



## 2024 State Legislative Platform

*Strategies to Preserve a Safe, Healthy,  
and Prosperous Community*

January 23, 2024

Butte County is a place of natural beauty with countless opportunities for recreation in both rural and urban environments. Many Butte County residents live in one of the five incorporated towns or cities: Biggs, Chico, Gridley, Oroville or Paradise. Butte County government provides services to residents through twenty-three diverse departments. Services include law enforcement, fire protection, behavioral health, public health, road maintenance, and building services to name a few. We strive to provide quality service with dignity, integrity and respect while ensuring basic health, safety, and protection to our residents. We value initiative and leadership and encourage innovation to increase efficiencies and operations.

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# Prosperity for Butte County



## Public Safety and Disaster Recovery

Provide reliable law enforcement, fire, emergency management and disaster recovery services.



## Land Use and Infrastructure

Smart economic expansion, growth, and sustainability are top priorities for Butte County.



## Community Support

Provide our at-risk populations with the services to overcome challenges related to public health, behavioral health and homelessness.



## Other Governmental Functions

Other initiatives that broadly impact our communities and residents.

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## PUBLIC SAFETY AND DISASTER RECOVERY

### Disaster Recovery

#### Summary of the Issue

Over the last decade, the communities of Butte County have experienced multiple declared disasters including droughts, floods, the Oroville Dam Spillway Failure, pandemics and repeated wildfires including the Wall Fire, Ponderosa Fire, Wind Complex Fire, Camp Fire, and North Complex Fire. Impacts of these disasters, including unanticipated costs and reduced local revenues, are exacerbated as the multiple successive disasters layer upon each other. Disaster recovery has become a way of life. Recovering from the disastrous events that are beyond our control remains one of the County's top priorities, along with ensuring we continue to provide the essential services our residents rely on.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

##### *Recovery Funding*

- Support additional State funding for agencies and programs to aid multiple disaster recovery efforts.
- Support legislation that waives the local share of cost of all emergency response and disaster recovery activities especially for jurisdictions facing multiple disaster recovery efforts.
- Support funding extensions for grants or allocations that have not been expended by deadlines.
- Advocate for local control of disaster recovery funding for housing and infrastructure.
- Support policies that utilize required post disaster debris insurance collections for the betterment of the impacted community.

##### *Infrastructure*

- Advocate for funding with minimal cost share for infrastructure projects destroyed, damaged, or impacted by large wildfires.
- Support legislation to repair roads to pre-disaster condition.
- Support legislation that funds water quality and quantity monitoring in communities impacted by wildfires and drought.
- Support legislation that provides funding for maintenance, repair or replacement of critical public safety facilities.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310  
Briana Haberman, Deputy Administrative Officer-Emergency Management, 530-552-3333

### Emergency Preparedness, Planning and Response

#### Summary of the Issue

California counties and their residents are facing more frequent and larger emergencies and disasters each year. Counties are responsible for planning, coordinating and leading emergency preparedness and response. These emergencies have stretched the ability of counties like Butte, who has had 9 federally declared disasters since 2017, to maintain regularly needed critical services.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation that provides funding for emergency management including preparedness, response and all hazard planning.
- Support funding and coordination of local government alert & warning systems.
- Support State financial assistance for vulnerable communities impacted by disaster, allowing for the swift response to the needs of our most susceptible survivors.
- Prioritize funding for hazard mitigation and response projects such as vegetation management and flood control, evacuation routes, secondary points of access, and hazard monitoring systems.
- Support funding for equitable emergency planning and response, addressing the safety of seniors, children, non-English speakers, and individuals with access and functional needs.
- Support the allocation of grant programs and available funds that would support post-disaster

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immediate response local recovery and resiliency efforts.

- Increase access to funding for local jurisdictions for disaster-related infrastructure and personal property damages, and response costs such as debris removal and property recovery.
- Support legislation to provide incentives for reducing wildfire risks, such as home hardening, and advocate for insurance reforms that provide for affordable insurance to encourage comprehensive long-term recovery.
- Support legislation to broaden eligible mitigation projects and provide mitigation funding.
- Support expanding and increasing evacuation routes or points, especially for communities with only one way in and out.
- Support CEQA exemptions for roadside clearing and fire mitigation efforts.
- Support legislation to provide a public safety exemption for the requirement that all small power equipment be electric.
- Advocate for equal construction standards for Manufactured Housing Units (MHU's). Currently local jurisdictions are prohibited from enforcing minimum Wildland Urban Interface construction standards to MHU's being relocated into high fire zones.
- Support legislation that enhances funding to local health departments for public health response efforts and emergency preparedness.

**Contact:** Briana Haberman, Deputy Administrative Officer-Emergency Management, 530-552-3333  
Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820  
Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172

## Forest Management

### Summary of the Issue

Butte County experienced repeated wildfires during the 2017, 2018 and 2020 fire seasons. Fire activity was extreme in part due to the high fuel load and vegetation. Without adequate funding for prevention and resource management these extreme conditions are going to continue.

Support policies and regulations that streamline forest management and do not compromise National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation that will increase fire prevention funding in a fair and equitable manner.
- Support legislation that streamlines NEPA and CEQA requirements regarding forest management and fuel reduction and the development of evacuation routes.
- Support funding for adequate disaster evacuation routes and mitigation projects that enhance safe travel during emergencies.
- Support legislation and funding for creative measures to mitigate and respond to wildfire impacts such as enhanced fire breaks, resolution of human-caused fire hazards, undergrounding utilities, utility line clearing, and microgrid deployment.
- Support legislation and funding for wildfire resilience efforts in high-risk watersheds, including the Feather River Watershed, recognizing the interplay between forest health, wildfires, water supply, flood management, and water quality.
- Support efforts that assist with more effective forest management, including but not limited to logging, biomass, renewable energy, biochar, and reforestation.
- Support legislation to maintain existing fire grants.
- Support efforts to reform tort law in such as vexatious litigation is curtailed regarding foresting efforts.
- Support funding for reseeding and reforestation.

**Contact:** Dawn Nevers, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-552-3336  
Katie Simmons, Deputy Administrative Officer-Economic and Community Development, 530-552-3338

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## CAL FIRE Contract

### Summary of the Issue

Butte County contracts with CAL FIRE to provide personnel to the Butte County Fire Department for countywide fire suppression and emergency response services. 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 continues to pass on higher overhead rates every year in the form of a pro-rata statewide share of costs in addition to the CAL FIRE Admin Fee. The resultant increases in contract payments for fire services are paid from discretionary revenues at the County level.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Oppose legislative or administrative actions that will increase costs borne by the County.

**Contact:** Dawn Nevers, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-552-3336

## Fines and Fees Revenue

### Summary of the Issue

40 criminal fees were eliminated over the previous three legislative sessions. These fees funded critical public safety services in multiple County Departments. Sixty-five million dollars (\$65,000,000) was appropriated beginning in the 2021–22 fiscal year continuing through the 2025–26 fiscal year to backfill revenues lost from the repeal of fees specified in AB 1869 (2020). Further, twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000) backfill was appropriated in 2021-22 fiscal year for fees repealed by AB 177 (2021), in which the backfill will increase to fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) in 2022-23 and ongoing. Both backfill calculations for the County are significantly less than the revenues eliminated.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support a permanent commitment from the State to backfill these lost revenues.

**Contact:** Kory Honea, Sheriff, 530-538-6759  
Matt Michaelis, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-552-3312

## Jail Funding

### Summary of the Issue

California has made \$2.5 billion available for County jail construction. Funding programs in AB 900 (2007), SB 1022 (2012), SB 863 (2014), and SB 844 (2016) are paying for additional or replacement jail facilities in almost every California county, with a required local match. Due to Public Safety Realignment of 2011, the kind of inmate housed in County facilities has changed from short term to long term. County jails do not have space for classes and programs necessary to rehabilitate long-term inmates to prepare them for reintegration into society. Funding for jail construction focuses on creating the right kind of facility, not simply an expansion of the existing facility. The economy overall has driven the cost of materials and labor much higher than previously anticipated, so the existing funds from the State programs are not sufficient. California needs to provide at least one more method of funding to assist Counties with the construction of local detention facilities.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support additional funding for County detention facilities that include space for rehabilitative services.

**Contact:** Kory Honea, Sheriff, 530-538-6759  
Matt Michaelis, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-552-3312



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## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

### Animal Control

#### Summary of the Issue

Each year almost one million unwanted and abandoned cats and dogs are born in California. Encouraging the spaying and neutering of cats and dogs is a reasonable, proven-effective, and necessary means to greatly reduce the number of unwanted animals. Furthermore, local governments are responsible for the surveillance, prevention, and control of animal rabies in California. This is achieved through local animal vaccinations and licensing programs, stray animal control, animal bite reporting, investigation, and animal isolation along with public education.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation that enhances the ability of County animal controllers to provide cost effective and humane animal control services.
- Support evidence-based programs for animal care.
- Support funding for animal response activities during disasters (animal evacuations and sheltering).

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

### Behavioral Health

#### Summary of the Issue

In recent legislative sessions significant changes have been made to the funding and delivery of Behavioral Health Services. These changes range from changes made to the Lanterman Petris Short Act to expand the definition of gravely disabled, to CARE Court and the recasting of the Mental Health Services Act, to the Behavioral Health Services Act which voters will consider in an upcoming election. As the State looks to revision Behavioral Health Services it is essential that ongoing, sustainable funding is provided for existing programs as well as new programs and services. It is also imperative that the State and Counties work together to address implementation challenges – making changes as needed.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

*Lanterman Petris Short (LPS) Act* – Funding for the expansion of Gravely Disabled (Senate Bill 43)

- Support legislation to adequately fund the expansion of the definition of gravely disabled to include staffing and appropriate facilities.

*Community Assistance, Recover and Empowerment (CARE) Act*

- Support legislation that would provide adequate funding to Counties to implement CARE Act programs (e.g, CARE Court). Additional funding is essential to cover treatment, staffing, facilities, supportive housing, and other unfunded program costs for this new mandated program.

*Riese Hearings*

- Support legislation that would allow the administration (at the treating psychiatrist's discretion) of injectable medications that last longer. Currently, with Riese hearings, only short-term oral medications are permitted. This often results in clients only partially stabilizing enough to not meet criteria for hospitalization and to be discharged while still very symptomatic. Adding a long acting injectable for psychosis or substance related issues will allow clients who discharge to continue to stabilize regardless of whether they are in patient or not. This will allow better treatment outcomes and fewer repeat hospitalizations.

*CalAIM*

- Support efforts to ensure that funding to Counties is sufficient to fund the programs as redesigned.

*Infrastructure*

- Ensure that infrastructure is equitably distributed. Support legislation which provides for direct and adequate funding of needed facilities versus requiring Counties to apply for competitive grants that are overly complex, restrictive and do not allow sufficient time to appropriately use the funds.

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### *Enhanced Care Management*

- Increase reimbursements for implementation of Enhanced Care Management (ECM) services to allow Counties to cover costs for staffing and program implementation.
- Support funding for Counties to aid in the long-term recovery efforts by maintaining and providing long-term behavioral health support to survivors in the wake of disasters.

**Contact:** Scott Kennelly, Director-Behavioral Health, 530-552-4599

### **Broadband**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

In recent years, it has become even more apparent that access to the internet is not a luxury, but a necessity that enables individuals to access work, healthcare, and education. The more rural parts of California need continuous funding and reforms to broadband funding programs to help close the digital divide and meet the connectivity needs of Californians, both now and for decades to come.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support funding for public telecommunications, radio, and broadband infrastructure and technology, including advancements to increase the redundancy of public safety communications, and to enhance general public safety.
- Seek support for flexible broadband funding and technical assistance for planning and implementation in 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.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310  
Katie Simmons, Deputy Administrative Officer-Economic and Community Development, 530-552-3338

### **California Children's Services**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The California Children's Services (CCS) program provides diagnostic and treatment services, medical case management, and physical and occupational therapy services to children under the age of twenty-one with CCS-eligible medical conditions. The CCS program is administered as a partnership between County health departments and the California Department of Health Care Services. The growth in CCS caseloads and program costs has steadily increased over time. This increase places demands on the service delivery side (particularly due to a decreasing pool of specialists and/or therapists and because County staff must review each case in order to determine program eligibility and authorize services) and on the financing of the program.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation to provide funding for staffing standards and operational expenses as outlined by DHCS for high quality service provision and client access to care in order to meet the demands of the medically complex children in California.
- Monitor the CCS program care guidelines and the demands made on the program through monitoring and oversight to ensure Counties are protected against unfunded mandates which lead to increased County program costs.
- Oppose any efforts to require Counties to provide funding for the CCS program beyond the Maintenance of Effort (MOE).

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

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## Cannabis

### Summary of the Issue

Local agencies still face many impacts from the cultivation and distribution of cannabis including the potential effects on the environment by cultivation (i.e., excessive water usage, uncontrolled pesticide use, and erosion); the creation of public and private nuisances; the heightened risk of electrical fires by indoor grows; negative health impacts, including those related to unregulated edible cannabis products; and safety concerns created by a high value crop or retailer inventory. Regulation at the local level is more effective as the potential impacts of cannabis vary broadly depending upon the geography and urban versus rural nature of counties and cities throughout California. Uncertainty in State legislation needs to be addressed to help guide local jurisdictions balance various interests.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Allow Counties to specially assess penalties for code violations related to *unlawful* cannabis cultivation.
- Support a statewide regulatory scheme for adult use cannabis that ensures Counties can set regulatory standards based on local needs and priorities and the rights of cannabis users.
- Support legislation which studies the impacts of cannabis use and legalization on public health, particularly epidemiological surveillance of youth and adult cannabis use and the impacts of use on infant and youth brain development.
- Support regulations that address transactional limits on the purchase of edibles, beverages and other consumable products infused with THC.
- Advocate for efforts to increase education (including on THC potency), youth prevention, environmental prevention strategies (e.g.: retail availability, retailer overconcentration), responsible adult use, and drugged driving prevention.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820  
Paula Daneluk, Director-Development Services, 530-552-3700

## Child Support Services

### Summary of the Issue

The County broadly supports legislation that will provide funding to enable local child support agencies (LCSAs), as part of the social safety net, to reach unserved families and decrease child poverty while maintaining local control. The County values flexibility in program operations and greater access to tools and information. Expanding the sharing of information between agencies would help to remove barriers to access and improved services to families.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation that fully funds State and LCSA's program costs.
- Support legislation that improves the effectiveness of LCSAs in establishing, enforcing, and collecting child support orders.
- Support legislation that provides for flexibility in program operations, such as a "no wrong door" approach. This would allow for innovative and inclusive policies that expand interagency communication and support across agencies providing services to recipients.
- Support legislation that provides access to appropriate tools and information to LCSAs and the clients they serve. For LCSAs, this means keeping and bolstering the SLMS (State Licensing Match System), expanding interagency data sharing, and securing digital court reporting procedures.

**Contact:** Sean Farrell, Director-Child Support Services, 530-552-4200

## Children, Youth and Families

### Summary of the Issue

Many children suffer from adverse childhood experiences. These can be singular or myriad; undetected and untreated they can have effects that unfortunately last lifetimes.

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### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation that supports children, youth, and families, including supporting homeless youth, promoting safety for all children, and prevention and early intervention for behavioral and developmental health in community and school settings.
- Support restoration and expansion of affordable quality childcare and preschool opportunities, support homeless youth, promoting safety for all children, and behavioral and developmental health prevention issues and early intervention activities both in the community and in school settings.
- Advocate for dedicated funding streams for child abuse and youth violence prevention efforts.

**Contact:** Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172  
Scott Kennelly, Director-Behavioral Health, 530-552-4599  
Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

### **Children's Health**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

Enhanced funding is needed for programs within Public Health that support youth development including but not limited to California Children's Services (CCS), First 5 and Home Visitation programs.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation to enhance the health and early growth experiences of California's youth.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

### **Chronic Disease and Prevention**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

Chronic diseases in California, such as heart disease, cancer, lung disease, stroke, diabetes, and asthma, continue to plague our communities in ever larger numbers, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color. In addition, approximately 20% of youth age 12-17 in California are considered overweight, with 14% being considered obese. Children who are overweight increase their risk for type 2 diabetes mellitus, asthma, and orthopedic problems. Finally, the growing number of people experiencing food shortages / insecurity, and hunger concurrent with the reduction in social assistance programs, has gradually become recognized as a public health concern.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support efforts that address the prevention of chronic disease and promotion of wellness, including full funding for the Cal-Fresh program.
- Support a dedicated funding stream to fund preventative health services or activities that improve community health outcomes for all chronic diseases; also, support efforts to require that sufficient funding is provided to every region / county in California.
- Support legislation and funding that encourages the inclusion of health in all policies and consideration of public health impacts in the design and planning of healthy communities.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

### **Communicable Disease**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The control of infectious disease, through immunizations, surveillance, disease investigation, laboratory testing, and response activities has long been a fundamental and statutorily required responsibility assigned to local government public health agencies. However, resources to support these essential activities have been insufficient for years. Preventing and controlling communicable diseases such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs), seasonal influenza, vaccine preventable diseases such as measles

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and pertussis, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis remain ongoing challenges for local health departments. In addition, new and re-emerging infectious diseases, including strains of influenza, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, West Nile Virus, Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRS), Meningococcal Disease, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) including COVID-19, Ebola, Valley Fever, Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), Zika, Dengue, and Chikungunya have increased the need to build capacity.

### **COVID-19 Response**

While the pandemic emergency has ended, COVID-19 remains a threat to the public's health. Local public health agencies continue to respond to the contagious coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) and its variants/mutations. As cases rise or outbreaks occur, the response efforts continue to strain the capacity of local health departments.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation that supports the flexibility of funding and resources directed at building the capacity of local public health department infrastructure to prevent, track and trace, test, vaccinate, and otherwise combat and control all communicable and infectious diseases.
- Support legislation that continues the funding support to local health departments to respond to COVID-19 and other significant public health challenges.
- Support legislation that would allow COVID-19 dedicated funding sources to be utilized for response efforts to any communicable and/or infectious disease.
- Oppose legislation to reduce funding streams which would further erode Counties' abilities to protect public health.
- Support successful evidence-based programs.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

### **Drug Endangered Children**

#### **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 400 – 500 children are referred to child protective agencies because of concerns about 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

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## Families First Prevention Services Act

### Summary of the Issue

On February 9, 2018, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 - Public Law (P.L.) 115-123 which includes the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law. The FFPSA amends the Title IV-E foster care program and makes other revisions to the Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2 programs. The FFPSA will enhance support services for families to help children remain at home and reduce the use of unnecessary congregate care placements by increasing options for prevention services, increased oversight and requirements for placements, and enhancing the requirements for congregate care placement settings.

### Requested Action and Strategy

Support State funding for the following services:

- Prevention services. The law gives states and tribes the ability to claim federal financial participation for providing eligible individuals with an array of approved foster care prevention services to strengthen families and keep children from entering foster care.
- Kinship (relative) caregivers through federal funds for evidence-based Kinship Navigator programs that link relative caregivers to a broad range of services and supports to help children remain safely with them.
- With the cost of new requirements for youth being placed in residential treatment programs and oversight of intensive and trauma-based services; the State should provide additional funding to the Counties and also consider funding its own facilities for placements.
- Improved services to older and transition-age youth.

**Contact:** Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172

## Health Care that is Affordable

### Summary of the Issue

People need affordable and effective health care. However, from accessing preventative care to being able to manage costs associated with catastrophic health events, many Butte County residents still struggle.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support ongoing and new efforts related to increasing the number of insured persons and to providing and expanding primary care services and public health prevention services and activities that do not have an adverse fiscal impact to the County. Examples of impacts may include unfunded or underfunded mandates, or reallocation of existing County funding that result in an increased General Fund obligation.
- Support legislation which increases healthcare options for all who are in need.

**Contact:** Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172  
Scott Kennelly, Director-Behavioral Health, 530-552-4599

## Housing and Homelessness

### Summary of the Issue

The affordability and availability of housing is at a crisis level in California and the impacts of the Camp Fire and the North Complex Fire have significantly exacerbated the problem in Butte County. The housing issue is not only a crisis in its own right, but also a driver of California's homelessness problem.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation to fund diverse and affordable housing. Support legislation to fund programs to move the homeless, including homeless youth, into sustainable long-term housing.
- Support legislation that is evidence-based on "harm reduction" and "housing first" programs.

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**Contact:** Briana Harvey-Butterfield, Housing and Homeless Administrator, 530-552-6202  
Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172

## Housing and Economic Recovery

### Summary of the Issue

The County has received allocations of State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for Disaster Recovery to support multi-family housing reconstruction as well as infrastructure and mitigation projects. Additionally, to aid fire survivors in rebuilding and assist in bringing the housing stock in the unincorporated area of the county up to current health and safety standards, the County offers housing rehabilitation and reconstruction loan programs for qualifying low and moderate-income property owners. These programs are typically funded through grants obtained through the State CDBG program and the State HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), as well as payments and payoffs from existing loan recipients. The types of improvements needed range from full reconstruction to roof repair, heating, failed septic systems, adequate cooking facilities, and more eligible activities. Home hardening projects are desired to both reduce risk and lower the cost of homeowner insurance. The County also seeks grant funding for direct business assistance grants and loans, and workforce development programs during economic disruption. The County encourages grant funds to support timber and forest management, wood utilization, biomass technologies, and renewable energy projects that aid in economic recovery and wildfire risk reduction.

### Requested Action and Strategy

#### *Single-Family Housing:*

- Support legislation to provide adequate, equitable, and flexible funding to local jurisdictions for housing rehabilitation, reconstruction, and first-time homebuyer programs.
- Support funding that lowers barriers to housing recovery in fire-impacted areas.
- Advocate for funding all displaced individuals from a disaster, including those who lost access to housing due to secondary displacement.
- Advocate for the administration of owner-occupied and multi-family housing reconstruction programs at the local level following a disaster to best address local recovery needs and priorities.
- Support statewide initiatives that maintain an accessible and affordable private insurance market.
- Support enabling more homeowners to access affordable California FAIR Plan insurance.
- Support incentives and grant funding for home and property hardening.

#### *Multi-Family Housing:*

- Support funding to expedite construction of diverse housing stock in Northern California.
- Support legislation that increases tax credits and other funding types for the restoration of housing after a disaster.
- Support legislation that scores housing funding on rural criteria rather than urban criteria.
- Support legislation that ensures adequate project based vouchers to fund housing projects.
- Support expenditure deadline extension requests as needed to ensure funds can be spent within the community.
- Advocate for local control of disaster recovery funding for housing and infrastructure.

#### *Individual & Business Assistance:*

- Advocate for access to full benefits for all evacuees, survivors, individuals and businesses impacted by disasters.
- Support legislation providing funding for governmental services for jurisdictions hosting survivors.
- Support efforts that provide funding and other forms of relief to stabilize local businesses.
- Support legislation for funding for end-market solutions for timber and green waste.
- Support funding for workforce development to aid in recovery efforts.

**Contact:** Katie Simmons, Deputy Administrative Officer-Economic and Community Development,  
530-552-3338

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## Public Guardian

### Summary of the Issue

Public guardian offices are understaffed. This is true even without possible conservatorship reform, which the Legislature may consider in 2024. Changes to conservatorship law could stretch public guardian offices to the breaking point. Additional funding is needed statewide to properly staff public guardian offices.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support efforts by the Public Guardians Association to secure funding in the State Budget for public guardian offices.

**Contact:** Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172

## Seniors and the Disabled

### Summary of the Issue

For too long, the State has failed to produce a workable, long-term solution to California's aging population. Recently, work has been done on a Master Plan for Aging. It is now time to properly fund and implement strategies to ensure that the elderly and infirm in our state can lead productive lives.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislative, administrative and budgetary efforts that seek to maintain active and healthy independence for seniors and the disabled, including affordable housing, funding, and other support for those who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.
- Support funding for comprehensive, integrated assistance for individuals with disabilities and seniors.
- Support legislation to increase skilled nursing facilities that are willing to accept dually diagnosed seniors with comorbid medical and behavioral health conditions.

**Contact:** Shelby Boston, Director-Department of Employment and Social Services, 530-552-6172  
Scott Kennelly, Director-Behavioral Health, 530-552-4599  
Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820

## Tobacco Control

### Summary of the Issue

Each year, more than 35,000 Californians die due to tobacco-related illnesses. The use of electronic smoking (vaping) devices, and other smokeless tobacco products, has been on the rise throughout the country, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported that the use of electronic cigarettes by U.S. youth (middle and high school students) has more than doubled in recent years.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation to prevent or reduce the use of tobacco products.
- Support legislation to reduce second-hand smoke exposure in our youth and communities.
- Support legislation to prevent youth access to all tobacco products, including electronic smoking devices and flavored tobacco products.
- Oppose legislation to exempt electronic nicotine delivery systems, such as e-cigarettes, from current tobacco control laws and regulations.
- Support legislation to mitigate community level harms for disproportionately impacted communities.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530-552-3820



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## LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Agriculture Issues

#### Summary of the Issue

Agriculture is one of the primary economic drivers in Butte County. Reductions in funding and services for crop protection resources and pest management strategies would negatively impact our agricultural businesses and local economy.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support efforts to prevent the introduction and potential spread of invasive pests and diseases harmful to agriculture, including State funding of pest prevention program activities.
- Support efforts to secure continuous funding to control invasive, noxious, or non-native weeds.
- Support proposals that maintain or increase funding for pesticide regulatory activities to protect the safety of workers, the public, and the environment, including funding for education, outreach, and compliance assessment activities related to the safe use of pesticides.
- Support legislation and funding that supports and keeps agricultural businesses viable.

**Contact:** Louie B. Mendoza, Jr., Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures, 530-552-4100

### Community and Library Services

#### Summary of the Issue

State funding for public libraries and other community services has been eliminated over the years.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support full funding for library programs including, but not limited to, adult literacy and technological enhancements (especially for improvements to infrastructure and technology that currently do not allow for advancements and upgrades) to support public learning.
- Support funding for electronic, audiovisual and digital content and capabilities.
- Support funding for the Local Library Partnership Program and other unfunded mandates.
- Support equitable access for libraries and library resources (funding for programs such as Zip Books) and provision of reading materials to rural and underserved areas.

**Contact:** Misty Wright, Acting Director-Library, 530-538-7240

### Drought Response

#### Summary of the Issue

California has experienced drought conditions of historic proportions over the past decade. Butte County, through its Drought Preparedness and Mitigation Plan, Drought Impact Analysis Study, and the Office of Emergency Management, has identified local drought impacts and taken steps to mitigate and/or secure resources as they arise. The primary immediate impacts are expected to be to individual and small community water supply wells. Broad economic impacts may occur from surface water cutbacks and changes to reservoir storage and operations of Lake Oroville. In cases of long-term droughts, the impact to water supply reliability and the local economy will increase substantially. State assistance should include funding to mitigate the local impacts of the drought.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation and funding that will assist Butte County in addressing and mitigating localized drought impacts.
- Support funding to implement the Drought Plan and drought risk assessment tools and metrics to address drought planning, response, and mitigation.
- Support legislation that will protect the local agricultural economy and ensure that local water supply needs are met.

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- Support funding for use of more efficient irrigation methodologies and Climate-Smart Agricultural programs.
  - Support legislation that protects all beneficial uses and users of water (i.e., agricultural, environmental, and urban users).
  - Support legislation and funding that facilitates the hauling of water for domestic water users threatened with the loss of water supply or degraded water quality during a drought emergency, including the provision of allowing water providers to deliver water outside of their service boundaries.

**Contact:** Kamie Loeser, Director-Department of Water and Resource Conservation, 530-552-3590  
Briana Haberman, Deputy Administrative Officer-Emergency Management, 530-552-3333

## **Flood Management and Flood Control**

### **Summary of the Issue**

Levees in Butte County need upgrading, repair, and maintenance to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accreditation and State certification requirements. To address the requirements by FEMA and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, funding is needed for flood management strategies to mitigate the impacts of severe rain events. Examples of areas in need of funding include much of the Chico Urban Area, along the Feather River, Butte Creek, Palermo, Cherokee Canal, Mud Creek, and the Rock Creek/Keefer Slough area.

If flood protection does not meet FEMA accreditation and State certification requirements, many residents in the south county and the Chico Urban Area will face increasing 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 improvement, repair and maintenance of levees and flood control projects 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.
- Support programs and funding to prepare and mitigate areas more prone to seasonal flooding.
- Support programs and funding that facilitate partnerships between flood and groundwater management agencies.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681  
Briana Haberman, Deputy Administrative Officer-Emergency Management, 530-552-3333

## **Highway and Other Infrastructure Improvements**

### **Summary of the Issue**

Reliable, safe, and modern public infrastructure is vital to the economic development of the county. Upgrading and maintaining our local roads, water supplies, and wastewater infrastructure not only helps the County provide basic services to residents, but also provides the foundation for future economic growth and business development.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Maintain funding for infrastructure improvement and maintenance opportunities.
- Support the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) and Caltrans in their efforts to secure funding for Highway improvements.
- Support CSAC and RCRC efforts to fund necessary road upgrades and repairs.
- Support funding for regional rail system traveling through Butte County.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681

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## Housing Needs Plans

### Summary of the Issue

State law requires the Department of Housing and Community Development and councils of governments/metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) 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. Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plans conflict with efforts to develop and implement the Sustainable Communities Strategy required by Government Code §65080 *et seq*, resulting in Counties being unable to take advantage of streamlining in the California Environmental Quality Act and being at a disadvantage in transportation funding decisions in the Regional Transportation Plan process.

With the changes in the 2017 Housing Bills, jurisdictions that fail to meet their Regional Housing Needs Allocation are penalized with the loss of discretionary approval over housing projects. This presents challenges for rural counties that do not have the infrastructure in place for high-density residential developments. Also, recent legislation pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should be revisited to allow more local control over ADUs, especially with respect to setbacks and depending on lot sizes.

### 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 (RHNA) Plans or pursue a process to exempt Counties that are members of the Rural County Representatives of California from the requirement for Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plans.
- Support legislation that provides funding for rural Counties to assist with the development of diverse housing options (affordable, market rate, etc.), and the cost of RHNA plans.
- Support legislation allowing flexibility in RHNA requirements for areas affected by severe wildfires.
- Support more local control over ADUs, especially with respect to setbacks and depending on lot sizes.

**Contact:** Paula Daneluk, Director-Development Services, 530-552-3642

## Local Primacy Agency

### Summary of the Issue

The Local Primacy Agency (LPA) is delegated authority from the State Water Board and Butte County has authority over 99 publicly and privately-owned water systems. The current requirements of the Local Primacy Agency (LPA) as defined by the State Water Resources Control Board-Division of Drinking Water (DDW) are not funded. Local program fees are not sufficient to staff this program in order to meet all of DDW's requirements. The LPA has experienced an increase in workload due to new or expanded requirements for program oversight and reporting set by DDW. The LPA has also experienced an increase in requests for assistance and funding for impacts to local small water systems as a result of fire disaster and drought conditions.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation for funding of the LPA to assist with the implementation, management, oversight and enforcement of the small water system program in accordance with DDW's program requirements, specifically those systems that are not in compliance or are recovering from drought or disaster conditions.
- Support legislation for funding for existing Mutual Water Companies, County Service Areas (CSA) or Community Service Districts (CSD) that operate small public water systems to assist with system

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maintenance, repair and replacement, especially those that have been impacted by drought or disaster related conditions.

**Contact:** Danette York, Director-Public Health, 530.552.3820  
Elaine McSpadden, Public Health, Environment Health Division Director,  
530.538.5339  
Kamie Loeser, Director-Department of Water and Resource Conservation,  
530.552.3590

## **Off-Highway Vehicles and Green Sticker Funding**

### **Summary of the Issue**

Green Sticker funds are collected from Off Highway Vehicles (OHV's) and used by various State agencies to operate the OHV program with the remaining funds going to grants to enhance OHV opportunities throughout the State. There have been attempts to use Green Sticker funds for programs not related to the OHV program. OHV opportunities typically help support rural business by purchasing fuel and other supplies.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Protect Green Sticker funding for OHV program use only.
- Require the U. S. Forest Service to partner with local non-profits or governmental agencies to apply for green sticker funding.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681

## **Solid Waste**

### **Summary of the Issue**

In 2016, California set ambitious goals to significantly reduce organic waste in landfills, aiming for a 50% reduction by 2020 and a 75% reduction by 2025 from 2014 levels. This initiative was driven by the need to reduce methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas contributing to climate change, with landfills being a significant source of these emissions in the state. However, California has struggled to meet these targets. The State missed the 2020 goal, with organic waste in landfills increasing by a million tons from 2014 to 2020. This failure was attributed to the non-enforceability of regulations until 2022. Moreover, the State will likely fall short of its 2025 target, with a projected shortfall in processing capacity of about 8 million tons annually. This situation is compounded by over a hundred local jurisdictions requesting extensions to comply with the State's requirements. To address these challenges, County leaders recommend a temporary pause in implementing the legislation (SB 1383).

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support efforts to educate Californians about organic waste, improve coordination among State agencies, and form a multidisciplinary team to enhance market opportunities for recycled organic waste.
- Work toward redefining the relationship between State agencies and local governments for more effective waste management, exempting low-population counties from specific requirements, and separating edible food recovery from the broader goals of SB 1383.
- Support investment in repairing and upgrading facilities responsible for the majority of landfill methane emissions.
- Advocate for realistic financial planning supported by a thorough cost-benefit analysis that garners broad support from Californians.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681

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## Solid Waste – Renewable Energy Projects – Conversion Technology

### Summary of the Issue

State mandates require local jurisdictions to increase waste diversion and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Modern technology can be effective in helping jurisdictions achieve mandates, but there are many obstacles preventing the development of facilities utilizing new conversion technologies. Obstacles include lack of proper definitions for modern technologies, improper placement in CalRecycle's hierarchy of waste handling priorities, unclear permitting pathways, inability to qualify as a renewable energy project and inability for a conversion technology facility to qualify for diversion credits. Currently, it is not feasible to implement new, green technologies either due to the cost or an inability to qualify for financial incentives, or compliance programs.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation and regulations that would establish a clear pathway to encourage the development of conversion technologies; including clarification of the definition of conversion technologies and ensuring they qualify for appropriate renewable energy project status, financial and other incentives for producing renewable energy, reducing landfill disposal, and producing low carbon fuels.
- Support efforts to grow markets for renewables, especially those that create jobs in California.
- Support efforts that assist with more effective forest management, green waste and agricultural waste disposal (including but not limited to biomass or biochar).
- Oppose any increase in the State's tipping fee that only supports State functions and/or does not offset local costs.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681  
Katie Simmons, Deputy Administrative Officer-Economic and Community Development, 530-552-3338

## Storm Water Permits

### Summary of the Issue

California's Regional Water Quality Board has adopted changes to its Industrial and Municipal General Storm Water Permits. In the opinion of a broad coalition of stakeholders, including the Rural County Representatives of California and CSAC, the changes are beyond what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency mandates and will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs to applicants with no proven environmental benefits.

### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support efforts by CSAC to create a new funding method for local agencies to finance storm water management and flood control projects.

**Contact:** Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681

## Water

### Summary of the Issue

Protecting and sustaining groundwater and surface water is critical for Butte County communities, agriculture, economy, and environment. Complying with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and maintaining local decision-making will ensure that groundwater is sustained for future generations. Projects to increase natural groundwater recharge and local water supply reliability will require policy, technical and financial support. Local efforts for groundwater sustainability and water supply reliability face challenges from State legislative and regulatory actions that would change County police powers, land use authority, water management and well permitting authority. Other actions by the State of California might reduce local surface water supplies, impact Lake Oroville and result in other deleterious socioeconomic impacts.

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### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support actions that promote natural groundwater recharge, protection of area of origin water rights, existing water right priorities, and local control over water management.
- Support implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act including providing State financial assistance and preservation of County land use, water management and well permitting authorities.
- Support legislation that recognizes groundwater recharge as a public and environmental beneficial use eligible for technical and financial assistance.
- Support legislation and actions that facilitate coordination of stormwater and flood management with local managed aquifer recharge and groundwater sustainability efforts that increase water supply reliability, reduce flood risk, and support natural ecosystems.
- Support funding and non-competitive grant opportunities that provide technical assistance, guidance and funding for construction and implementation of groundwater recharge projects in coordination with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and other local entities and organizations.
- Identify and advocate for project funding through water bonds and other funding opportunities that will benefit Butte County and the region through the Northern Sacramento Valley and Upper Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management planning efforts.
- Support funding that assists with providing safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water and wastewater disposal systems for rural, low-income, and underrepresented communities.
- Support funding for Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation, interbasin coordination and SGMA compliance.

Contact: Kamie Loeser, Director-Department of Water and Resource Conservation, 530-552-3590

### **Williamson Act**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The Williamson Act, also known as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, authorizes a City or County to enter into contracts with owners of land devoted to agricultural use. Existing law sets forth procedures for reimbursing Counties for property tax revenues not received as a result of these contracts and appropriates State General Fund monies for this purpose. Existing law for the 2008-09 Fiscal year and each year since, essentially eliminated the reimbursement.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation that would restore full funding of the Williamson Act.

Contact: Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

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## OTHER GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS

### Accessibility

#### Summary of the Issue

Eliminating barriers to services for residents and employees is necessary. However, funding levels do not support the necessary modifications to aging facilities, public right of way access or to policies and procedures that residents and employees need. In addition, funding for the training of public employees in assisting with accommodations does not exist.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Pursue funding necessary to improve accessibility in both public facilities and public rights of way / access routes.
- Pursue funding to train public employees on improving access to services by everyone.

**Contact:** Benjamin Matray, County Architect, 530-552-3491  
Sheri Waters, Director-Human Resources, 530-552-3565  
Joshua Pack, Director-Public Works, 530-538-7681

### Clerk-Recorder

#### Summary of the Issue

The County supports increased technology provided for in legislation, however, ensuring that securities keep up with the mandates is a challenge. Verifying identity using remote technology may result in increased costs, with no offsetting revenue. Preserving Butte County history in a formal and professional manner without specific funding is a challenge.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Support legislation 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 the addition of State fees to recordings where no clear nexus is drawn between the instrument and the proposed use of funds.
- Support grant funding for the preservation and storage of County archives.
- Support legislation to allow for vital records to be opened after 75 years.

**Contact:** Keaton Denlay, Clerk-Recorder, 530-552-3425

### Community Choice Aggregation

#### Summary of the Issue

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), authorized by AB117, allows local governments to pool their electricity load to purchase and/or develop power on behalf of their residents, businesses, and municipal accounts. CCA allows local governments to become an energy purveyor and to purchase electrical energy on the wholesale market from any source. CCA is a supply model that works in partnership with the existing utility, which continues to deliver power, maintain the grid, provide consolidated billing, and provide other customer services.

The County, the City of Chico and the City of Oroville are currently in the process of launching a CCA in this region called Butte Choice Energy.

#### Requested Action and Strategy

- Oppose legislation and administrative actions that would restrict CCA formation, establish an opt-in only program, or add additional fees/increase current fees or surcharges to which an Investor-Owned Utility is not subject.

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- Support legislation to protect local governments' right to participate in, or establish, community choice aggregation programs.

**Contact:** Meegan Jessee, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3311

### **Construction Funding for Deferred Maintenance**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The County owns and operates programs from a wide variety of public facilities ranging from administrative offices to fire stations, libraries, veteran halls, and public community centers. Unfortunately, the average age of County facilities is nearly 50 years old with millions of dollars in deferred maintenance, inefficient building components and accessibility related matters. Funding for facilities related projects is often required to construct new facilities to accommodate State and federal mandated responsibilities. Local revenue sources are not sufficient for new construction which forces utilizing buildings well beyond their useful life.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support efforts to provide funding for building facility condition assessments and to address deferred maintenance in County owned and operated facilities.
- Funding for community facilities throughout the County, including but not limited to fire stations, libraries, veteran halls, and public community centers.

**Contact:** Michael Hodson, Director-General Services, 530-552-3471

### **Election Operations**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

Increasing rules and regulations at the State level regarding elections are increasing costs for local jurisdictions. New election technology 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 governments 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 legislation to allow Counties to fully utilize federally approved voting systems and upgrades within California.
- Oppose legislation that increases local costs or administrative burdens where funding is not provided.
- Support legislation allowing vote centers to be open 4 days or less.

**Contact:** Keaton Denlay, Clerk-Recorder, 530-552-3425

### **Electrical Backup**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

When originally constructed, the few County facilities that included generator backup for electrical service were designed to withstand power outages that spanned hours and that typically occurred during winter months. Now, with planned and un-planned power outages that span days and in hot summer months, the need for backup electrical services is much different. Most County programs cannot sit idle without electricity for several days in a row, and existing generators must incorporate cooling functions excluded in the original design. Also, there is a critical need for redundant and alternative methods of communicating during outages.



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### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation and funding for the design, construction, and maintenance of sufficient electrical service backup systems for County facilities.
- Pursue funding for alternative and redundant communication methods.

**Contact:** Michael Hodson, Director-General Services, 530-552-3471

### **Funding for Net Zero Energy Buildings**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

California Green Building Code establishes aggressive requirements for new construction, and fifty percent of existing governmental buildings, to be Zero Net Energy by 2030. Classification as a Zero Net Energy (ZNE) building requires that the building produces at least as much energy as is used to operate the facility annually. To reach ZNE status requires aggressive energy conservation measures and the production of alternative and renewable energy. While the cost to operate ZNE buildings throughout the life of the building is lower than traditional buildings, the County lacks funding for the significant upfront cost to implement conservation and energy production technology.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support efforts to provide funding for building envelope, mechanical and operating controls focused on energy conservation in new and remodeled buildings.
- Support efforts to fund and streamline implementation of alternative and renewable energy production on new and remodeled buildings.

**Contact:** Michael Hodson, Director-General Services, 530-552-3471

### **Health Care Insurance Options**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The County currently contracts with California Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) for the provision of employee health insurance. In previous years as well as the upcoming calendar year, PERS has implemented significant health insurance premium increases, especially for the Northern California region. The County has requested rate setting and utilization information to better understand the extraordinary increases, and PERS claims it is unable to provide the requested information due to prohibition by State law.

The County believes aggregate data should be available to contracting agencies to analyze health care utilization trends and to allow contracting agencies to seek other options on the market. Lack of aggregate data makes it impossible for contracting agencies to launch effective, targeted wellness programs that could positively impact future utilization and premiums, as well as seek quotes from other providers. Without utilization data, any quotes the County receives are estimates at best, and pure conjecture at the worst. Absent firm quotes, the County cannot make informed decisions regarding other options.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Continue advocacy efforts to compel PERS to release aggregate data and information for each contracting agencies, including legislative efforts to modify the Government Code, where applicable.

**Contact:** Matt Michaelis, Deputy Administrative Officer, 530-552-3312  
Sheri Waters, Director-Human Resources, 530-552-3565

### **Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The Indian Gaming State Distribution Fund (SDF) was established in 1999 as a mechanism by which Tribes operating more than two hundred gaming machines would contribute a percentage of net win

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dollars to address the impacts of gaming. Some of these funds were designated for local government agencies to mitigate the local impacts of gaming. Over the years the funds were available, Butte County designated these funds primarily for public safety functions. SDF funds had been decreasing for years, primarily due to the State renegotiating compacts with Tribes to have the percentage of net win dollars bypass the SDF and go directly to the State. In 2014, all mitigation funds from the SDF to local government ended.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation to restore funding for mitigating local impacts of gaming.
- Support efforts to include local jurisdictions in tribal compact negotiations to assist in addressing impacts that gaming activities have on local jurisdictions.
- Support provisions to increase local autonomy in how funds are spent.

**Contact:** Meegan Jessee, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3311

### **Local Revenue Protection**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The State has chosen in the past 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 to safeguard local property tax revenues and transportation monies. In 2010, California voters passed Proposition 22, which protects gas tax 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, and the critical services they fund, further at risk.

In addition, significant increases in the sales of zero-emission vehicles and State mandates to reduce or eliminate the reliance on fossil fuels threaten the long-term solvency of gas taxes. Butte County relies heavily on gas taxes to fund critical road infrastructure maintenance and improvement projects, and the loss of gas tax revenues threatens our ability to meet our ongoing maintenance needs.

### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Oppose any effort by the State to borrow, delay, defer, or take local revenue.
- Oppose the redirecting of existing revenues and/or the creation of additional unfunded mandates.
- Support legislation to generate new intergovernmental revenue and/or enhance existing revenue and reimbursement levels.
- Support efforts to explore options that replace the gas tax system with an alternative funding mechanism that can ensure ongoing, adequate and equitable funding levels for critical road infrastructure.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

### **Mandates - Timely Payments**

#### **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, behavioral health, elections, social services, and roads. During the Great Recession, the State delayed payment of millions in State and federal funds to Counties. When the State delays payment, the County has difficulty meeting all its obligations, delaying payments to vendors (ranging from landlords to supply stores to childcare providers to non-profit agencies providing services); contractors; and ultimately employees. The State has historically tended to pass cash flow problems on to Counties. Although things have improved dramatically since the Great Recession, there are insufficient protections in place to shield Counties in the event of another significant downturn.

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### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Advocate for payment of SB 90 claims and all State mandates and oppose actions to eliminate, delay or reduce payments to Counties.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

### **Marketplace Equity and Consumer Protection**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

Weights and Measures programs are used to verify the accuracy of weighing and measuring devices. These programs are critical in providing protection for consumers and are partially funded by device registration fees. Weights and Measures set standards and enforce uniform procedures to verify weight, volume, length or count, ensuring that consumers get the quantity that they pay for and that businesses sell the quantity that they advertise.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Support legislation to enhance inspection of alternative motor fuel devices.
- Support legislation that amends existing device registration fees and protects local authority for consumer protection programs.
- Support legislation that establishes funding for quantity control and package inspection programs.

**Contact:** Louie B. Mendoza, Jr., Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures, 530-552-4100

### **Oroville Facilities, Adequate Reimbursement for Activities Related to Project**

#### **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 subsidized DWR's operation of the facilities. To date, the State has not properly compensated the residents of Butte County for costs incurred by the County providing services supporting the construction and operation of the Oroville Facilities. The County and its residents lose between \$3.6 - \$8.3 million in property taxes as the State is not required to pay property taxes on the 41,000 acres of land associated with the Project. Also, the County incurs an average annual cost (50-year period) of \$9.7 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. In February 2017, both the primary and emergency spillways failed, resulting in the evacuation of over 180,000 people downstream from the Facilities and significant social, economic, and environmental impacts to the communities and the County.

For over 17 years, DWR has sought renewal of its license for the Facilities through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC); there is no estimate as to when this might happen. DWR generates revenue and inexpensive power from these Facilities for the benefit of itself and others outside of Butte County. The County believes that a new license should be issued that addresses all local costs associated with the Project, safety concerns and recreation concerns.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Hold Department of Water Resources accountable for deliverables promised associated with the Project; support efforts to settle the County's claims regarding uncompensated costs, including property tax loss attributable to construction of the reservoir.
- Explore all opportunities for resolution of this issue, including, but not limited to, provision of lower cost water and electricity for the residents and businesses in Butte County, payment in lieu of taxes and reimbursement of costs associated with services provided to the Oroville Facilities.

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- Support a new license process with DWR that addresses local costs associated with the Project, safety concerns and recreation concerns.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

### **Property Tax Administration**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The County is responsible for all property tax administration activities, including apportionment and distribution of funds to all taxing agencies. The County recovers less than half of the more than \$4.5 million annual cost of property tax administration because schools are included in the calculation but exempted from collection. This exemption costs the County over \$2.5 million dollars every year, funds that could otherwise be spent on County services, including libraries, fire, and police protection.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Advocate for fuller funding of Property Tax Administration costs, with schools or the State on behalf of the schools, paying a reasonable share of the cost to assess, collect, and distribute taxes.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

### **Public Facilities – Project Delivery**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

Public Contract Code 22162(a) allows entities other than local government to utilize project delivery methods other than the traditional Design – Bid - Build for infrastructure and communications projects. Local governments are not allowed to utilize alternative project delivery method in these cases, which is less effective for complicated projects.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

Support modifications to legislation in two ways:

- Allow the use of alternative project delivery methods such as Design-Build, Construction Management at Risk and others for infrastructure and communications projects and allow merit shop training programs.

**Contact:** Michael Hodson, Director-General Services, 530-552-3471

### **Realignment**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The State periodically transfers responsibility for providing public services from the State to Counties. This has included realignment of a variety of health and human services functions starting in the 90's as well as more recently public safety services such as the realignment of felony and juvenile offenders. Conceptually, with adequate resources, Counties are better to use the resources to best meet unique local needs. However, realignments are often done in the context of declining State resources and adequate resources are not provided. Additionally, Counties must be given the flexibility and authority to manage the available resources to meet local needs. When the authority to manage realigned programs is removed from the County or the dollars are redirected to new State initiatives the realignment structure no longer works.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Advocate for full funding of and authority for realigned programs and a local funding allocation formula that provides a fair share to cover realigned programs in Butte County.
- Support legislation to prohibit the State from passing any new law or regulation that imposes additional costs on local governments to provide services unless the State provides a source of State funding to pay the additional costs.

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**Contact:** Meegan Jessee, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3311

### **Safety and Security**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

The traditional role of organizational safety efforts has changed dramatically over the past few years and requires a much heavier emphasis on security than needed previously. Local agencies must adapt to the safety and security challenges of today by developing specific procedures and providing staff training.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Pursue funding for security-related analysis, facility modifications, and staff training focused on personal safety and security.

**Contact:** Michael Hodson, Director-General Services, 530-552-3471

### **Surcharges (State) 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 gives 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 function as collection agencies for the State.
- For mandated surcharges, support full funding by the State for the County's administrative overhead.

**Contact:** Andy Pickett, Chief Administrative Officer, 530-552-3310

### **Unclaimed Gas Tax (UGT) Revenue**

#### **Summary of the Issue**

California's accelerated mandated push to zero emissions for on-road/off-road vehicles and off-road equipment will negatively affect the major source of local reimbursement funding. The State is currently piloting a "road charge" to demonstrate technology that can determine when a driver is on a private road vs. a public road or highway – thus eliminating collection and ultimate refund of a road charge fees when operating vehicles on private roads. It is very likely, if a Road Charge system is implemented in California – that the State will stop collecting gasoline excise taxes at the pump – which will eliminate the pool of on-farm and small horticultural refundable unclaimed gas taxes held by the State.

For Fiscal Year 2022-23, Caltrans requested the State Controller's Office to transfer a total of \$124,471,861 from the Motor Vehicle Fuel Account with \$78,978,435 to the California Department of Agriculture Fund which supports County Agriculture Departments statewide.

For Fiscal Year 2023-24, Caltrans is requesting a transfer of \$134,405,678 of which \$85,215,971 will go to the Agriculture Fund which supports County Agriculture Departments statewide.

#### **Requested Action and Strategy**

- Consider long-term stability of Unclaimed Gas Tax as zero-emission mandates expand and alternative funding for agricultural code programs to support County Agricultural Commissioner's net County costs for reimbursement and County general funds. Support funding through the "road

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charge” or vehicle miles driven to offset losses when unclaimed gas tax is eliminated.

**Contact:** Louie B. Mendoza, Jr., Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures,  
530-552-4100