



# Solano County

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## Legislation Text

File #: 20-68, Version: 1

Receive an update from staff and the County's State Legislative Advocate on the status of legislation that is of interest to the County, including items that were discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on January 6, 2020 and highlights from the Governor's proposed budget for 2020-21

Published Notice Required? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X  
Public Hearing Required? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors receive an update from staff and the County's State Legislative Advocate on the status of legislation that is of interest to the County, including items that were discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on January 6, 2020 and highlights from the Governor's proposed budget for 2020-21.

### **SUMMARY:**

Staff will provide an overview of items discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on January 6, 2020. The County's Legislative Advocate, Karen Lange of SYASL Partners, Inc., will provide a verbal update on developments at the Capitol and key legislation of interest to the County, including the Governor's proposed budget for 2020-21. The informational items before the Board were reviewed by the County's Legislative Committee and are discussed individually in the discussion section below.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The legislative program is designed to result in additional funding and cost avoidance relative to Solano County. The cost of preparing this report and compiling the information is a General Fund cost covered in the County Administrator's FY2019/20 administration budget.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The County's Legislative Committee Members, Supervisor Erin Hannigan and Supervisor John Vasquez met on January 6, 2020 to discuss both Federal and State issues. Joe Krahn, Hasan Sarsour, and Tom Joseph of Paragon Government Relations, the County's federal legislative advocacy team, and Karen Lange of SYASL Partners, Inc., the County's state legislative advocate, all participated in the meeting as well.

The County's January 6, 2020 Legislative Committee agenda packet can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.solanocounty.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=31447>

As part of public comment, Nestor Aliga, a community member representing the Vallejo Veterans affairs, requested the Legislative Committee and the Solano County Board of Supervisors consider writing letters the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs to mark-up and approve bills H.R.578, S.127 and S.2983 that enter into an agreement with the City of Vallejo for the transfer of Mare Island Naval Cemetery, and for other purposes. A copy of the email request sent to Solano County Board of Supervisors Erin Hannigan and Monica Brown is included in Attachment A.

The meeting agenda included several action items, each is discussed individual below:

S.2626 - Restoring Health Benefits for Justice-Involved Individuals

On October 17, 2019, Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced S.2626, a bill to remove limitations on inmate eligibility for Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and veteran's health benefits. The bill has been read twice and has been referred to the Committee of Finance. The bill, S.2626 is ATTACHMENT B.

S.2628 - Equity in Pretrial Medicaid Coverage Act

On October 17, 2019, Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) introduced S.2628, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to remove a limitation on an individual's eligibility for medical assistance under the State Medicaid plan while the individual is in custody pending disposition of charges. The bill, which is co-sponsored by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Senator Tina Smith (D-MN), has been read twice and has been referred to the Committee on Finance. The bill, S.2628 is ATTACHMENT C.

**Gerald Huber, Director, and Sandra Sinz, Deputy Director of Solano County Health and Social Services, brought these two bills to the Legislative Committee for consideration. Director Huber stated that under current federal law, incarcerated individuals lose critical benefits, including Medicare, Medi-Cal and Veterans Services. If passed, these bills would ensure that individuals maintain critical benefits during the pre-trial process and while incarcerated. The County of Solano, Health and Social Services would benefit by not having to re-sign up individuals for benefits when leaving the criminal justice system - which can come at a great expense. Director Huber recommended the Legislative Committee support the National Association of Counties (NACo's) recommendation to support the bills and to write letters to our members of Congress, urging them to support legislation that strengthens Counties' ability to address health care in jails.**

**ACTION - The Legislative Committee recommended to Support these bills and referred it to the full Board for consideration.**

Proposal to Revise the Mental Health Services Act during the 2020 Legislative Session

On December 5, 2019, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) executive committee wrote a letter to its Board of Directors recommending they consider adopting the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Flexibility Proposal and direct staff to pursue during the 2020 legislative session. CSAC's core policy priorities in initiating changes to the MHSA include increasing flexibility, accountability and funding protections to help support and improve mental health infrastructure in California. CSAC's executive committee letter is ATTACHMENT D.

**Gerald Huber, Director, and Sandra Sinz, Deputy Director of Solano County Health and Social Services, brought the CSAC MHSA Flexibility Proposal to the Legislative Committee for discussion and consideration. Director Huber recommended the Legislative Committee support CSAC's MHSA Flexibility Proposal to help protect critical funding sources that support mental and behavioral health services in Solano County. The Director also recommended the Legislative Committee support the appointment of two members of the Health and Social Services department to serve on the MHSA committee for suburban Counties. Their presence on this committee would work to ensure Solano County has an active voice in the ongoing MHSA conversation with legislators.**

**ACTION - The Legislative Committee recommended to Support Solano County Health and Social Services department to have an active voice on the MHSA committee for suburban Counties and referred it to the full Board for consideration.**

This staff report also includes a federal legislative update from Paragon Government Relations, (Attachment

E) a state legislative update on bills Solano County has been following during the 2019-2020 legislative session from Karen Lange of SYASL Partners, Inc., (Attachment F), and a summary of Governor Gavin Newsom's January budget proposal for 2020-2021 from SYASL Partners, Inc. (Attachment G) and the California State Association of Counties (Attachment H).

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Staff consulted with Solano County Department Heads, Paragon Government Relations, SYASL Partners, Inc. and the California State Association of Counties to compile this legislative report.