funding for replacing County fire stations.
<b>Forensic Computer Center</b>	Pursue funding for hardware, technology, and training for a regional Forensic Computer Center, to include investigation of drug, narcotic, child pornography, and other crimes that often use computers and technology.
<b>Hall of Records</b>	Pursue funding to support construction of a Hall of Records including, but not limited to, historic preservation, records management and elections.
<b>Highway 70 Expansion</b>	Pursue funding for safety improvements to Highway 70 in support of the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG), the lead agency for the project.
<b>Infrastructure to Utilize Table A Allocation In-County</b>	Pursue funding for a feasibility study and eventual construction of facilities to transfer the County's Table A allocation from Lake Oroville to local water purveyors.
<b>Invasive Pests</b>	Pursue additional funding for the detection and control of various invasive pests harmful to agriculture in California.
<b>Public Library Facility Funding</b>	Pursue funding to improve and/or replace public library facilities.
<b>Rock Creek/Keefer Slough</b>	Pursue funding for flood management in the affected area around Rock Creek/Keefer Slough to decrease the occurrence of flooding.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES (in alphabetical order)

<b>PROJECT/ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>Veterans Memorial Park and Veterans Memorial Halls</b>	Pursue funding to complete the <i>Oroville Veterans Memorial Park</i> for all of <i>Butte County Veterans</i> and to fund necessary renovations to Veterans Memorial Halls.
<b>Wastewater Infrastructure</b>	Pursue funding for wastewater solutions including, but not limited to: the expansion of the Sewerage Commission-Oroville Region (SCOR) Wastewater Treatment Plant; a wastewater solution for the community of Palermo; a replacement for the County's septage ponds located at the Neal Road Waste and Recycling Facility; and regional solutions in conjunction with other local jurisdictions.

## POLICY, REGULATORY, AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES (in alphabetical order)

<b>PROJECT/ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>Child Protective Services Shelters</b>	Research federal programs that provide counties assistance in creating and/or offering shelters to older children in protective custody.
<b>Child Welfare Program</b>	Support continued funding for child welfare programs.
<b>Economic and Green Community Development Programs</b>	Identify potential funding sources, incentives, loan programs, or other assistance to encourage economic and green community development in the County. Develop programs to actively pursue such funding.
<b>Elder Justice Act</b>	Advocate for funding of Elder Justice Act programs, which are authorized but receive no funding.
<b>Election Reform</b>	Monitor and track legislation pertaining to local election regulations and processes. Oppose federal election legislation that does not provide funding for mandates or that does not bring efficiencies to the election process. Support legislative election reform to bring stabilization to federal elections and promote efficiencies of administration while enhancing the integrity of the process. Support and encourage the Federal Government to fund replacement Electronic Voting Equipment that has been decertified and recertified for only conditional use in California.
<b>Federal Financial Participation (FFP) Program</b>	Monitor legislation and/or policy changes that would affect the County's FFP reimbursement. Advocate for maintaining current reimbursement levels (2010) at a minimum.

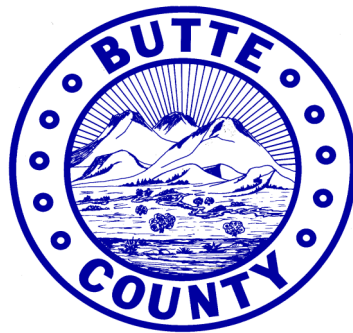
**POLICY, REGULATORY, AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES (in alphabetical order)**

<b>PROJECT/ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>Federal Income Tax Intercept Authority for Counties</b>	Support legislation that would give counties the ability to collect debts owed to the County and/or victims of crimes committed in the County by intercepting federal income tax refunds for which debtors might apply.
<b>Forest Management and Fire Protection</b>	Monitor and track federal assistance opportunities for improved forest management and fire protection programs.
<b>Health Care Reform</b>	Monitor key provisions from the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act related to county programs.
<b>Public Access to Federal Lands</b>	Support preservation and enhancement of public access to federal lands for diverse purposes, such as off-road vehicle use on US Forest Service lands.
<b>Relicensing of Oroville Project</b>	Coordinate communications with and engage the congressional delegation and relevant congressional committees regarding the FERC relicensing of the Oroville Project.
<b>Search and Rescue Site</b>	Coordinate with US Forest Service (USFS) offices at the local and national levels to obtain cooperation in transferring land currently leased by Search and Rescue from the USFS to the County or obtain a long-term lease.
<b>State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP)</b>	Support full funding for states and counties of costs associated with incarcerating undocumented aliens for the federal government.
<b>Tribal Gaming Issues</b>	Monitor and track policy initiatives and legislation pertaining to casino development on tribal lands.
<b>Tribal Lands</b>	Monitor legislation that will allow the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for all tribes. 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.
<b>USDA Match Requirements</b>	Pursue congressional support for waivers of USDA grant and loan match requirements for projects where no local match is available.
<b>Water Resources, Land Use, and Delta Protection Issues</b>	Support preservation of water rights, area of origin, local control of land use and water management, and development of increased storage.

## POLICY, REGULATORY, AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

<b>PROJECT/ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>Reauthorizations</b>	
<b>Farm Bill Reauthorization</b>	Monitor hearings and legislation reauthorizing the Farm Bill. Advocate for programs that encourage the protection of the agricultural industry in Butte County.
<b>National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization</b>	Monitor legislation pertaining to FEMA flood zone mapping and the reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program.
<b>Highway Safety Improvements Program (SAFETEA-LU) Reauthorization</b>	Monitor legislation reauthorizing SAFETEA-LU. Support funding for the Bridge Maintenance Program, the High Risk Rural Roads Program, and prioritization of funding for rural highway and road safety improvements.
<b>Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization</b>	Monitor legislation reauthorizing the Secure Rural Schools Act. Support full funding of the program and pursue changes to the programs to allow local control and more flexible use of the funds.

# 2012 State Legislative Platform



# ENERGY, WATER AND PUBLIC WORKS

## CALIFORNIA WATER ISSUES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The northern Sacramento Valley region is the area-of-origin for much of the water that flows through the Delta. Butte County's surface water resources, including Lake Oroville and a network of creeks and rivers that are tributary to the Sacramento River, feed the Delta. Many of the streams provide invaluable habitat necessary for the sustainability of threatened and endangered species such as the Spring Run Chinook Salmon.

The 2009 Delta Reform Act enacted a number of significant policies and programs that could affect the sustainability of County water resources and its economic vitality. A significant piece of the legislative package calls for the development of the Delta Plan by the Delta Steward Council. The Delta Plan will include a number of recommendations and actions that could affect Butte County such as overseeing local land use decisions, increasing fees and reducing surface water deliveries. The 2009 Delta Reform Act included other legislatively mandated programs such as the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program (CASGEM), water rights reporting and water conservation. Although the 2009 Delta Reform Act enacted far sweeping programs and policies that are still in development, interest to enact additional legislation remains high especially in the area of groundwater management. Additionally, the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) process, the water bond and enforceable flow criteria for the Delta are related actions that could spur legislative action. In general, potential legislation in these areas would usurp local water resource management, jeopardize the sustainability of the groundwater basin and increase fees.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support additional storage, protection of area of origin water rights, existing water rights, and local control over land use and water management.
- Monitor new proposals that impose significant, new water conservation targets and groundwater monitoring statutes.
- Identify and advocate for projects that will benefit Butte County residents in future water bonds.

**CONTACT:** Paul Gosselin, Water and Resource Conservation Director, 530-538-4343

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## FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD CONTROL

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Levees in Butte County are in need of upgrading, repair and maintenance. In order to address new requirements being imposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and State agencies, funding is needed for planning and capital improvements. With new regulations and requirements tied to funding, the County needs to have flexibility to address issues to meet local needs with local decision-making and not mandates. Examples of areas in need of solutions include the urban and non-urban levees that protect much of the Chico Urban Area, levees along the Feather River that protect south County residents, and the Rock Creek/Keefer Slough.

If levees do not meet FEMA accreditation and State certification requirements, many residents in the south County and the Chico Urban Area will be facing annual costs for flood insurance, as well as stricter development regulations.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Pursue budget action and/or legislation to provide access to funding for the repair and maintenance of levees in Northern California.
- Continue to advocate for inclusion of local water quality and flood control projects in Butte County to be funded from voter-approved bonds.

**CONTACT:** Mike Crump, Public Works Director, 530-538-7681

## HIGHWAY 70 IMPROVEMENTS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Highway 70 from the Butte County line to Highway 162 (Oroville) has seen numerous fatalities since 1992. Between 2003 and 2009 there have been 286 collisions recorded on Hwy 70 between Oroville and Marysville, based upon the latest data available from the Highway Patrol. Safety improvements are needed in the form of passing lanes, turnouts and/or widening of the Highway from two-lanes to four-lanes .

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) and CalTrans in their efforts to secure funding for this important project.

**CONTACT:** Mike Crump, Public Works Director, 530-538-7681

## SOLID WASTE ISSUES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

In the County's experience, the State Legislature passes bills that ban certain products from disposal without having a plan to finance the diversion of such products from disposal. The end result is that the County becomes responsible for the costs through its Waste and Recycling Facility and those costs are passed on to consumers through the gate fees that support the Facility. Currently, the County's Waste Management Division spends upwards of \$700,000 per year to manage household hazardous and universal waste properly.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support statewide planning for convenient identification and recovery of all material and products banned from California landfill disposal or requiring separate handling or processing.
- Support producer responsibility for financing and arranging for the collection and recycling of their products at end-of-life.
- Support the proper disposal of electronic and universal waste through programs that place the cost of compliance on manufacturers and consumers, rather than on county-operated landfills or waste management programs.

**CONTACT:** Bill Mannel, Waste Management Division Manager, 530-879-2350

## SOLID WASTE – REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Costs of solid waste regulatory compliance are disproportionately high in rural areas of the state.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support efforts to ensure that costs of complying with regulations are commensurate with environmental and public health risks associated with solid waste operations.

**CONTACT:** Bill Mannel, Waste Management Division Manager, 530-879-2350

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# STORM WATER PERMITS

## **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

California's Water Resources Board has proposed changes to its Industrial General Storm Water Permit. In the opinion of a broad coalition of stakeholders, including the Regional Council of Rural Counties and the California State Association of Counties, the proposed changes are above and beyond what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency mandates and will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs with no proven environmental benefits.

## **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support efforts that will result in an industrial general storm water permit without numeric limits and that protects water quality while minimizing costs to public agencies.

**CONTACT:** Bill Mannel, Waste Management Division Manager, 530-879-2350

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## FINANCE

# ADEQUATE REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES' OROVILLE FACILITIES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Butte County has been the host jurisdiction to the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Oroville Facilities for over 50 years and during that time Butte County taxpayers have been subsidizing DWR's operation of the facilities. To date, the State has not properly compensated the residents of Butte County for the costs incurred by the County for providing services that supported the construction, and continue to support the operation, of the Oroville facilities. The County and its residents experience an annual loss of \$1 million to \$6.9 million in property tax revenue due to no requirement for the State to pay property taxes on the 41,000 acres of land associated with the Project. In addition, the County incurs costs of over \$5 million per year for local law enforcement, criminal justice, road maintenance, and fire and emergency response related to the facilities with no reimbursement from DWR.

DWR is currently seeking a renewal of its license for the facilities through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the County has asked that any new license include provision of benefits to the County and its residents for the financial drain the project has had, and will continue to have, on the County over the life of a new license.

DWR does generate revenue and inexpensive power from these facilities for the benefit of itself and others outside of Butte County.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Explore all opportunities for successful resolution of this issue, including, but not limited to, provision of lower cost water and electricity for the residents and businesses in Butte County.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

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## INDIAN GAMING SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION FUND

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund (SDF) is a fund within the State Treasury for receipt of moneys from certain Indian tribes pursuant to the terms of gaming compacts. The funds are to be used for specific purposes, including grants to local jurisdictions to mitigate the impacts of tribal casinos. Local agencies, including Butte County, have received over \$7 million since fiscal year 2003-04 to address needs in critical services such as law enforcement, fire and emergency services, and road maintenance. The State has not appropriated funds annually, thereby making this funding source unpredictable.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support funding for the grant program on an annual basis in the State budget;
- Support provision of funding prior to costs being incurred, rather than as a reimbursement after the fact.

**CONTACT:** Andy Pickett, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7052

## PROPERTY TAX ADMINISTRATION

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

In fiscal year 2006-2007 the State suspended the Property Tax Administration Grant program, resulting in a \$60 million hit statewide to local governments. Historically, the County relied on the Property Tax Administration allocation to support the workload in the Assessor's Office associated with assessing properties. The County has lost approximately \$380,000 per year from this revenue source, which has been backfilled with discretionary dollars from the County General Fund; funding that could have been used for other local priorities.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Advocate for restoration of the Property Tax Administration allocation.

**CONTACT:** Fred Holland, Assessor, 530-538-7550

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## PROTECTION OF LOCAL REVENUE

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The State often chooses to use local County resources to balance its budget. Historical efforts have included suspension of Proposition 1A and Proposition 42 - two initiatives that were approved by the voters in an attempt to safeguard local property tax revenues and transportation monies from being used too frequently to balance the State Budget. In 2010, California voters passed Proposition 22, which protects gas tax funds and redevelopment funds from being taken by the State, further narrowing the State's options for balancing its budget, as well as Proposition 26, which reduces the State's ability to adopt new fees and revenues. The State is left with few options for reducing its gap between on-going expenditures and revenues, which puts local County resources further at risk.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Oppose any effort by the State to borrow, defer, or take local discretionary revenue.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

## STATE SURCHARGES COLLECTED BY COUNTIES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

There is a growing trend by State agencies to add an administrative surcharge to local fee-based programs. This practice places additional hardships on local businesses and give the appearance that the County is charging higher fees. There are existing state surcharges on local fees related to land use, agriculture, and recording of documents, to name a few. Not all State surcharges provide for the administrative costs incurred by counties to collect the fees on the State's behalf.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Oppose legislation that places a state surcharge on local fee-based programs and requires counties to act as collection agencies for the State.
- For mandated surcharges, support full funding by the State for the administrative overhead the County incurs for collecting the fees.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

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## TIMELY PAYMENT FOR STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND MANDATES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Butte County provides a variety of public services on behalf of the State and Federal governments including, but not limited to, mental health, elections, social services, and roads. Over the last few years, the State's cash flow problems have significantly delayed payment of State and Federal funds to Butte County and, in turn, negatively impacted its cash flow.

Cash flow refers to the cash on-hand, or cash in the bank. If the State does not pay the County what the State owes the County, the County cannot make all of its payments. County payments that cannot be made may include vendors (ranging from landlords to supply stores to child care providers to non-profit agencies providing services); contractors; and ultimately employees. This inability to pay bills therefore passes the State's cash flow problem down and lays it on the shoulders of individuals in Butte County.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Advocate for timely and full payment for State and Federal programs and mandates, and oppose actions to eliminate, delay or reduce payments to counties.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

## WILLIAMSON ACT

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The Williamson Act is one of the most effective tools in preventing the loss of farmland and open space. The Act provides tax breaks to landowners who contract with the County to keep their land in agriculture for a period of 10 years. Properties that are under Williamson Act contracts are assessed at a lower agricultural tax rate rather than a possible higher rate based upon development potential. To encourage county participation in the program, the State historically reimbursed counties a portion of the property tax revenue losses resulting from the lower assessments. The State discontinued the reimbursement in FY 2010-2011.

In addition, there is a need to consider reforms in the Williamson Act, perhaps through revising the definition of *agriculture*, in order to prevent abuses and allow more flexibility in the program.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Oppose legislative or budget proposals to cease funding the Williamson Act subventions to counties, including any partial loss of funding upon approval of notices of non-renewal.
- Explore reforms that would allow reasonable extraction of mineral resources as compatible with agricultural uses of Williamson Act land.
- Facilitate reforms that would provide greater flexibility to counties to terminate contracts for cause.

**CONTACT:** Tim Snellings, Development Services Director, 530-538-6821

# 2011 REALIGNMENT

## **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

In the 2011 Legislative session, the State Legislature transferred responsibility for providing a number of public services from state government to counties and other local governments. The transferred responsibilities included law enforcement and public safety services, care for abused and neglected seniors and children, mental health and substance abuse recovery programs, and monitoring and detaining specified felony offenders. No guaranteed source of funding to pay for the services was provided by the State beyond the current fiscal year (2011-2012).

## **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

1. Support legislation to require the State to provide ongoing, guaranteed funding to counties and other local governments for the cost of providing services that were shifted in the 2011 Realignment from the State to local government.
2. Support legislation to prohibit the State from reducing funding for 2011 Realignment in future years unless there is a commensurate reduction in local government program responsibilities.
3. Support legislation to prohibit the State from passing any new law or regulation that imposes additional costs on local governments to provide these services unless the State provides a source of state funding to pay the additional costs.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

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# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

## AGRICULTURAL BORDER STATIONS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

As a result of State budget cuts, many agricultural border stations have been closed, thus exposing local communities to greater risks of agricultural infestations.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support all budgetary efforts to restore funding for agricultural border stations.

**CONTACT:** Richard Price, Agricultural Commissioner, 530-538-7137

## AGRICULTURE DISCHARGE WAIVERS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The State Water Quality Control Board is maintaining the current fee structure for growers for the Irrigated Lands Program. However, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is considering a new Long Term Irrigated Lands Program that may include a groundwater quality monitoring and protection program.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support an Irrigated Lands Program that will not increase costs to the growers and will provide reasonable, regulatory oversight in agricultural practices that may affect water quality of the state.

**CONTACT:** Richard Price, Agricultural Commissioner, 530-538-7137

## ANIMAL CONTROL—FAIR HEARING REQUIRED TIMELINES

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

State law requires that an administrative hearing be scheduled and held within 48 hours of receiving a request for hearing related to seizure of animals that are abused, neglected or in danger of death due to circumstances surrounding their care by owners. It is extremely difficult to obtain the services of a qualified and impartial attorney to serve as the administrative hearing officer within this 48-hour requirement.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Pursue amendment of Penal Code Section 597.1 to change the fair hearing timeline from 48 hours to five (5) working days.

**CONTACT:** Phyllis Murdock, Public Health Director, 530-538-7750

## EFFICIENT OPERATIONS OF COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER FUNCTIONS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Current laws lead to inefficiencies in the Clerk-Recorder functions, as well as additional unfunded mandates that will lead to further decline in the services the County is able to provide with discretionary revenue sources. There are many changes to laws that, if enacted, would help these aspects of county government function more efficiently.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support efforts to protect all vital and official records against fraud, while ensuring their availability to authorized users.
- Support greater flexibility in the use of electronic recording for real property records that include appropriate precautions to protect consumers and homeowners against fraud.
- Oppose changes in the required format of public records that impose an unfunded mandate on counties.
- Oppose decreasing the definition of *reasonable response*, which is currently defined as 10 days.
- Oppose a state mandated retention schedule for general documents.
- Seek grant funding for the preservation and storage of county archives.

**CONTACT:** Candace Grubbs, Clerk-Recorder, 530-538-7654

## EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF ELECTIONS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Increasing rules and regulations at the State level regarding elections are costing local jurisdictions. Voting equipment and upgrades to electronic voting equipment currently approved by the Federal government are not allowed to be used in California, which further increases the costs of elections, restricts services to voters, and negatively impacts the discretionary resources available to all local government to fund local programs such as law enforcement, fire and emergency services, and libraries.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Oppose legislation and administrative actions that increase the local cost of elections.
- Oppose legislation that does not lead to improvements in the election process.
- Support efforts to allow counties to fully utilize federally approved electronic voting systems and upgrades within California.
- Support legislation to hold election-by-mail in counties where the Board of Supervisors chooses to do so.
- Support legislation for vote centers.

**CONTACT:** Candace Grubbs, Clerk-Recorder, 530-538-7654

## HOUSING ELEMENT

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

State law requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and councils of governments/metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to prepare a Regional Housing Need Allocation Plan to allocate a share of the regional housing need to each city and county. These allocation plans do not adequately recognize the limited availability of necessary public infrastructure in unincorporated portions of counties, particularly community sewer systems, community water systems, and public transportation. In addition, Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plans conflict with efforts to develop and implement the Sustainable Communities Strategy required by Government Code §65080 *et seq* (per SB 375). As a result, counties may be unable to take advantage of streamlining provision in SB 375 in the California Environmental Quality Act and be at a disadvantage in transportation funding decisions in the Regional Transportation Plan process.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support legislation to require the Department of Housing and Community Development and councils of government/metropolitan planning organizations to consider availability of necessary infrastructure and the Sustainable Community Strategy in the preparation of Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plans or pursue a process to exempt counties that are members of the Regional Council of Rural Counties from the requirement for Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plans.

**CONTACT:** Tim Snellings, Development Services Director, 530-538-6821

## INVASIVE AGRICULTURAL PESTS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Over the years, Northern California has seen various infestations of invasive agricultural pests. The most recent example is of Butte County olive growers who were impacted by the olive fruit fly, which prevented crops from being accepted by processors.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support all reasonable efforts by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the County Agricultural Commissioners, and the agricultural industry to acquire funding and to prevent the introduction and potential spread of invasive pests in California.

**CONTACT:** Richard Price, Agricultural Commissioner, 530-538-7137

## LIBRARY FUNDING

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The Public Library Fund (PLF), which is distributed to public libraries on a per capita basis, is the only source of funding for public libraries that benefits every Californian equally. PLF funding is used by local libraries to provide vitally needed reading, education, job development, technology, and lifelong learning resources to people in every community. In its 23-year existence the PLF has never been fully funded. If the PLF were fully funded, and Butte County met the required maintenance of effort (expenditure of local funds), the Butte County Library would receive in excess of \$500,000. The County was receiving approximately \$75,000 annually, in the years it met the maintenance of effort requirements. Due to State budget reductions in fiscal year 2011-12, public libraries may no longer receive any public library funding.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Pursue full funding for library programs including, but not limited to, the Public Library Fund and the Transaction Based Reimbursement program.

**CONTACT:** Jan Christofferson, Interim Library Director, 530-538-7525

## PENSION REFORM

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

Public outcry and shrinking budgets are leading to review of current pension formulas and benefits in the public sector and a push for pension reform. The Governor has proposed a twelve point pension reform plan that would apply to employees of all state, local, school and other public agencies. Initiatives are being proposed by various groups for the 2012 ballots. Proposals include statewide standardization of pensions, which may have negative impacts on the County's ability to recruit from other public agencies but would remove pension benefit disparity as an obstacle when competing for candidates from outside the public sector. Butte County's current pension benefits are not as generous as those in some other California counties.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support pension reform that helps reduce the County's future liabilities and requires standardization throughout the State.

**CONTACT:** Brian Ring, Human Resources Director, 530-538-7651

## PROTECTION OF BUTTE COUNTY'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

There are attempts through legislation and initiatives to change collective bargaining rules that would further deteriorate the County's management rights in collective bargaining.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Oppose legislation and initiatives that would further deteriorate the County's management rights in collective bargaining.

**CONTACT:** Brian Ring, Human Resources Director, 530-538-7651

## RESTORATION OF 900 ESPLANDE

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The County owns a unique, historical building located at 900 Esplanade in the City of Chico. The building was built in 1926 as a War Memorial Building and is located on the premier central boulevard of the City, enhancing its importance to the community. Numerous civic, philanthropic, cultural and education organizations would benefit from the rehabilitation of the hall and the use of this building's large auditorium and performance stage. The only other structure with similar qualities in this community of over 100,000 people, and a region of over 400,000, is Laxson Auditorium on the campus of CSU-Chico. The lack of large meeting facilities limits the cultural and economic life of Chico.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Pursue funding to support restoration of the facility located at 900 Esplanade in the City of Chico.

**CONTACT:** Grant Hunsicker, General Services Director, 530-538-2511

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## VETERANS PROJECTS

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The County is responsible for provision and maintenance of Veterans Halls for veterans in Butte County. Most of the halls are in aging buildings that require extensive maintenance and are in need of upgrades to meet Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements.

The County acquired property in 2008 to allow development of a Veterans Memorial Park in Oroville. Though the County does not develop or operate parks, it does wish to support the Veterans Memorial Park Committee and the future operator in seeking funding for development of the proposed Park.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Pursue funding to support the maintenance and upgrades of the County's Veterans Halls.
- Pursue funding to support the Veterans Memorial Park Committee and future operator in their efforts to develop a Veterans Memorial Park.

**CONTACT:** Grant Hunsicker, General Services Director, 530-538-2511

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Workers' Compensation costs are significant, diverting funds that could be utilized for County services. Workers' Compensation should provide a safety net for injured employees, for a reasonable period of time, and not encourage injured workers to be off work longer than what is medically necessary.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support Workers' Compensation reforms that will lower costs to employers while delivering equitable benefits to employees, including the ability to control excessive medical utilization and litigation.
- Support legislation that prevents or corrects abuses in the Workers' Compensation system.
- Oppose legislation that seeks to increase Workers' Compensation benefits without providing for concurrent cost controls.
- Oppose legislation that expands or extends any presumptions of occupational injury or illness.
- Oppose legislation that would increase benefits for injured workers currently presumed to have incurred an on-the-job injury because of their job classification, as well as legislation that would extend the presumption of injury to other job classifications.

**CONTACT:** Greg Iturria, Chief Financial Officer, 530-538-7053

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH, DRUG AND ALCOHOL AND PAROLE

#### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Although Proposition 63 provided for a much needed infusion of funding for mental health programs, it only increased funding statewide by approximately 10-12%. With Proposition 63 funds available to counties for services, it is increasingly necessary to secure additional funding for housing of the population served (it is estimated that Butte County needs an additional 800-1,000 housing units), as well as additional job and job training opportunities.

Similarly, additional housing units, jobs and job training opportunities are needed to better serve individuals receiving treatment via state and county drug and alcohol programs. Prison reform may mean that as many as 600 individuals per year would return to the County on parole. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has funds to buy services from the counties and private providers. It is imperative that the CDCR use this money wisely to assist counties in successfully transitioning parolees back into society.

#### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support funding to create additional housing units for individuals in state and county funded mental health and drug and alcohol programs, as well as additional funds for job creation and job training for the same individuals.
- Support efforts to ensure that the CDCR utilizes funds appropriated by the Legislature in ways that are helpful to counties and to parolees attempting to re-enter society.

**CONTACT:** Anne Robin, Behavioral Health Director, 530-891-2857

### CASH PAYMENTS TO EMPLOYEES AVOIDING CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

#### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Many employers in California pay their employees in cash, thereby enabling those employees who owe child support to avoid their legal obligations. Penalties for this practice need to be increased in order to create a disincentive.

#### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support legislation to amend current law in order to increase the civil liability and penalties to employers who pay their employees cash.

**CONTACT:** Sharon Stone, Child Support Services Director, 530-538-6578

## **CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES—FILING OF ABSTRACTS**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

Current law provides that the filing of abstracts be handled within each county. A statewide system to centrally house all state filings related to Child Support Services would be more cost-effective and would help facilitate services more efficiently.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support legislation to amend Family Code Section 4506, in order to require that all abstracts for Child Support Services be filed in a central statewide system.

**CONTACT:** Sharon Stone, Child Support Services Director, 530-538-6578

## **CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES—INCOME WITHHOLDING ORDERS**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

Current law provides that each Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) must issue income withholding orders to employers for child support obligors with cases in the child support enforcement program. A central statewide system to house all income withholding orders relating to child support obligations would be more cost-effective, provide employers one place to check and provide information, and help facilitate services more efficiently.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support legislation to add a Family Code Section to require that all income withholding orders for child support obligations be filed in a central statewide system.

**CONTACT:** Sharon Stone, Child Support Services Director, 530-538-6578

## **CHILD WELFARE SERVICES (CWS) FUNDING**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The State did not restore funding for CWS programs in 2011, leaving a continued loss of \$80 million statewide. In Butte County, the net State funding loss to the CWS allocation continues to be in excess of \$300,000 per year. The CWS budget is further diminished by the loss of the corresponding federal matching funds for a total estimated loss of up to \$900,000 annually. This revenue loss has significantly impacted the County's ability to adequately investigate allegations of abuse and neglect of Butte County children and to meet certain legal requirements. In addition, new realignment proposals are being discussed while issues with the existing realigned programs have not been addressed.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

- Oppose legislation that would further reduce funding to Child Welfare Services.
- Advocate through the state budget and legislative process to restore funding reductions imposed on Child Welfare Services.
- Support addressing existing issues prior to implementing further realignment of programs.

**CONTACT:** Cathi Grams, Employment and Social Services Director, 530-538-2511

## **COST OF DOING BUSINESS IN SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

When California implemented the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program in 1998, counties initially received flexible funding, budgeted in a manner that attempted to forecast actual program needs. In California, TANF was implemented under the name CalWORKs. Historically, the Proposed County Administrative Budget (PCAB) process was used to develop the annual budget for program operations not just in CalWORKs but also in most of the other county-administered health and human services programs. The process allowed each county to project its operational needs for the coming year and work with the state to refine the estimates. Each county's PCAB request, once vetted by the State, was then added up to arrive at a statewide total for eligibility operations, including initial determinations and ongoing case management in programs such as CalWORKs. The State ultimately stopped using the PCAB process to budget county program operations, and since 2001 counties have received no funding increases to reflect the increased cost of doing business in California.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support full funding for counties for social services programs.

**CONTACT:** Cathi Grams, Employment and Social Services Director, 530-538-7750

## **COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES PROGRAM (CMSP)**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) was established in January 1983, when California law transferred responsibility for providing health services to indigent adults from the state to counties. The State Department of Health Services administered the program until 1995, when the program was transferred to the CMSP Governing Board, composed of representatives from the 34 participating counties. CMSP provides medical care services to medically indigent adults, ages 18-64 that are not eligible for Medi-Cal, and county Welfare Departments determine eligibility. Proposals for implementing universal health care in California have included contributions by counties. The extent to which CMSP counties would have to contribute CMSP revenues would become very contentious.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Advocate for preserving historical funding sources for CMSP and minimizing the impact to County funds from any future health care reform.

**CONTACT:** Phyllis Murdock, Public Health Director, 530-538-7750

## **FUNDING FOR TREATMENT OF JUVENILES WITH DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROBLEMS**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

There is a glaring lack of state funding to assist in the treatment of juveniles experiencing drug and alcohol problems. This population would benefit from additional after-school programs and work opportunities.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support legislation to assist counties in expanding treatment, employment, and after-school opportunities for youth with drug and alcohol problems.

**CONTACT:** Anne Robin, Behavioral Health Director, 530-891-2857

## **INTEREST ON CHILD SUPPORT ARREARS**

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The current 10% interest rate on child support obligations is so high that balances are nearly impossible for parents to pay off, even if they are making sincere efforts. The result is many of these parents become discouraged and stop making payments altogether.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support legislation to eliminate or decrease the amount of interest on Child Support arrears.

**CONTACT:** Sharon Stone, Child Support Services Director, 530-538-6578

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## MEDI-CAL AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Over the coming years, California will grapple with many changes and numerous options in the Medi-Cal program, as it moves toward implementation of the federal health care reform law. It is vital that California ensure a comprehensive, client-friendly and simple approach to health care reform, especially for low-income Medi-Cal clients, in order to develop the *culture of coverage* envisioned by the federal government and to take full advantage of the opportunity that presents itself to ease enrollment in and retention of health care coverage for millions of Californians.

Options need to include a single program for parents, children and childless adults with a single gross income standard; a *no wrong door* approach to eligibility and enrollment; building on existing information technology to enhance access to and retention of coverage; simplifications in all programs to the greatest extent possible; and Medi-Cal eligibility to 200 percent of poverty.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support legislative and administrative efforts to include all options as outlined above.
- Encourage our state partners to include the expertise, local in-person presence and modernized eligibility and enrollment systems that counties currently provide.

**CONTACT:** Cathi Grams, Employment and Social Services Director, 530-538-2511

## STATE INTERPRETATION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYMENTS TO INSTITUTIONS FOR MENTAL DISEASE (IMD)

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Counties believe that the State is wrongly interpreting Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 38, 14053.1 and 14053.3 related to who is responsible for payments to Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) for ancillary services and annual cost-of-living adjustments. The State asserts that the statute that provided the State the authority to pay for such costs expired in 2001 by a sunset provision in the law. Analysis by the California Mental Health Directors Association finds that Assembly Bill 430 in 2001 and Chapter 171, Section 38 of the Welfare and Institutions Code extended the authority for the State to pay these costs. This stalemate poses another threat to counties' mental health services budgets because other mental health services must be reduced to cover the additional costs to the counties.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Support legislation that would resolve this problem by providing the State with the authority to pay for these costs.

**CONTACT:** Anne Robin, Behavioral Health Director, 530-891-2857

## TIMELY PAYMENT OF MEDI-CAL CLAIMS

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

Counties have suffered delays in claims payment for Federal Financial Participation under the Medi-Cal Managed Care contract with the State for years. The cash flow burdens are severe and counties need relief from this practice. The outstanding balance owed Butte County at any given time is in the millions of dollars.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Support legislation that requires the State to improve timelines of county reimbursements for Medi-Cal managed care.

**CONTACT:** Anne Robin, Behavioral Health Director, 530-891-2857

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## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **CAL FIRE CONTRACTS**

#### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

Butte County contracts with CAL FIRE to provide countywide fire suppression and emergency response services through the provision of personnel for the Butte County Fire Department. While this arrangement proved to be cost-effective in the past for both the County and the State, there are inherent issues that cause fiscal stress in the relationship. The State negotiated significant salary and benefit increases in the early 2000's that caused corresponding increases in contract payments for fire services. The increases must be paid from discretionary revenues at the County level.

#### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

- Pursue legislative efforts to provide hardship funding to mitigate some of the increased contract payments.
- Oppose any legislative or administrative actions that will further increase contract costs borne by the County.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hahn, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-538-7224

### **DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN (DEC) PROGRAM**

#### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

The Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Program started in Butte County in 1993 and has been a model throughout the country. On average 200-300 children are removed from drug endangered living conditions each year. In drug raids prior to DEC, children at the scene—which was their home and included drugs, violence, chemical exposure, and filth—were not cared for as a priority. DEC involves personnel at the scene with the sole priority to remove the children safely and render immediate assessment and services. The DEC Team includes personnel from law enforcement, social services, the District Attorney's Office, medical services and the Fire Department. All personnel assigned to the DEC Team require special and exceptional training.

Children removed from drug endangered homes have been found to have serious respiratory problems, delayed development, malnutrition, injuries from abuse and lack of medical treatment, emotional trauma and damaged internal organs. DEC provides interdisciplinary assessment, immediate services, referrals for specialist care and case management to ensure ongoing care and treatment.

#### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Explore options for the State to fund the DEC program including providing a means of reimbursing county staff to periodically train personnel in other counties with respect to DEC procedures and processes.

**CONTACT:** Mike Ramsey, District Attorney, 530-538-7411

## FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY REALIGNMENT (AB 109)

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

In 2011, the State passed legislation to comply with a Supreme Court order to reduce overcrowding in state prisons, and to assist the State with its budget crisis. The Public Safety Realignment Act redefines the roles of counties and the State by shifting supervision responsibilities of many parolees to counties and requiring a larger number of felons to serve time in county jail instead of State prison. The realignment of duties was predicated on the basis that funding would follow responsibility, however, funding was only provide for the first year with no assurance that adequate funding would be guaranteed in future years.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

- Support legislation that provides adequate funding for the realigned public safety responsibilities, ensuring that funding is made available annually, and with the goal of obtaining a constitutional amendment that guarantees the funding as long as the responsibility remains with counties.
- Support State administrative efforts to secure adequate funding.

**CONTACT:** Andy Pickett, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-538-7052

## OFFENDER TREATMENT PROGRAM

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The State never adequately funded the Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act of 2000 (Proposition 36) programs, and ultimately the programs were eliminated in fiscal year 2010-11. Butte County has patched together a program without the Proposition 36 funds, but not at the level that is needed.

### REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY

Advocate for funding for offender treatment programs and local drug courts.

**CONTACT:** Anne Robin, Behavioral Health Director, 530-538-2850

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## VEHICLE LICENSE FEES

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

In 2009, the State passed legislation increasing Vehicle License Fees (VLF) from 0.65% of the purchase price to 1.15% of purchase price. Of that increase, 0.15% was dedicated to support a range of local public safety programs that were formerly supported by the State General Fund. Local programs included the Citizens' Option for Public Safety (COPS), Rural and Small County Sheriffs Assistance Grants, and various intervention and prevention services for juvenile offenders. The increased VLF went away on June 30, 2011, reducing funding again for these vital local criminal justice programs.

### **REQUESTED ACTION AND STRATEGY**

Protect funding for local law enforcement efforts and support legislation to provide additional funding to rural areas.

**CONTACT:** Jerry Smith, Sheriff, 530-538-6759  
Mike Ramsey, District Attorney, 530-538-7411

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