



Solano County

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Legislation Text

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Receive an update from staff on items discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on August 3, 2020; Receive an update from the County's Federal Legislative Advocates on the status of legislation of interest to the County regarding the ongoing COVID-19 federal relief aid package negotiations; and Receive and update from the County's State Legislative Advocates on the status of legislation that is of interest to the County

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 on items discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on August 3, 2020; receive an update from the County's Federal Legislative Advocates on the status of legislation of interest to the County regarding the ongoing COVID-19 federal relief aid package negotiations, and receive and update from the County's State Legislative Advocates on the status of legislation that is of interest to the County.

SUMMARY:

Staff will provide an overview of items discussed at the Board's Legislative Committee on August 3, 2020. The County's Federal Legislative Advocates at Paragon Government Relations will give a verbal update on developments taking place in Washington DC and key legislation of interest to the County, including COVID-19 federal relief aid negotiations. The County's State 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. The informational items before the Board were reviewed by the County's Legislative Committee and are discussed individually in the discussion section below. It is important to note that the August 3, 2020 Legislative Committee meeting took place in a virtual setting on the Microsoft Teams video platform.

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 FY2020/21 administration budget.

DISCUSSION:

The County's Legislative Committee Members, Supervisor Erin Hannigan and Supervisor John Vasquez met on the virtual platform, Microsoft Teams on August 3, 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 August 3, 2020 Legislative Committee agenda packet can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.solanocounty.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=32795>

The meeting agenda included two federal action items and one local state-action item which are all discussed below:

H.R. 1957 / S. 3422 - Great American Outdoors Act

The Great American Outdoors Act (H.R. 1957) was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) in March of 2019. A revised version of the legislation (S. 3422) was subsequently offered by Senators Cory Gardner (R-CO) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) and was recently approved by both chambers of Congress. Among other things, the bill would convert the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to a mandatory spending program. Beginning in fiscal year 2021, the LWCF, which is funded by offshore oil and gas leasing revenues, will receive \$900 million in guaranteed funding on an annual basis to support the protection of public lands and waters, including national parks, federal forest lands, wildlife refuges and recreation areas. The Great American Outdoors Act, which retained the original bill number (H.R. 1957), was signed into law by the President on August 4, 2020. The bill, [H.R. 1957 <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr1957/BILLS-116hr1957enr.pdf>](https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr1957/BILLS-116hr1957enr.pdf) is ATTACHMENT A.

SUPPORT - Following a discussion, the Legislative Committee, by request of the Solano County Department of Resource Management's Interim Director, Terry Schmidtbauer, agreed to support the bill, as it would help support public lands, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas in Solano County, and to show support, on the record, for H.R. 1957 and celebrate its passing through Congress and being signed by the President.

H.R. 7575 - Water Resources Development Act of 2020

On July 13, 2020, Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR) introduced H.R. 7575, a bill that would provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, and provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources. Specifically, WRDA bills authorize water resource studies and projects and set policies for navigation, flood control, hydropower, recreation, water supply and emergency management and addresses county interests related to ports, inland waterways, levees, dams, wetlands, watersheds and coastal restoration. The bill was first introduced in the House of Representatives on July 13, 2020 and amended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 24, 2020. The bill was passed by the House on July 29, 2020 was received by the Senate on July 30, 2020 and is pending a vote. The bill, [H.R. 7575 <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr7575/BILLS-116hr7575eh.pdf>](https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr7575/BILLS-116hr7575eh.pdf) is ATTACHMENT B.

SUPPORT - Following a discussion, the Legislative Committee, by request of the Solano County Department of Resource Management's Interim Director, Terry Schmidtbauer, agreed to support the bill, as it includes appropriations to the 5 Bay Area Delta Counties, including Solano County, to conduct work with the Army Core of Engineers on a master plan of projects, including, but not limited to addressing flood levee protection, identifying and constructing new levees and to combat invasive algae blooms in delta waterways, and to write letters of support to Senators, urging them include favorable components of the House bill as a part of the complete Senate package.

SB 974 - Improve Water Infrastructure in Disadvantaged Communities

On February 11, 2020, Senator Melissa Hurtado (D-CA) introduced SB 974, a bill that would add a section to the Public Resources Code, and, with certain specified exceptions, exempt from CEQA certain projects consisting solely of the installation, repair, or reconstruction of water infrastructure, as specified, that primarily benefit a small disadvantaged community water system by improving the small disadvantaged community water system's water quality, water supply, or water supply reliability, by encouraging water conservation, or by providing drinking water service to existing residences within a disadvantaged community where there is evidence that the water exceeds maximum contaminant levels for primary or secondary drinking water standards or where the drinking water well is no longer able to produce an adequate supply of safe drinking water. The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources on June 29, 2020 and is scheduled for hearing on August 6, 2020. The bill, [SB 974 <https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB974>](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB974) is ATTACHMENT C.

WATCH POSITION - Following a discussion, the Legislative Committee, by request of the Solano County Department of Resource Management's Interim Director, Terry Schmidtbauer, agreed to take a watch position on the bill, and have asked Karen Lange, the County's state legislative advocate, to reach out to the bill's author, asking her to consider adding language that would include state small water systems, in addition to disadvantaged communities, as Solano County regulates some state small water systems, all of which lack the technical capacity to operate properly, and would benefit from additional state funding. Because the bill is set for hearing on August 6, by the time the Board of Supervisors receives a report-out on August 11, a decision may already be made, and if so, Karen Lange will provide an update as to its status.

This staff report also includes a federal legislative update summary from Paragon Government Relations, dated August 5, 2020 (ATTACHMENT D) and 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 E).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Staff consulted with Solano County Department Heads, Paragon Government Relations, SYASL Partners, Inc. to compile this legislative report.