



® **Government Finance & Administration (GFA) Policy Committee Meeting**
CSAC 130th Annual Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2024 • 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Pasadena Convention Center and Conference Center • Ballroom H
300 Green Street, Pasadena, California • Los Angeles County

Supervisor Mani Grewal, Stanislaus County, Chair
Supervisor Ryan Campbell, Tuolumne County, Vice Chair
Supervisor Nathan Magsig, Fresno County, Vice Chair

- 10:00 a.m. I. Welcome and Introductions**
Supervisor Mani Grewal, Stanislaus County, Chair
Supervisor Ryan Campbell, Tuolumne County, Vice Chair
Supervisor Nathan Magsig, Fresno County, Vice Chair
- 10:05 a.m. II. County Budgets: Past, Present, and Future**
Moderator: *Supervisor Mani Grewal, Stanislaus County*
- Presenter:
Bobby Young, Financial Consultant for Local Agencies, HdL Companies
- Panelists:
Dr. Sevet Johnson, County Executive Officer, Ventura County
Sonia M. De La Rosa, County Administrative Officer, Monterey County
Tracie Riggs, County Administrative Officer, Tuolumne County
- 11:15 a.m. III. Government Finance and Administration (GFA) Policy Platform Review – ACTION ITEM**
Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Advocate
- 11:30 a.m. IV. 2024 GFA Legislative Year in Review – INFORMATIONAL ITEM**
Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate, CSAC
- 11:45 a.m. V. 2025 GFA Legislative Advocacy Priorities – ACTION ITEM**
Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate, CSAC
- 12:00 p.m. VI. Adjourn**

Scan the QR code for digital copies of the agenda materials:



ATTACHMENTS

County Budgets: Past, Present, and Future

Attachment OneCSAC Memo: County Budgets: Past, Present, Future

GFA Policy Platform Review – ACTION ITEM

Attachment Two CSAC Memo: GFA Policy Platform Review

2024 GFA Legislative Year in Review – INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Attachment Three CSAC Memo: 2024 GFA Legislative Year in Review

2025 GFA Legislative Advocacy Priorities – ACTION ITEM

Attachment Four CSAC Memo: 2025 GFA Legislative Advocacy Priorities

Attachment One

CSAC Memo: County Budgets: Past, Present, and Future



October 31, 2024

OFFICERS

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Bruce Gibson
San Luis Obispo County

1st Vice President

Jeff Griffiths
Inyo County

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Past President

Chuck Washington
Riverside County



CEO

Graham Knaus

To: CSAC Government Finance and Administration (GFA) Policy Committee

From: Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Advocate
Stanicia Boatner, CSAC Legislative Analyst

Re: **County Budgets: Past, Present, and Future – INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

Summary: This agenda item is designed to foster a discussion about the current state of county budgets, recent dynamics influencing county finances, and prospects for the future. Before the panel begins, the committee will hear a brief presentation on trends in county finances. After the presentation, a panel of county administrative and operating officers will discuss their respective county budgets, speaking to their efforts to address budget challenges.

Speakers:

Dr. Sevet Johnson, County Executive Officer, Ventura County
Tracie Riggs, County Administrative Officer, Tuolumne County
Sonia M. De La Rosa, County Administrative Officer, Monterey County
Bobby Young, Financial Consultant for Local Agencies, HdL Companies

Background: County budgets have long faced significant challenges, due to the costs needed to deliver essential public services and the constraints in obtaining the revenue needed to pay for those services. To compound those challenges, counties are required to navigate state and federal funding for mandated services that can be slow, unreliable, and, often, non-existent.

Due to robust support from the federal government through COVID-era funding provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), counties have been able to make critical investments and postpone some of the fiscal pressures brought by rising costs and limited revenue sources. Now, with that support coming to an end and with the state facing a multi-year budget shortfall, county budgets are facing a challenging future.

This panel will address several pressing questions: How are county budgets doing now? How have counties used federal funds to make long-term investments in their communities that will help them withstand budget challenges? What are some of the effective, creative ways that counties are using to address budget constraints? What advocacy is needed to ensure that county budgets are not only solvent, but equipped to address future challenges?

We encourage those in attendance to participate in the discussion and to contribute their own experiences and questions.

Attachment Two

CSAC Memo: GFA Policy Platform Review – ACTION ITEM



October 31, 2024

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To: CSAC Government Finance and Administration (GFA) Policy Committee

From: Eric Lawyer, CSAC Legislative Advocate
Stanicia Boatner, CSAC Legislative Analyst

Re: GFA Policy Platform Proposed Changes – ACTION ITEM

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the GFA Policy Committee approve the recommended changes to the CSAC policy platform as drafted and forward to the CSAC Board of Directors.

Background: At the end of each two-year legislative session, CSAC undertakes a policy platform review process to capture changes in law from bill signings and to prepare for potential policy debate in the coming session.

Below, please find a brief overview of the key changes proposed in the attached documents:

Chapter 1 – General Provisions

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.

Chapter 5 – Government Operations

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.
- Section 4: Administration of Elections – Proposed addition of language regarding state payments for proportional cost of election administration.
- Section 5: Broadband – Proposed addition of new language opposing efforts by telecommunications providers to eliminate carrier of last resort responsibilities for plain old telephone service.
- Section 6: Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Proposed addition of a new section identifying guiding principles for the use of AI, as proposed by the AI Steering Committee and AI Working Group convened by CSAC.
- Section 7: The Ralph M. Brown Act - Mention of reduced transportation emissions among the benefits of remote meeting options under the Brown Act.
- Section 8: The California Public Records Act – Proposed addition of a new section regarding the California Public Records Act.

Chapter 8 – Public Employment Retirement

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.

Chapter 9 – Financing County Services

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.

Chapter 12 – State Mandates

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.
- Section 5: Proposed addition of language regarding the need for clarity and predictability of rules for reporting state-mandated costs.

Chapter 13 – Economic Development

- Updated minor grammatical issues, modified language for consistency, and made minor technical changes.



The California County Platform | Chapter 1

General Provisions

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

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PREAMBLE

The strength and creativity of America's government institutions reflects the ability of a free people to create, control, and use their freedom for the purpose of self-government. The bedrock foundation of that strength and creativity is responsible and responsive local government. It is to local government – and particularly to county government – that citizens turn for day-to-day government needs. It is to the county that citizens turn for equal protection under the laws guaranteed by the state and federal constitutions, and locally provided by the sheriff, courts, and jails. Citizens look to the county for the protection of health, the treatment of physical and mental illnesses and ~~chemical dependency~~ substance use disorders, and for help in times of financial crisis. Counties meet the needs of their diverse residents and employees, and promote equity in their communities, by designing programs and services in a way that satisfies current needs and takes into account historical factors to ensure fair administration. The county enhances economic well-being through its work in the fields of transportation, business regulation, planning, public safety, agricultural advice, libraries, and the protection and improvement of the built and natural environment.

Yet, decisions made by the California Legislature and electorate have restricted counties' ability to provide those services, and others, at the levels their communities desire. Beginning with its implementation of Proposition 13, the Legislature has entrusted counties, but not funded counties, to provide the most important services to Californians. Counties now face the twin pressures of increasing service demands and statutory requirements on the one hand, and the inability to raise necessary resources to meet those demands on the other.

Local control is the chief principle underlying the California County Platform (Platform). Based on that principle, the three major planks of the Platform are:

- 1) to allow county government the fiscal resources that enable it to meet its obligations;
- 2) to permit county government the flexibility to provide services and facilities in a manner that resolves the day-to-day problems communities face; and
- 3) to grant county government the ability to tailor the levels of local revenues and services to citizens' satisfaction.

This Platform is a statement of general principle and policy direction. It recognizes that when dealing in a fast-changing political arena in a state with many local differences, almost any policy guideline will occasionally require exceptions. Therefore, it is anticipated that both the CSAC Board of Directors and Executive Committee will support exceptions in appropriate situations upon finding that there exist compelling special conditions.

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The Platform is incomplete in that it is continually subject to review and revision. The Platform chapters are arranged in a manner that facilitates additions and amendments without affecting remaining portions.

SECTION 1: LOCAL CONTROL

Local control calls for the recognition of the differences that exist throughout the state and holds that local government should have the flexibility to develop systems by which services are provided and problems are resolved. It calls on counties to resist externally imposed systems that ignore the differences among them.

Not only does local control fortify counties' position that the state must recognize local differences, it also allows for individual counties to adopt alternatives that might not be acceptable to other counties – provided that these alternatives are not imposed on those who do not wish them.

Counties adopt the principle of local control as the policy cornerstone of CSAC.

CSAC will strive to ~~assure~~ensure that all legislative proposals, policies, and regulations recognize the differences that exist throughout the state. CSAC will strongly resist any externally imposed systems that ignore statewide differences or that erode local determination.

CSAC internally incorporates the principle of local control. In matters limited to county-wide or regional application, counties are free to determine their own solutions, except when the CSAC Board of Directors or the Executive Committee determines them to be of the gravest and most far-reaching proportions.

CSAC will firmly support any county or counties seeking to oppose the external imposition of systems upon them.

CSAC will firmly support any county or counties seeking to resolve local or regional issues through the enactment of legislation or otherwise, as long as the proposal is not contrary to the basic precepts of a strong and viable county government.

SECTION 2: INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

There are various issues and problems that transcend the boundaries of political subdivisions. In implementing the Platform, CSAC will endeavor to foster an understanding of the appropriate levels of governmental responsibility to promote efficient and effective governance for the citizens of the State of California. Within this context, it is essential that the roles of state, regional, and local agencies be recognized as distinct and separate. Areas of mutual

1 concern do exist; however, the appropriate role of each agency varies.

2

3 Counties comprehensively plan for future growth, the management of natural resources, and
4 the provision of public services; the state should only add requirements to this local planning in
5 areas the Legislature explicitly finds to be of statewide concern. One useful measure of
6 statewide significance is the Legislature's commitment of funds to local government for related
7 costs.

8

9 Counties will fully implement state-mandated, state-funded programs locally. However, doing
10 so is not financially or operationally feasible when state regulations are overly burdensome,
11 internally inconsistent, too inflexible to local concerns, or generally ~~under funded~~ underfunded.
12 Therefore, CSAC supports a process of periodic legislative review to determine each mandated
13 program's benefits, including the fiscal and operational feasibility of the program and related
14 regulations.

15

16 Counties, cities, and special districts should adopt formal policies that encourage locally
17 initiated solutions to regional problems.

18

19 CSAC will support reasonable proposals that encourage local agencies to resolve disputes
20 without costly litigation and in a way that buoys public confidence in local government, for
21 instance, through non-binding mediation.

22

23

24 **SECTION 3: EFFICIENCY, ECONOMY, AND EFFECTIVENESS**

25

26 Counties also advocate the principle of local control to improve efficiency, economy, and
27 effectiveness.

28

29 CSAC will consider proposals to realign responsibility for public services among levels of
30 government. However, any realigned program responsibility must be accompanied by revenue
31 authority sufficient to fund the ongoing costs of the program.

32

33 CSAC will support efforts to align program responsibility with revenue authority among various
34 levels of government.

35

36 Many local services are well-suited for the utilization of private contracts. When properly used,
37 private contracts can be an effective method of increasing efficiency and economy. CSAC
38 encourages expanded permission to use private contracts to provide local services in justifiable
39 areas as a means of achieving efficiency and economy.



The California County Platform | Chapter 5 Government Operations

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

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INTRODUCTION

Local control is the primary policy cornerstone of CSAC. Counties should determine the scope and extent of the government services ~~that~~ they will render in response to the needs and desires of the local community. While counties do act as agents of the state and federal government in performing services in some policy areas – and do so with substantial state or federal financing – these activities should be distinguished from areas of local interest when determining the basis for applying statewide standards and supervision.

SECTION 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Scope of Services

Counties should have full discretion over the scope and extent of government services offered. Each county should further examine its ability to support such services, always subject to the requirement to provide mandated services as state agents.

Uniformity in Services

When performing mandated duties, the degree of uniformity required should be carefully determined, with emphasis on the purpose of each requirement ~~with and~~ the goal of uniformity to serve a specific beneficial purpose. This will enable progress through the application of a variety of administrative approaches and methods.

Freedom to Devise Program Operating Policies

Counties should be free to devise their own operating policies for all government programs not financed wholly or substantially by federal or state funds.

Whole Responsibility with Board of Supervisors

To be directly responsible to the people, general control of county government should be placed wholly with the board of supervisors.

Non-Partisan Nature of County Government

The office of county supervisor should continue to be nonpartisan, enabling the people to vote on the basis of local issues and to enable supervisors to solve local problems without binding allegiances to political parties.

1 **SECTION 2: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION**

2
3 Different government organizational structures exist throughout the state; legal constraints and
4 time-consuming restrictions have severely limited the use of the charter as a method of obtaining
5 local control. The State Constitution and statutes should be revised to provide authorization for
6 counties to independently organize by local control.

7
8 The principle of local control also applies to the issue of elected "ministerial" officials. The
9 board of supervisors should have authority to submit proposals for appointment of elected
10 officials to the voters. Also, counties should be allowed to submit to their electorate the
11 questions of whether elected non-legislative officials, except District Attorney, should be
12 appointed by the board of supervisors.

13
14 Counties should be allowed maximum flexibility to structure their organization through the
15 process of "local option control."
16

17
18 **SECTION 3: LIBRARY SERVICES**

19
20 The continued vitality of our free and democratic society and the effective operation of
21 government at all levels is dependent on an informed and knowledgeable citizenry. Libraries
22 continue to expand their role beyond repositories of written knowledge to now include STEM
23 education, activity areas, meeting rooms, computer access, non-book rentals, services for job-
24 seekers, and more often serve as a resource for the homeless community, among other
25 services. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all levels of government, including county
26 government, to ensure that all people have access to sources of knowledge and information
27 that affect their personal and professional lives and society as a whole.
28

29 The public library is a supplement to the formal system of free public education and a source of
30 information and inspiration to persons of all ages, as well as a resource for continuing
31 education. As such, public libraries deserve adequate financial support from all levels of
32 government.
33

34 Counties are among the traditional providers of library and information services to the people.
35 Counties form a natural region for the provision of this service. Citizens expect free library
36 services that are responsive to local needs.
37

38 Intergovernmental Relationships

39 The state is urged to recognize public libraries as part of the system of public education and
40 should continue providing financial assistance to support their operation. The state should also
41 continue and strengthen funding for the interjurisdictional library cooperatives established
42 under the California Library Services Act, Education Code Sections 18700 through 18766.
43

44 Privacy and Censorship

1 Recognizing the right of an individual to privacy, circulation records and other records
2 identifying the names of library users with specific materials, including Internet usage, are to be
3 confidential in nature.

6 **SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS**

8 Counties support efficient and accessible voting for all. As a democratic republic, the people
9 and their representatives control government and the people’s will is expressed through voting.
10 Election policies and administration should strike a balance between uniformity and flexibility,
11 but should aim to further the nation’s democratic and republican nature by allowing and
12 encouraging voting by a broad range of citizens, so that the government’s decisions express the
13 will of the people as fully as possible.

15 Reimbursement for Special and Vacancy Election Costs

16 Counties support efforts to reinstate language directing the state to provide reimbursement to
17 counties that hold a special election to fill a legislative or Congressional vacancy and other
18 special elections. Until such reimbursement is provided, counties support efforts to reduce
19 special election administrative costs borne by counties.

21 All Mail Ballot Elections

22 Given the increasing popularity of voting by mail, the rising costs of administering elections due
23 to state and federal regulations, and the positive effect it would have on voter participation,
24 counties support proposals that would give Boards of Supervisors the option of holding any
25 election by mail in lieu of in-person voting.

27 State Payments for Ballot Real Estate

28 While cities and special districts reimburse counties for the proportionate cost of administering
29 elections on their behalf, the state traditionally does not. Counties support efforts to seek more
30 upfront funding from the state for administration of elections, particularly for those direct costs
31 imposed by the state.

34 **SECTION 5: BROADBAND**

36 In 2021, Governor Newsom signed a measure that created a structure and framework for a
37 statewide, state-owned, open-access middle-mile broadband network. Counties believe this
38 network is critical to finally closing the digital divide, are committed to its successful
39 implementation, and will oppose efforts to divert its funding or reduce its scope.

41 Counties support the expansion of broadband (high-speed internet service) to all parts of the
42 state to drive economic development and job opportunities, support county service delivery,
43 and improve health, education, and public safety outcomes for community members. This

1 should include funding for technologies that can address underserved areas where fiber is not
2 financially or practically viable.

3
4 Broadband must be capable of supporting current technology standards and speeds in order for
5 counties to realize these benefits. This may require infrastructure solutions specific to a given
6 county or region. Counties support efficiencies that offer local jurisdictions the opportunity for
7 simultaneously running fiber when private entities are undergrounding powerlines.

8 Access and adoption are both necessary elements that should be supported in state and federal
9 legislative and regulatory proposals. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 10 • Establishing and maintaining reliable broadband in unserved or underserved
11 communities;
- 12 • Promoting the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that comprise digital literacy;
- 13 • Making broadband affordable for all households;
- 14 • Maximizing funding for infrastructure; and
- 15 • Reducing infrastructure deployment barriers.

16 Counties oppose efforts by telecommunications service providers to relieve themselves of
17 obligations to serve as a carrier of last resort (COLR) for “plain old telephone service,” (POTS)
18 landline phone services. While counties believe that closing the digital divide is essential to
19 ensuring all communities can thrive, removal of COLR obligations would reduce the availability
20 of essential communication services and the ability for residents and community leaders to
21 respond to emergencies, particularly when there is an electrical power outage.

22 23 24 **SECTION 6: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

25
26 Counties are committed to using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology responsibly, transparently,
27 and ethically to improve processes, enhance services to residents, and support employees to do
28 their best work. To preserve the county priority of local control, the state should support the
29 ability of counties to independently determine the scope and extent of AI integration within
30 county government services. The state should not infringe on county operational policies and
31 practices, inclusive of employment practices.

32
33 Counties expect the state to commit to transparent decision-making processes regarding AI
34 state legislation and regulations; formally soliciting county input and involvement. If the state
35 requires the use of a particular AI technology or platform over another, then the state must be
36 responsible for evaluating, maintaining, and keeping it current, using state resources. If the
37 state makes a regulation, it is the state’s responsibility to ensure the vendor is upholding
38 standards and compliance. Counties support the state auditing or monitoring the AI industry
39 and technologies for compliance with state law.

40
41 ~~Counties encourage the state to publish guidance on AI technology best practices – aligning with~~
42 ~~federal laws as much as possible. This guidance should not supersede local control in how~~
43 ~~counties decide to use AI technology. The State’s guidance should include, but not be limited to~~

1 the need for algorithmic systems to have a high accuracy rate and include details for a
2 competitive procurement process. That guidance should include questions to ask vendors to
3 demonstrate how they have attempted to remove bias from their products.

4
5 Election security is paramount, and as those charged with administering elections, counties are
6 supportive of efforts to protect the integrity of elections, thereby preventing and/or identifying
7 deepfakes and misinformation. For all other policy issues or programs that may be affected by
8 artificial intelligence, CSAC supports evaluating the impact of artificial intelligence and the
9 appropriate response through the lens of the values described in this section.

10
11 Counties encourage AI-related legislation to follow existing state law on copyright,
12 cybersecurity, privacy, and public record laws. Legislation should not be introduced that
13 exempts AI from existing copyright, cybersecurity, privacy, and public record laws. Any proposed
14 state law related to AI technology or platforms must comply with existing data requirements
15 and applicable laws, including but not limited to the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA),
16 Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
17 (HIPAA), California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA), California Public Records
18 Act (CPRA). Counties recognize public trust in AI technologies is still developing and control over
19 the use of disclosure statements should be maintained at the county level.

21 **SECTION 67: THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT**

22
23 The Ralph M. Brown Act (the Brown Act) is intended to facilitate public participation in local
24 government decisions and imposes an “open meeting” requirement on local legislative bodies.
25 Among its many provisions, the Brown Act ensures that public decisions are deliberated on and
26 made in public, at noticed meetings, in which the public can participate. Counties are
27 committed to ensuring the public’s right to access public meetings and scrutinize the decisions
28 of public officials.

29
30 Recognizing the clear benefits of open meetings, CSAC supports efforts that maximize local
31 control and flexibility while maintaining transparency and accountability under the following
32 framework.

- 33 • The people must retain “the right of access to information concerning the conduct of
34 the people’s business, and, therefore, the meetings of public bodies and the writings of
35 public officials and agencies shall be open to public scrutiny,” as granted by the state
36 constitution.
- 37 • State law should allow counties to design local rules regarding the safe and efficient use
38 of remote meeting options by elected and appointed officials and members of the
39 public in order to promote greater participation, reduce travel barriers, reduce
40 transportation emissions, and increase equity and inclusion. Remote participation might
41 require different rules or limitations than in-person participation.
- 42 • Local legislative bodies should be able under the law to effectively manage meetings so
43 that they can constructively accomplish the people’s business while meeting the intent
44 of the state’s open meeting laws.

- Public meetings should be safe, accessible, and welcoming environments where community members can peaceably assemble and attend the people’s business without being threatened, harassed, or subjected to unacceptably disruptive behavior.
- The requirements of the Brown Act for local open meetings should not be more stringent than the requirements of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act for the state’s open meetings.

Section 8: The California Public Records Act

The California Public Records is part of the bedrock of transparency laws enshrining the public’s rights to hold their governments accountable. Counties believe the act is a vital component of maintaining trust in government institutions. Counties also believe in the importance of advancing policies that strike a more appropriate balance between the public’s right to access records and the needs of local governments to preserve local resources for all members of the communities they serve. Changes to the public records act over the past decade have expanded the public’s access to records while diminishing tools available to local governments to respond to the fiscal pressures brought by public records requests.

To that end, counties support public records act reform that:

- Allows counties to recover more of the costs of responding to requests that are expensive and consume significant resources;
- Consider the unique needs of journalists, academics, non-profits, and intergovernmental interests in accessing records, particularly in comparison to commercial or legal interests;
- Appropriately balance the public’s right to access information and the needs of the government in providing services for all residents in their communities; and
- Help agencies avoid public records act lawsuits.



The California County Platform | Chapter 8 Public Employment and Retirement

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

5

6 SECTION 1: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

7
8 Counties are committed to an employment system that provides public employees with
9 protection against arbitrary and capricious loss of jobs, unfair hiring practices, and preferential
10 promotions or job assignments that are not ~~merit-based~~ merit-based. Counties believe in, and
11 support, merit systems that promote equity and equality among its employees and applicants.
12 For this purpose, they have provided personnel services, grievance procedures, health and
13 safety protection, retirement, and pension plans. Foremost, however, counties have a
14 fundamental obligation to all citizens to exercise the peoples' sovereign power in determining
15 what government will do, at what cost to the taxpayer, and under what circumstances. Thus,
16 the basic principle of county employer-employee relations is one of balancing the legitimate
17 desires and needs of employees against the ~~public's~~ public's right to economical, efficient,
18 effective, and stable government.

19 20 Collective Bargaining

21 CSAC supports collective bargaining legislation that:

- 22
23 1) Recognizes the right of each employee to join or not join organizations and bargain
24 collectively or individually.
- 25
26 2) Recognizes the responsibility of local elected officials to govern and manage the
27 organization and to implement public policy.
- 28
29 3) Minimizes the potential for disputes arising purely from procedural matters.
- 30
31 4) Provides an acceptable method of resolving impasse resulting from negotiations. CSAC
32 opposes compulsory, binding arbitration.

33 34 Political Activity by Employees

35 Employees whose job security is protected by civil service or merit systems or by agreement
36 between the county and an employee organization cannot be permitted to engage in any
37 political activity during times when they are paid to ~~be performing~~ perform the duties of their
38 employment.

39 40 Nepotism Restriction

41 CSAC supports nepotism restriction policies that are consistent with applicable state statutes.
42 Specifically, CSAC supports policies that prohibit employment of immediate family members
43 by county officers, or participation of county officers or employees in employment decisions

1 affecting immediate family members. No person should be employed in a position where that
2 position will be directly supervised by a member of the immediate family, or where it is
3 reasonable to believe, and it can be shown, that employment of immediate family members in
4 the same department, division, or facility involves potential conflicts of interest.

5
6 Employee Benefits Legislation

7 Counties strive to develop employee benefit plans that are affordable, responsive to the needs
8 and desires of county employees, and reflect the values of the community. CSAC is opposed to
9 the state legislating salary, wages, or employee benefits for county employees. These issues
10 must be determined only at the local bargaining table; otherwise, the foundation of the
11 collective bargaining process is undermined.

12
13 Workers' Compensation

14 CSAC supports preserving the original intent of the Workers' Compensation Act and legislation
15 that would prevent or correct abuses within the system. We believe that timely and
16 unprejudiced benefits should be provided to employees who suffer from work-related injuries
17 or illnesses at a reasonable cost to county employers. CSAC opposes state policy ~~which that~~
18 would erode the original intent of the Workers' Compensation Act or result in excessive costs
19 and increased litigation to county employers.

20
21 CSAC supports workers' compensation legislation that:

- 22
- 23 1) Provides reasonable measures to assist employees in returning to suitable employment.
 - 24
 - 25 2) Promotes medical care treatment guidelines that are based on evidentiary medicine
26 and designed to cure or relieve the effects of employment-related injury or illness.
 - 27
 - 28 3) Supports the concept of apportionment for disability that is the result of other
29 industrial or non-industrial injuries or conditions.
 - 30
 - 31 4) Maintains objectivity in evaluating permanent disability standards.
 - 32
 - 33 5) Promotes the concept that tax exemptions on temporary disability should extend only
34 to the statutory maximum, ~~as outlined in Labor Code 4453.~~
 - 35
 - 36 6) Ensures that the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board remains a forum for efficient
37 resolution of claim issues.
 - 38

39 CSAC Opposes:

- 40
- 41 1) Extending workers' compensation benefits to any person other than the employee, as
42 defined by law, except in the case of dependent death benefits.
 - 43
 - 44

1 2) Expanding injury presumptions without data-driven evidence that the existing system is
2 unjust.

3
4 3) Changing the system in ways that could increase fraud, abuse, or unqualified claims.
5

6 Coordination of Governmental Employers

7 Counties, cities, and local governmental management are strongly encouraged to freely and
8 timely exchange information on employee demands over wages and employee benefits as
9 well as settlements reached. In this manner, each employer can deal more effectively with its
10 own "meet and confer" process.

11
12 While multi-employer bargaining may not currently occur, there are many real benefits
13 available if governmental units kept adjoining and comparable agencies promptly informed of
14 employer positions on salaries, employee demands, and employee benefits. Governmental
15 entities are regularly used ~~for comparison of~~ to compare employee benefits, sometimes at an
16 "anticipated" rather than actual level.

17 18 Closed Sessions for Negotiation Discussions

19 Successful negotiations depend upon meaningful discussions at the bargaining table. Under no
20 circumstances should closed sessions of the Board of Supervisors and its designated
21 management representatives be required to be opened to the public.

22 23 Federal Labor Relations Legislation

24 CSAC opposes the intrusion of the federal government into the field of state and local public
25 labor relations legislation. States and counties should be innovative with new legislative
26 approaches and ~~to~~ adopt procedures tailored to meet the needs of their constituents.

27
28 However, should federal labor relations legislation become inevitable, counties should
29 encourage ~~adoption of legislation which~~ the adoption of legislation that parallels their
30 positions on state legislation.

31 32 33 **SECTION 2: PUBLIC RETIREMENT**

34
35 Public retirement systems should be established and maintained on actuarially sound
36 principles and be fiscally responsible. Public pension reform has garnered widespread
37 interest and has generated significant debate among policy leaders about the appropriate
38 remedy for actual and perceived abuse, rising costs, and accountability to taxpayers. CSAC
39 welcomes this discussion and approaches the concept of reform with the overarching goal
40 of maintaining public trust in public pension systems, and empowering local elected
41 officials to exercise sound fiduciary management of pensions systems, as well as
42 maintaining a retirement benefit sufficient to assure recruitment and retention of a
43 competent local government workforce. The guiding principles are intended to apply to
44 new public employees in both the California Public Employees' Retirement System

1 (CalPERS) and County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (1937 Act) retirement systems.
2

3 Local elected officials should be able to develop pension systems that meet the needs of their
4 workforce, maintain principles of sound fiduciary management, and preserve their ability to
5 recruit and retain quality employees for key positions that frequently pay less than
6 comparable positions in the private sector. We oppose efforts to remove the authority of
7 boards of supervisors to determine retirement benefits since they are responsible for funding
8 benefit changes. For the 1937 Act county retirement systems, we are opposed to any
9 legislation that would transfer authority now vested with the county board of supervisors to
10 the county board of retirement. Such proposed transfers could include, but are not limited to,
11 the adoption of salaries for retirement board members or employees, the extension of
12 benefits, or decisions related to funding of the system.
13

14 ~~Public pension systems provide an important public benefit by assisting public agencies in the~~
15 ~~recruitment and retention of quality employees. Any fraud or abuse must be eliminated to~~
16 ~~ensure the public trust and to preserve the overall public value of these systems.~~
17

18 Public pension systems boards have a constitutional duty to:

- 19
- 20 1) Protect the administration of the system to ensure benefits are available to members;
21 and,
22
- 23 2) Minimize employer costs.
24

25 The constitutional provisions and state statutes governing such boards should promote
26 responsible financial management ~~and~~, discourage conflicts of interest, and eliminate fraud or
27 abuse to ensure public trust and to preserve the overall public value of these systems.
28

29 Public pensions should adhere to the following principles:

- 30
- 31 1) Protect Local Control and Flexibility
32 a. Local elected officials should be able to develop pension systems that meet the
33 needs of their workforce, maintain principles of sound fiduciary management,
34 and preserve their ability to recruit and retain quality employees for key
35 positions that frequently pay less than comparable positions in the private
36 sector. A statewide mandated retirement system is neither appropriate nor
37 practical, given the diversity and varying needs of California's communities.
38 Further, a mandated defined contribution retirement system could force a
39 reconsideration of the decision of local governments not to participate in Social
40 Security.
41
- 42 2) Eliminate Abuse
43 a. ~~Public pension systems provide an important public benefit by assisting public~~
44 ~~agencies in the recruitment and retention of quality employees. Any fraud or~~

1 abuse must be eliminated to maintain the public trust and to preserve the
2 overall public value of these systems.

3
4
5 3) Reduce and Contain Cost

- 6 a. Public pension reform should provide for cost relief for government, public
7 employees, and taxpayers.

8
9 4) Increase Predictability of Costs and Benefits for Employee and Employer

- 10 a. Responsible financial planning requires predictability. Employers must be able
11 to predict, and therefore budget for, their financial obligations in future years.
12 Employees should have the security of an appropriate and predictable level of
13 income for their retirement after a career in public service.

14
15 5) Strengthen Local Control to Develop Plans with Equitable Sharing of Costs and Risks
16 Between Employee and Employer

- 17 a. Equitable sharing of pension costs and risks promotes shared responsibility for
18 the financial health of pension systems and reduces the incentive for either
19 employees or employers to advocate changes that result in disproportionate
20 costs to the other party, while diminishing the exclusive impact on employers
21 for costs resulting from increases in unfunded liability.

22
23 6) Increase Pension System Accountability

- 24 a. Public pension systems boards have a constitutional duty to both protect
25 administration of the system to ensure benefits are available to members and
26 minimize employer costs. The constitutional provisions and state statutes
27 governing such boards should promote responsible financial management and
28 discourage conflicts of interest.

29
30
31 **SECTION 3: INDUSTRIAL DISABILITY RETIREMENT (IDR)**

32
33 CSAC has traditionally supported the principle of provision of IDR to safety employees who are
34 unable to continue their safety employment due to a bona fide job-connected disabling injury
35 or illness. CSAC has also traditionally recognized that IDR can be extremely expensive, and that
36 responsible reforms may be warranted to limit the cost to legitimate claims.

37
38
39 **SECTION 4: OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS**

40
41 The occupational safety and health standards and practices for counties should comply with
42 California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) regulations. ~~Cal/OSHA.~~

43
44 Safety Member Classification

1 The safety member classification is intended to provide a retirement system for the class or
2 classes of public employees whose duties consist of physically active functions in the
3 protection and safety of the public. The purpose of such classification is to ensure that persons
4 so employed will be agile and active and possess a high degree of physical alertness and
5 stamina, and it is designed to provide an opportunity for career employment and, at the same
6 time, provide for and ensure separation from such service without financial hardship at a
7 normal retirement age that is a younger age than other employees. The term "safety," as used
8 in the retirement law, refers to the safety of the public. Personal risk or the hazardous nature
9 of job functions are not elements of the classification and shall have no bearing in determining
10 the establishment of or eligibility for safety membership.

11 12 Coordination of Personnel Functions with Central Administration

13 CSAC recognizes the successes and failures of local government rest heavily on the quality of
14 its personnel, and, therefore, supports the close organizational ties between the central
15 administration and the personnel function. Counties are encouraged to establish and maintain
16 effective partnerships between the central administration and the personnel functions and to
17 link activities related to those functions.

18 19 Equal Employment Opportunity

20 The California State Association of Counties is committed to the concept of equal employment
21 opportunity (EEO) in public service as a basic merit system principle. Acceptance of this
22 principle does not end with mere prohibition of discriminatory practices. We recognize the
23 obligation of counties to develop practical plans for specific steps to be taken to achieve more
24 fully the goal of equal employment opportunity in county government. This includes positive
25 efforts in recruitment, examination, selection, promotion, pay, job restructuring, and due
26 process protection so that appropriate numbers of protected group members achieve
27 positions in county government and are provided training and promotional opportunities at all
28 job classification levels.

29 30 Testing, Selection, and Promotion

31 Counties believe initial selection and promotional assessments used should eliminate artificial
32 barriers, be job-related, and help ensure future job success. Special consideration should be
33 given to facilitate the transfer and promotion of qualified employees and the full utilization of
34 human resources particularly in protected classes.

35 36 Licensing and Certification

37 Counties urge a review of all requirements for licenses or certificates for county employment
38 to ensure they are reasonably and realistically related to job performance. Counties should
39 strive to prevent requirements within licenses or certificates when those requirements create
40 artificial barriers to employment and/or upward mobility.

41 42 State Duplication of Federal Law and Reporting Requirements

43 CSAC is opposed to the adoption of state laws ~~which that~~ duplicate, are inconsistent, or
44 conflict with federal law or regulations.

1
2 Counties are greatly concerned with the multitude of varying EEO reporting requirements
3 coming from the state and federal government. The time required to gather and report EEO
4 data from the many different state and federal agencies, each requiring its own data, greatly
5 reduces the time available to accomplish the objective of EEO. Counties urge state and federal
6 government reporting requirements that are reasonably and realistically related to necessary
7 monitoring and evaluation activities.

8
9 CSAC supports the consolidation and integration of federal agencies with responsibilities for
10 the monitoring, auditing, or regulating of local affirmative action plans and activities. The
11 federal government should initiate efforts to increase standardization and uniformity of their
12 practices in these areas.

13
14

15 **SECTION 5: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

16
17 CSAC recognizes and endorses the principles of prime sponsorship and accountability of
18 county officials in the planning, administration, and supervision of comprehensive local
19 systems of workforce development, training, and employment--with minimal federal
20 regulation.

21



The California County Platform | Chapter 9

Financing County Services

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

4

5

6 INTRODUCTION

7

8 California counties are the unit of government best suited to deliver public assistance, public
9 protection, and some public works services, but counties have limited ability to adequately
10 finance these responsibilities. In order to meet each community's unique needs, counties must
11 be given greater financial independence from the state and federal budget processes, including
12 the authority to collect revenues at a level sufficient to provide the degree of local services the
13 community desires. Counties will seek a level of financial independence that provides for the
14 conduct of governmental programs and services, especially discretionary programs and
15 services, at an adequate level.

16

17

18 SECTION 1: STATE POLICY OBJECTIVES

19

20 Program Realignment

21 Reforms of county finances need to involve agreement between the state and the counties on a
22 realignment of responsibilities to provide social services, income maintenance, health care,
23 justice services, or any other service that the county is best suited to provide. Counties must be
24 given realistic and adequate revenue sources to pay for ongoing program and service
25 responsibilities. The CSAC Realignment Principles appear in the Realignment chapter within this
26 Platform.

27

28 Financial Independence

29 Counties have neither the financial resources to both operate state programs and also meet
30 local needs, nor the ability to predict service levels beyond each legislative session. Therefore,
31 counties advocate for aligning revenue authority with service responsibility, and also support
32 other measures that grant counties financial independence.

33

34 1) Protection of Local Government Revenues: Counties strongly support the provisions of
35 Proposition 1A (2004), which provides constitutional protection of local governments'
36 property tax, sales tax, and Vehicle License Fee revenues. It also requires the Legislature
37 to fully fund or else suspend reimbursable local mandates.

38

39 2) Mandate ~~funding~~ Funding: Counties continue to advocate for guaranteed state
40 appropriations of sufficient funds prior to requiring counties to provide new or
41 increased services. (Also see Chapter XII: STATE MANDATE LEGISLATION.) Counties also
42 seek a guarantee that programs and services that are funded wholly or partially by the
43 state will annually

1
2 receive full adjustments for the increased cost of providing them, including inflation and
3 population changes.
4

5 3) State Borrowing of Property Tax Revenues: Counties will firmly oppose any attempt by
6 the state to borrow property tax revenue from counties under the provisions of
7 Proposition 1A. Such borrowing would cause counties increased costs in several areas,
8 including the cost of borrowing and lost investment income. Furthermore, borrowing to
9 cover ongoing state costs is fiscally unwise, and would put negative pressure on state
10 funding of county-provided services in the out-years.
11

12 4) Local Authority: Counties should be granted enhanced local revenue-generating
13 authority to respond to unique circumstances in each county to provide needed
14 infrastructure and county services. Any ~~revenue raising~~ revenue-raising actions that
15 require approval by the electorate should require a simple majority vote.
16

17 5) Furthermore, counties should have the ability to adjust all fees, assessments, and
18 charges to cover the full costs of the services they support.
19

20 6) State Payments: Counties seek a guarantee that the state will pay reimbursements and
21 subventions promptly, with ~~the payment of interest~~ interest paid to counties when it
22 fails to do so.
23

24 Existing Revenue Sources

25 1) Property Tax Revenue: Counties oppose erosion of the property tax base through
26 unreimbursed exemptions to property taxes. The state should recognize that property
27 tax revenues are a significant source of county discretionary funds. Any subventions to
28 counties ~~that are based upon~~ based on property tax losses through state action should
29 be adjusted for inflation annually.
30

31 2) Property Tax Administration: Counties incur significant costs in administering the
32 property tax system and in maintaining financial records for other government entities
33 and jurisdictions, and should receive full reimbursement from all recipients –
34 proportional to their benefit – for actual administrative costs upon distribution of
35 property tax proceeds.
36

37 3) 1991 Realignment: In 1991, the state and counties entered into a new fiscal relationship
38 known as realignment. Realignment affects health, mental health, and social services
39 programs and their funding. The state transferred control of certain programs to
40 counties, altered program cost-sharing ratios, and provided counties with dedicated tax
41 revenues from the sales tax and vehicle license fee to pay for these changes. Counties
42 support the full continuation of all dedicated realignment revenues. Counties also urge
43 the state to pay counties for the full, current, actual costs of administering programs on
44 its behalf, which is currently frozen at 2001 levels.

- 1
2 4) Incorporation, Annexation, and Dissolution: Counties support the provisions of revenue
3 neutrality and encourage enhancements and improvements to new city incorporation
4 law. Property tax transfers resulting from municipal incorporations, annexations, or
5 dissolutions should be generally negotiated.
6

7 Sales Tax Distribution and Exemptions

- 8 1) Distributions: Any distribution formula for new sales tax revenue growth should not be
9 limited to a situs-only distribution. Other options for distribution of new sales tax
10 revenue growth should be fully explored.
11
12 2) Sales Tax Exemption: Counties oppose unreimbursed sales tax exemptions enacted by
13 the state, including exemptions of the local portion and state portions dedicated to
14 counties for ~~county-administered~~ county-administered services
15

16 Efficient Government

17 The state should facilitate the efficient use of taxpayers' dollars by:

- 18
19 1) Streamlining or eliminating unnecessary planning, reporting, and administrative
20 requirements in state-county partnership programs.
21
22 2) Reducing or eliminating regulations designed to control the implementation of state-
23 mandated programs and services.
24
25 3) Granting counties greater flexibility to manage county programs ~~in a more efficient and~~
26 ~~effective manner and tailored~~ more efficiently and effectively and tailor them to a
27 community's individual needs.
28
29 4) Allowing counties to use the least costly methods of providing services while meeting
30 operational needs.
31

32 Equal Treatment

33 The allocation of new financial resources or needed reductions should treat all counties equally,
34 based on service needs.
35

36 Counties should engage in ongoing efforts to discuss and negotiate equitable resolutions of
37 conflicts between counties and other units of local government.
38

39 ~~Aligning Revenue Authority with Service Responsibility~~

40 The passage of Proposition 13 and implementing legislative and judicial decisions, along with
41 myriad other actions since, have eliminated most connections between the payment of taxes
42 and the benefits received by the individual or business taxpayer. Counties support aligning
43 revenue authority with the level of government responsible for providing services.
44

1
2
3 Master Settlement Agreement

4 Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state, California counties
5 receive forty percent of proceeds from the Master Settlement Agreement between the tobacco
6 industry and a number of states. The MOU specifies that these funds are discretionary.
7 Counties oppose any effort to diminish their share of the tobacco settlement or to impose
8 restrictions on its expenditure. Additionally, counties oppose any effort to lower or eliminate
9 the state’s support for programs with the expectation that counties will backfill the loss with
10 tobacco settlement revenue.

11
12
13 **SECTION 2: FEDERAL POLICY OBJECTIVES**

14
15 Adequate compensation must be made available to local governments to offset the costs of
16 providing services as ~~required by federal law~~ federal law requires. Additionally, any revenue
17 sharing or payment ~~in lieu~~ in lieu of taxes should be equitable, predictable, and sustainable.

18
19 Basic Service Levels

20 The federal government should finance a basic level of health, social service, and income
21 maintenance services, including resultant county administrative costs. It must provide flexibility
22 to adjust to local needs and circumstances and ensure long-term program planning and ~~and it~~
23 ~~must provide for long-term program planning and program stability.~~

24
25 Adequately Finance Specific Program Objectives

26 Federal efforts to address certain domestic needs as partners with counties must adequately
27 provide for county administrative costs, provide flexibility to adjust to local needs and
28 circumstances, provide for long-term program planning, and provide for program stability.

29
30 Shared Revenues

31 The federal government should continue to share the benefits of its greater and more equitable
32 taxing ability with state and local government in a non-restrictive manner. When possible, the
33 shared revenues should be provided in the form of block grants.

34
35 Encourage Public Investment

36 The maintenance and development of state and local infrastructure must be facilitated with
37 federal tax exemptions for state and municipal debt and by special taxing and expenditure
38 programs to meet priority needs.

39
40 Payments in Lieu of Taxes

41 Payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) should be made in full whenever the federal government
42 removes or withholds otherwise productive property from the property tax rolls. PILT payments
43 should receive the full cost of living adjustments annually.

1
2

3 Taxation Of Remote Sales

4 The federal government should endeavor to approve a nationwide system for sales taxation
5 that ensures fairness between remote (online) and brick-and-mortar retailers.

6
7

8 Telecommunications

9 Counties endorse promoting competition among telecommunications providers and treating
10 like services alike. Any effort to reform the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996 must
11 maintain local management of the public rights-of-way, encourage investment in all
12 communities and neighborhoods, preserve support funding for public education and
13 governmental (PEG) channels and institutional networks (I-NET), and hold local governments
14 fiscally harmless for any loss of fees or other revenue that result from franchise agreements.
15



The California County Platform | Chapter 12

State Mandates

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

4

5 INTRODUCTION

6

7 The state is constitutionally required through Proposition 4 (1979) and Proposition 1A (2004) to
8 pay for new or higher levels of service it mandates counties and other local agencies to provide.
9 However, the issue of mandate reimbursement remains contentious, since mandates reside at
10 the intersection of local control and the reality that counties are providers of state services.

11

12

13 SECTION 1: MANDATE SUSPENSION

14

15 The ongoing suspension of established mandated programs or services is problematic. The state
16 should either fund a mandate annually or repeal it completely. Continually suspending
17 mandates merely burdens counties with either funding the service out of its own general funds
18 or absorbing the cost of repeatedly resetting service levels.

19

20

21 SECTION 2: NEED FOR MANDATES

22

23 Mandates are particularly burdensome for counties because of the severe restrictions on
24 raising county revenues to pay for new requirements. State mandates should only be imposed
25 when there is a compelling need for statewide uniformity.

26

27

28 SECTION 3: TIMING OF MANDATE PAYMENTS

29

30 All state mandates should be funded prior to delivery of the new or higher level of service. The
31 current policy of reimbursing established mandates following a Commission on State Mandates
32 determination constitutes a loan from counties to the state. The state should not require
33 counties to provide a service for which it is unwilling to ~~timely pay~~ pay timely. Bills mandating
34 new or increased levels of service should include a direct appropriation.

35

36

37 SECTION 4: MANDATE ALTERNATIVES

38

39 Local agencies and the state should endeavor to take advantage of Reasonable Reimbursement
40 Methodology and Legislatively Determined Mandates. These processes will provide budgetary
41 certainty to the state and counties, and help to decrease the extraordinary time and cost
42 involved with determining reimbursement levels through the traditional Commission on State
43 Mandates process.

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SECTION 5: MANDATE REFORMS

The current mandate determination ~~and~~ processes must be reformed. The reforms must make the determination process more efficient, in terms of both time and cost, and less biased against local agencies. State audits of local claims must be timely, consistent, reasonable, and predictable.

It should not take several years to determine whether the state has required a new or higher level of service. State Controller audits should not be able to cut reasonable claims by half or more based on technicalities or unreasonable records requirements. Rules for tracking and reporting state-mandated costs must be clear and consistent for counties to ensure they can receive the full amount of state mandated costs they are owed.

Constitutional amendments should not exempt additional categories of state mandates from cost reimbursement. Also, voter approval of requirements or programs similar to those already established as reimbursable mandates should not be cause for the state to cease reimbursements.



The California County Platform | Chapter 13

Economic Development

Adopted by the CSAC Board of Directors ~~March 2023~~

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INTRODUCTION

To maintain a vital economy in California, counties support an economic development process that retains, expands, and recruits businesses while reducing regulatory barriers to such businesses. For example, regulatory barriers may include permitting issues, fees and taxes on business in California, and streamlining government.

SECTION 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM RETENTION

Counties believe that existing state economic development programs should be retained within existing resources. Job creation is important to counties and should help guide policy on such issues as investment in infrastructure and the allocation of state resources.

Currently, counties continue to advocate for the following programs to be retained within existing resources as budgeted by the State of California:

- 1) Office of Military Base Retention and Reuse. This office provides ongoing assistance and support to communities with closed bases, as well as communities with active installations, in an effort to ensure the continued viability and retention of the remaining bases in California.
- 2) Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (iBank). iBank is authorized to issue tax-exempt and taxable revenue bonds, provide financing to public agencies, provide credit enhancements, acquire or lease facilities, and leverage ~~State-state~~ and ~~Federal~~ federal funds. iBank also provides low-cost financing to public agencies for a wide variety of infrastructure projects that help create jobs in California.
- 3) Marketing Programs. These programs include Team California, ~~which is~~ a network of economic development professionals actively involved in business attraction, retention, expansion, and job creation efforts throughout the state.
- 4) Small Business Development Centers (SBDC). The SBDC program links federal, state, educational, and private resources designed for small businesses. They provide one-stop access to free business counseling, planning, marketing and training programs.

- 1 5) Tourism. The California Office of Tourism supports efforts to attract tourist dollars to the
2 ~~Golden State~~state, and CSAC supports efforts to promote agricultural, historic, and
3 natural resources tourism throughout the state.
4
- 5 6) Film Industry. The California Film Commission works to retain film production in the
6 state, and CSAC supports partnerships and continued collaboration between the state
7 and the efforts of regional and county film commissions.
8
- 9 7) Manufacturing Retention and Expansion Programs. ~~Support~~CSAC supports tools to
10 create and expand manufacturing jobs and capacity throughout California.
11

13 SECTION 2: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

14
15 Counties recognize the importance of the Community Development Block Grant Program,
16 which provides funding to small communities for economic development. This program is
17 administered by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
18 Counties maintain that this program is very important to rural counties and provides significant
19 investment in the rural economy.
20

21 Within the economic development portion of the CDBG program, counties believe that there
22 should be less paperwork, more flexibility, more emphasis on economic development issues,
23 and an increase in the availability of technical assistance provided by HCD.
24

25 The state should provide more guidance and technical assistance to ~~those counties in need of~~
26 additional resources in order counties that need additional resources to apply for these funds.
27

28 Key priorities for reform in the CDBG Program include the following:
29

- 30 1) Model the state Economic Development CDBG program to the greatest extent possible
31 after the current federal entitlement community ~~in order to~~to streamline the program.
32
- 33 2) Renew ~~HCD~~HCD's focus on technical assistance, specifically ~~to those~~for jurisdictions
34 with limited resources. This could include assistance from the California Association for
35 Local Economic Development (CALED) and Economic Development Corporations located
36 throughout California.
37
- 38 3) Increase the focus on economic development, including the possibility of having an
39 economic development advocate within HCD.
40
- 41 4) Improve communication between HCD and rural counties. This would include providing
42 counties with new directives from the United States Department of Housing and Urban
43 Development (HUD), and alerting counties to best practices and funding provided by the

1 CDBG program. Counties also maintain that this should also include better guidance on
2 the re-monitoring and auditing of grant recipients.

- 3
4 5) Increase the flexibility in the CDBG program to enable smaller jurisdictions to limit the
5 amount of paperwork and ~~regulation~~ regulations that currently make this program
6 difficult to implement.

7
8
9 **SECTION 3: MILITARY BASE RETENTION AND REUSE**

10
11 Counties support funding for and the retention and sustainability of military installations and
12 their inextricably linked sea, air, and land operating areas in California. The Department of
13 Defense (DoD) generates billions for the economy in California, providing thousands of quality
14 jobs with real benefits and career advancement opportunities. Counties believe that California
15 is uniquely positioned to support military missions and operations and that the DoD provides a
16 substantial economic benefit to the state. Therefore, counties vow to continue efforts to
17 support, preserve, and enhance the military mission capabilities of areas throughout the state.
18 In the area of military base reuse, counties support programs and efforts to attract high quality
19 technological businesses that can maximize existing facilities to further the economic
20 development goals of local governments. Counties further affirm that flexibility at the local
21 level to help communities develop reuse areas in a timely manner is critical to the successful
22 reuse of former military installations.

Attachment Three

**CSAC Memo: 2024 GFA Legislative Year in Review –
INFORMATIONAL ITEM**



October 31, 2024

To: CSAC Government Finance and Administration (GFA) Policy Committee

From: Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate
Stanica Boatner, Legislative Analyst

Re: **2024 GFA Legislative Year in Review – INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

Included below is a summary of the bills for which the Government Finance and Administration team has taken positions throughout the 2023-24 legislative session.

A complete list of 2024 legislation that CSAC monitored and advocated for related to Government Finance and Administration is also available on the [CSAC website](#).

Brown Act

Chaptered

[AB 2715 \(Boerner\)](#) (Chapter 243, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Ralph M. Brown Act: closed sessions. This measure authorizes local agencies’ governing bodies to convene a closed session to consider matters related to cybersecurity. The Governor signed this measure on September 14.

California Public Records Act

Chaptered

[SB 1034 \(Seyarto\)](#) (Chapter 161, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

California Public Records Act: state of emergency. This measure amends the definition of “unusual circumstances” in the California Public Records Act (PRA) to include the need to respond to a PRA request during an emergency. The Governor signed this measure on July 18.

[AB 1785 \(Pacheco\)](#) (Chapter 551, Statutes of 2024)

California Public Records Act. This measure will disallow a state or local agency, without first obtaining written authorization, from publicly posting the name and assessor parcel number associated with the home address of any elected or appointed official on the internet.

Economic Development

Chaptered

[AB 2922 \(Garcia\)](#) (Chapter 581, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Economic development: capital investment incentive programs. This measure extends the authorization for capital investment incentive programs until January 1, 2035, and expands the program to include lower primary investment amounts if a project promoter fulfills extra job creation conditions. The Governor signed this measure on September 25.

Elections

Chaptered

[SB 1441 \(Allen\)](#) (Chapter 479, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Examination of petitions: time limitations and reimbursement of costs. This measure requires a proponent to conclude an examination of an election petition for insufficiency no later than 60 days

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from the date the examination commenced. Additionally, this measure also requires costs incurred by the county elections official past the fifth business day of the examination to be paid by the proponent. The Governor signed this measure on September 22.

Vetoed

[AB 884 \(Low\)](#) – Elections: language accessibility - OPPOSED UNLESS AMENDED

This measure would have required the Secretary of State and county elections officials to expand the language requirements for translated election materials, adjust the threshold for determining when language services must be provided to be triggered when at least 10,000 voting-age voters with limited English proficiency reside in a county, and provide additional translated election materials and language services. If enacted, this measure would have created a new state-mandated local program for counties. The Governor [vetoed](#) this measure on September 22.

Government Administration

Chaptered

[AB 1879 \(Gipson\)](#) (Chapter 217, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Electronic signatures. This measure will allow county assessors to accept electronic signatures for property tax filings. The Governor signed this measure on September 12.

[AB 2455 \(Gabriel\)](#) (Chapter 568, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Whistleblower protection: state and local government procedures. This measure will modernize the Whistleblower Protection Act by expanding whistleblower protection to reporting on government contractors and clarifies that whistleblowers may also report activity through email and text message. The Governor signed this measure on September 25.

[AB 2631 \(Fong, M\)](#) (Chapter 201, Statutes 2024) – CO-SPONSORED

Local agencies: ethics training. This measure codifies the Fair Political Practice Commission’s ethics training program in statute and ensures that local officials continue to have free and convenient access to a resource that educates these officials on ethics laws that impact their work and decision-making. The Governor signed this measure on August 26.

[AB 2813 \(Aguiar-Curry\)](#) (Chapter 155, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Government Investment Act. This measure makes a series of technical amendments to the statutory provisions of ACA 1, identified on the November 2024 ballot as Proposition 5, including specifying accountability requirements for ACA 1 bonded indebtedness, clarifying the role of the State Auditor in reviewing ACA 1 audits, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of citizens’ oversight committees on ACA 1 projects, and providing some restrictions on the uses of ACA 1 projects. Those restrictions clarified that ACA 1 funds cannot be used to acquire or lease real property with one to four dwelling units or to finance the reconstruction or rehabilitation of a sports arena. The Governor signed this measure on July 18.

[SB 1515](#), [SB 1516](#), and [SB 1517](#) (Committee on Revenue and Taxation) (Chapter 31, Statutes of 2024) – SUPPORTED

Validations. These measures will assist all public agencies by protecting investors from minor and technical errors that might otherwise threaten bonds, boundary changes, and other official acts and will ensure that local bonds attain the highest possible ratings, resulting in the lowest possible borrowing costs for constituents. The Governor signed these measures on June 26.

Labor Relations

Chaptered

[AB 2561 \(McKinnor\)](#) (Chapter 409, Statutes of 2024) - OPPOSED

Local public employees: vacant positions. This measure requires a public agency to present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts at a public hearing at least once per fiscal year, regardless of any vacancy rates agency-wide or in a specific bargaining unit. The measure requires public agencies to allow recognized employee organizations to present at the hearing. If the number of job vacancies within a single bargaining unit meets or exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions, the measure requires the public agency, upon request of the recognized employee organization, to include specified information during the public hearing. The Governor signed this measure on September 22.

[SB 399 \(Wahab\)](#) (Chapter 670, Statutes of 2024) - OPPOSED

Employer communications: intimidation. This measure prohibits an employer, private and public, from subjecting, or threatening to subject, an employee to any adverse action because the employee declines to attend an employer-sponsored meeting or affirmatively declines to participate in, receive, or listen to any communications with the employer, the purpose of which is to communicate the employer's opinion about religious or political matters. For public employers, this includes conversations about pending legislation, ballot measures, or proposed regulations. The Governor signed this measure on September 27.

Proposition 218

Chaptered

[AB 1827 \(Papan\)](#) (Chapter 359, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Local government: fees and charges: water: higher consumptive water parcels. This measure reinforces authority under the law to impose fees or charges for the incrementally higher water service costs due to higher water usage demand, maximum potential water use, and projected peak water usage of parcels. The Governor signed this measure on September 22.

[AB 2257 \(Wilson\)](#) (Chapter 561, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Local government: property-related water and sewer fees and assessments: remedies. This measure establishes an administrative procedure that must be exhausted by a ratepayer before they may sue an agency to contest a new or increased fee or assessment pursuant to Proposition 218. The Governor signed this measure on September 25.

[SB 1072 \(Padilla\)](#) (Chapter 323, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Local government: Proposition 218: remedies. This measure provides that, upon a determination that a water agency has violated Proposition 218, the agency must credit the amount they overcharged against future rate increases, rather than provide a direct refund, unless statute provides an explicit refund remedy. The Governor signed this measure on September 20.

Retirement

Chaptered

[AB 3025 \(Valencia\)](#) (Chapter 427, Statutes of 2024) - OPPOSED

County employees' retirement: disallowed compensation: benefit adjustments. This measure amends the County Employees' Retirement Law to require that public agencies hold both '37 Act systems and employees harmless if the employee and employer have made contributions for disallowed compensation. Similar to SB 278 (Chapter 331, Statutes of 2021), the bill requires public agencies to pay a 20% penalty for

the difference between the actuarial value of an employee's prior and future pension payments for any compensation found to be disallowed, among other changes. The Governor signed this measure on September 22.

Revenue and Taxation

Chaptered

[AB 3134 \(Chen\)](#) (Chapter 922, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Property taxation: refunds. This measure increases the maximum amount of a property tax refund that may be issued without the taxpayer filing a claim from \$5,000 to \$10,000, among other changes. The Governor signed this measure on September 29.

Vetoed

[AB 2061 \(Wilson\)](#) – Sales and Use Tax: exemptions: zero-emission public transportation ferries - SUPPORTED

This measure would have helped public agencies comply with Clean Harbor Craft regulations imposed by the California Air Resources Board. The measure would have established a new exemption for the purchase of zero-emission ferries by public transit agencies from the state portion of the sales and use tax from 2025 until 2030. The Governor [vetoed](#) this measure on September 27.

[AB 2564 \(Boerner\)](#) – Property tax postponement: Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Fund - SUPPORTED

This measure would have required automatic General Fund support for the Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Program by requiring an annual transfer of General Fund moneys when the balance of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Fund is less than \$15 million. The Governor [vetoed](#) this measure on September 14.

Veterans

Vetoed

[AB 2736 \(Carrillo, J\)](#) – Veterans: benefits - SUPPORTED

This measure would have improved access to higher education for family members of disabled veterans by allowing them to receive additional educational benefits while also receiving federal educational benefits or duplicate assistance from any other government source. The Governor [vetoed](#) this measure on September 28.

Worker's Compensation

Chaptered

[AB 2337 \(Dixon\)](#) (Chapter 392, Statutes of 2024) - SUPPORTED

Workers' compensation: electronic signatures. This measure authorizes the use of certain electronic signatures in workers' compensation proceedings on a permanent basis, a practice that was temporarily permitted by Governor Newsom's emergency order during the COVID-19 state of emergency. The Governor signed this measure on September 22.

FAILED PASSAGE:

[SB 251 \(Newman\) - Candidates' statements: false statements.](#) - SUPPORTED

[SB 955 \(Seyarto\) - Office of Planning and Research: Infrastructure Gap-Fund Program.](#) - SUPPORTED

[SB 964 \(Seyarto\) - Property tax: tax-defaulted property sales.](#) - OPPOSED

[SB 1116 \(Portantino\) - Unemployment insurance: trade disputes: eligibility for benefits.](#) - OPPOSED

[SB 1124 \(Menjivar\) - Deceptive practices: service members and veterans.](#) - SUPPORTED

[SB 1164 \(Newman\) - Property taxation: new construction exclusion: accessory dwelling units.](#) - OPPOSED

[SB 1205 \(Laird\) - Workers' compensation: medical benefits.](#) - OPPOSED

[SB 1261 \(Alvarado-Gil\) - Horse racing: state-designated fairs: allocation of revenues: gross receipts for sales and use tax.](#) - SUPPORTED

[SB 1346 \(Durazo\) - Workers' compensation: aggregate disability payments.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 817 \(Pacheco\) - Open meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body.](#) - CO-SPONSORED

[AB 2050 \(Pellerin\) - Voter registration database: Electronic Registration Information Center.](#) - SUPPORTED

[AB 2249 \(Pellerin\) - Elections: retention of election records.](#) - SUPPORTED

[AB 2289 \(Low\) - Vehicles: parking placards and special license plates for disabled veterans and persons with disabilities.](#) - SUPPORTED

[AB 2404 \(Lee\) - State and local public employees: labor relations: strikes.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2421 \(Low\) - Employer-employee relations: confidential communications.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2489 \(Ward\) - Local agencies: contracts for special services and temporary help.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2557 \(Ortega\) - Local agencies: contracts for special services and temporary help: performance reports.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2591 \(Quirk-Silva\) - Local government: youth commissions.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2751 \(Haney\) - Employer communications during nonworking hours.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 2797 \(McKinnor\) - Telephone corporations: carriers of last resort: tariffs.](#) - OPPOSED

[AB 3268 \(Low\) - Property taxation: low-value exemption: possessory interests in publicly owned streets and sidewalks.](#) - SUPPORTED

Recap of 2024 Ballot Initiatives:

In addition to advocating for important legislation, the GFA team also worked on three significant ballot measures:

- [Proposition 5 - “Local Government Financing” \(ACA 1 and ACA 10\)](#) - This proposition would reduce the voter approval threshold from two-thirds to 55% for general obligation bonds that fund public infrastructure, affordable housing projects, and permanent supportive housing for persons at risk of chronic homelessness—and any associated ad valorem taxes needed to pay the interest and redemption charges on bonded indebtedness. The CSAC Board of Directors voted in support of Proposition 5 in August 2024.
- [Assembly Constitutional Amendment \(ACA\) 13](#) - This constitutional amendment would require that any ballot initiative that seeks to raise a vote requirement be approved the same portion of votes the initiative would require. ACA 13 would also maintain that local governing bodies have the power to hold advisory votes on any issue of governance and specify that such advisory votes must be approved by a simple majority of electors. The CSAC Board of Directors voted to support ACA 13 in April 2024. Due to passage of AB 440 earlier this summer, pushed ACA 13 to the November 2026 statewide ballot for voter consideration.
- [Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act](#) - This initiative would have severely restricted the ability of local governments to raise revenue by increasing voter thresholds to approve nearly every tax increase to a super majority, required sunset dates for all tax ordinances, restricted local government’s ability to adjust user fees, and prohibited local advisory measures from being placed on the same ballot as tax increases. In 2022, CSAC approved and was opposed to this initiative, however, it did not proceed in the CSAC ballot initiative process, as the California Supreme Court removed it from the November 2024 ballot.

Attachment Four

CSAC Memo: 2025 GFA Legislative Advocacy Priorities – ACTION ITEM



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Graham Knaus

October 31, 2024

To: CSAC Government Finance and Administration (GFA) Policy Committee

From: Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate
Stanicia Boatner, Legislative Analyst

Re: **ACTION ITEM: 2025 GFA Legislative Advocacy Priorities**

Recommendation: Staff recommends the committee approve the policy items described below as Government Finance and Administration advocacy priorities for the 2025 legislative session.

Proposed 2025 Government Finance and Administration Legislative Priorities

State-Imposed Mandate Reimbursement Reform and Debt Repayment

Counties should be paid timely for implementing the state’s priorities. CSAC will continue to advocate to secure repayment of the remaining debt owed to counties for services already rendered due to new or expanded program or service mandates (nearly \$1 billion owed to local governments as of April 2024). Furthermore, CSAC will actively work with the Governor’s administration and local government stakeholders to review the current mandate reimbursement system, identify potential alternatives to establish greater payment security, and reduce the potential for payment backlogs on services already rendered. To this end, CSAC will lead discussions and advocate for alternatives to the process for mandate determination, methodologies, and processes for mandate cost estimates, among other solutions.

Address Workforce Challenges

California counties are facing workforce challenges as they compete for qualified employees in a challenging labor market. Local government decision makers and public agency department heads recognize the impact that long-term vacancy rates have, both on current employees and those who receive services from those departments. Many specialty positions like nurses, licensed behavioral health professionals, social workers, probation officers, law enforcement, and planners are experiencing nationwide workforce shortages and a dwindling pipeline for new entrants, driven by both an expansion of services and an aging workforce. To further complicate recruitment, local governments are competing with both the private sector and other government agencies. While local governments have been implementing innovative ways to try to boost recruitment and retention (e.g., sign-on bonuses, housing stipends, etc.), they inevitably lack the financial resources and flexibility enjoyed by private sector employers. Despite these challenges, which were compounded by elimination of hundreds of millions for workforce pipeline programs in the state budget, counties had to advocate against needless legislation that would punish counties for vacancy challenges. CSAC will continue to advocate for policies that help counties rebuild the public service pipeline. CSAC will also push back against efforts to make contracting more challenging, as third-party contractors have long performed vital roles in providing public services and whose necessity is acutely felt when workforce challenges exist.

Modernize the Brown Act and Promote Safe, Welcoming Public Meetings

The Brown Act ensures that public decisions are deliberated on and made in public at noticed meetings in which the public can participate, but some of its out-of-date provisions make it difficult for members of boards, commissions, and advisory bodies to participate, especially those with young children, medical issues, or disabilities. CSAC will continue to lead in developing proposals to modernize the Brown Act and foster public meetings that are safe and welcoming for all community members.