

## 2025-26 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AND PLATFORM

### County Agencies and Departments

<b>AG</b>	Agricultural Commissioner	<b>HSA</b>	Human Services Agency
<b>AIR</b>	Airports	<b>ITS</b>	Information Technology Services
<b>AS</b>	Animal Services	<b>LIB</b>	Library Services
<b>CEO</b>	County Executive Office	<b>PRO</b>	Probation Agency
<b>CSS</b>	Child Support Services	<b>PD</b>	Public Defender
<b>DA</b>	District Attorney	<b>PWA</b>	Public Works Agency
<b>FD</b>	Fire Protection District	<b>RMA</b>	Resource Management Agency
<b>HAR</b>	Harbor Department	<b>SO</b>	Sheriff's Office
<b>HCA</b>	Health Care Agency		

### NEW BILL REQUESTS

None

### POLICY PILLARS

The County supports:

- 0.1 Proposals that would provide counties with greater decision-making authority over the use of State and Federal funds and opposes new unfunded or underfunded mandates
- 0.2 Efforts to ensure local discretionary control over governance issues, land use authority, and delivery of services
- 0.3 Streamlining efforts that reduce access barriers, improve service, increase efficiency, and expand equity of public programs
- 0.4 Legislation that would limit or minimize the County's exposure to tort/liability claims

### STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUES BY POLICY AREA

#### Healthy, Safe and Resilient Communities

##### Health and Wellbeing

The County supports:

- 1.1 Efforts that enhance access to high-quality health care for all residents, improve system integration and data sharing across agencies, and fully integrate mental health, substance use treatment, and physical health services to provide

- coordinated, comprehensive care; regardless of health care coverage status or ability to pay (CEO/HCA/HSA)
- 1.2 Preservation or enhancement of funding and policies that support comprehensive disease and substance misuse prevention, including chronic and infectious disease initiatives, and response strategies, particularly for low-income and Medi-Cal eligible clients (HCA)
  - 1.3 Preserving medical control for the Medical Director to plan, implement, and evaluate a countywide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system to provide equitable service to residents (HCA)
  - 1.4 Policies and programming that allow for innovative animal welfare programming that emphasizes the human-animal bond, promotes humane care, and enhances the well-being and protection of animals (AS)
  - 1.5 Preservation or enhancement of funding programs that foster early literacy, school readiness, adult literacy, career development, vocational support, and robust early childhood development—including science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM)—to empower vulnerable populations and strengthen the workforce (CEO/HSA/ITS/LIB)
  - 1.6 Legislation that facilitates family access to child support program services while easing administrative burdens (CSS)
  - 1.7 *Federal only* - Protection of Medicare, Medicaid, and other federal health programs, including efforts to maintain sufficient funding levels to serve eligible populations that do not rely on county financial participation (HCA)
  - 1.8 *Federal only* - Efforts to increase the amount of funding available for mental health response and to repeal or reform of the institutions for mental disease (IMD) exclusion (HCA)
  - 1.9 *Federal only* - Legislation protecting participants in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program from deportation and that provides a pathway for permanent status (CEO)

## Public Safety

The County supports:

- 2.1 Comprehensive diversion, rehabilitation, and reentry initiatives to lower recidivism, enhance public safety, and promote successful community reintegration (HCA/PRO/PD/SO)
- 2.2 Efforts to provide equitable funding and access to indigent defense services, ensuring fairness and integrity in the criminal legal system (PD)
- 2.3 Legislation and strategies that address emerging crime trends—including fentanyl distribution, gun violence, ghost guns, and organized retail theft—and remove firearms from prohibited persons while strengthening Gun Violence Restraining Orders (DA/SO)
- 2.4 Proposals and funding to plan and modernize correctional facilities, including correctional health facilities, incorporating evidence-based environments that

support rehabilitation and protect the safety of both incarcerated individuals and staff (PRO/SO)

- 2.5 Preservation or enhancement of funding for victim-based crime investigation, prosecution, and trauma-informed support services—especially for victims of child sexual abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, and sexual assault—to ensure equitable, compassionate, and effective justice (DA/PRO/SO)
- 2.6 Preservation or enhancement of funding for local governments to acquire lifesaving public safety equipment, ensuring effective emergency response and community protection (FD/PWA/SO)
- 2.7 *Federal only* - A multi-agency approach to implementing the Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of adults with mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders in County jail (PD/SO)
- 2.8 *Federal only* - Reauthorization and increased funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) (SO)

## Resiliency

The County supports:

- 3.1 Efforts and funding that strengthen local hazard mitigation planning, enhance resilient and accessible infrastructure, and ensure timely resource allocation for comprehensive disaster preparation, response, and recovery—including mass care and shelter operations that address the needs of individuals with disabilities, access, and functional needs (CEO/FD/LIB/RMA/SO)
- 3.2 Legislation that would fully fund mass care and shelter efforts - covering planning, preparation, operations, and equitable support for individuals with disabilities, access, and functional needs - to ensure effective response and recovery. (HSA)
- 3.3 Measures that provide access to reasonably priced fire insurance for residents that recognize local fire hazard risk reduction efforts and ensures availability of insurance even in previously impacted areas, fostering financial security and incentives for resilience (FD)
- 3.4 Efforts to improve fire prevention —such as hardening homes, enforcing defensible space, undergrounding utilities, and removing hazardous vegetation—to safeguard communities and natural resources from wildfire risks (FD)
- 3.5 *Federal only* - Legislation and initiatives that fully fund agricultural pest exclusion, eradication, and management programs, including the establishment of a California-based dog team training facility, to protect agricultural resources and economic stability (AG)
- 3.6 *Federal only* - Preservation or enhancement of funding for disaster programs supported through FEMA, including the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER) (SO/FD)

## Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Vitality

### Fiscal Responsibility

The County supports:

- 4.1 Efforts to address the financing model and financial shortfall for safety net systems, including timely reimbursement from payors for services provided (HCA/HSA)
- 4.2 Local fiscal autonomy by preventing State appropriation of local resources, ensuring full cost recovery for employee-related costs, enhancing flexibility in labor relations, and granting the Board of Supervisors sole authority over retirement benefits to maintain long-term financial stability without increasing the County's fiscal obligations. (CEO)
- 4.3 *Federal only* - Full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and authorization of mandatory payments to provide stability to the program (CEO)
- 4.4 *Federal only* - The repeal of the caps on the amount of State and Local Taxes (SALT) that can be deducted on individual tax returns (CEO)

### **Economic Vitality**

The County supports:

- 5.1 The efforts of our local partners to secure State and Federal funding to further support residents when projects are beyond the County's scope, ensuring residents benefit from broader collaboration and resources (CEO)
- 5.2 Legislation that enhances consumer protection through improved standards in weights and measures, agricultural products, food safety, and organic production, ensuring fairness and quality for consumers and producers (AG)
- 5.3 Policies and investments that stimulate business growth and enhance quality job creation through industry sector diversification, reducing barriers to access capital and resources, and strengthening economic vitality across key sectors, including the creative economy, advanced manufacturing, business services, healthcare, agriculture, tourism and hospitality, biotech and emerging technologies – to support prosperous communities and strengthen economic resilience (CEO/ITS)
- 5.4 *Federal only* - Legislation and incentives that provide crop insurance and disaster relief to specialty crop growers affected by pest quarantines, while promoting sustainable agriculture through USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service farmland conservation programs and fostering a transition to renewable energy (AG)

### **Reliable Infrastructure and Sustainability**

#### **Protecting Infrastructure**

The County supports:

- 6.1 Flexible design standards for State highways serving as local roads and ensuring adequate funding and policies for maintaining, repairing, and modernizing aging infrastructure, including multimodal transportation systems and levee assistance programs (PWA)
- 6.2 Resources and policies that help non-hub airports develop and sustain viable air service, while ensuring compatible land use and development around these facilities (AIR)
- 6.3 Preservation or enhancement of funding for broadband equity and digital literacy to ensure unserved and underserved communities have reliable access to critical online resources (LIB/HSA/ITS)
- 6.4 Legislation to increase the environmental review of new school sites to minimize negative impacts to agricultural land, community health, and educational outcomes (AG)
- 6.5 Funding and flexibility for retrofitting of County buildings for seismic safety and to protect existing homes in fire hazard areas, ensuring the safety and resilience of community infrastructure (HCA/RMA)
- 6.6 Legislation establishing guidance, funding, and reimbursement for managing Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination—encompassing testing, cleanup, and compliance with federal mandates—to safeguard public health and the environment. (AIR)
- 6.7 Efforts to ensure that oil and gas development activities do not pose a significant risk to water supplies, people, or natural resources and establish finite time limits on idle wells to maintain environmental and community safety (RMA)
- 6.8 Funding and initiatives to modernize public safety technology and infrastructure, ensuring effective emergency response and community protection (FD/ITS/SO)
- 6.9 Sustainable pest management approaches—including invasive pest prevention, eradication, and outreach on best practices—and support increased funding mechanisms to maintain safe and healthy ecosystems (AG)
- 6.10 Preservation or enhancement of funding for coastal infrastructure, ocean water quality, and the protection of existing coastal resources (HAR/RMA)
- 6.11 *Federal only* - Funding policies and incentives that ensure maximum resources for maintaining, repairing, and rehabilitating aging public works infrastructure, and reduce unnecessary administrative barriers to the effective use of federal funds. (PWA)
- 6.12 *Federal only* - Reauthorization and increased funding of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which provides funding for safety, security, noise abatement, and capacity enhancement programs (AIR)
- 6.13 *Federal only* - Full funding through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to reconstruct runways and taxiways to ensure existing infrastructure meets community needs (AIR)
- 6.14 *Federal only* - Funding through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for activities related to dredging of Federally authorized channels and sand deposition areas, jetty maintenance and repair, and environmental enhancement (HAR)

## Sustainability and Reliability

The County supports:

- 7.1 Efforts to streamline the environmental review processes and resource protection regulations to enable efficient, cost-effective, and timely delivery of vital public works and development projects, without compromising environmental quality standards or collaboration between State and Federal agencies. (PWA/RMA)
- 7.2 A regional strategy to address Sea Level Rise, ensuring critical coastal infrastructure, public health, safety, and welfare are protected for future generations (RMA)
- 7.3 Policies, and permitting efficiencies that support environmental sustainability, protect water resources, enhance regional water supplies, encourage diversion of reusable and recyclable materials, and invest in renewable energy, energy conservation, habitat preservation, and alternative transportation modes (PWA/RMA)
- 7.4 Development and transition to alternative piston engine aviation fuels that minimize environmental impact while maintaining the viability of general aviation (AIR)
- 7.5 Efforts to balance preservation of agriculture and habitat preservation, water supply considerations, and other resource constraints with housing production to meet state housing element goals sustainably (RMA)
- 7.6 Initiatives that streamline implementation of energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy storage, and decarbonization projects; promote integrated distributed energy resources; enhance local energy resilience; and create opportunities for local governments to administer greenhouse gas reduction programs supported by State and Federal funding (CEO)
- 7.7 *Federal only* – A multi-year authorization of the National Flood Insurance Program and amortization periods for newly mapped areas before mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements and higher insurance rates go into full effect (PWA)
- 7.8 *Federal only* - Funding for County watershed projects under the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service PL-566 Watersheds Program (PWA)
- 7.9 *Federal only* - Development of Federal regulations and procedures that promote efficient and consistent compliance with Federal and State resource protection laws (PWA)

## Address Homelessness and Lift Up the Most Vulnerable

The County supports:

- 8.1 Efforts to expand financial resources for affordable housing and fund the development, construction, operations, acquisition, and rehabilitation of shelters for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. (CEO/HSA)

- 8.2 Legislation that addresses any challenges related to the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act, including support and flexibility for services that support foster youth (HSA)
- 8.3 The preservation and enhancement of services across the continuum of need, including prevention, early intervention, after-care, workforce support, and pathways to self-sufficiency for families and individuals in poverty (HSA)
- 8.4 Legislation that enables seniors and adults with disabilities to reside in a community setting to support aging with dignity and provide them with engaging, equitable services in a community setting (CEO/HSA)
- 8.5 Efforts to ensure that those disproportionately impacted by economic downturns and historically underrepresented in receiving public relief receive critical services and benefits (HSA)
- 8.6 Efforts to increase awareness, funding, and support to prevent and prosecute child, elder, and dependent adult abuse, ensuring justice and safety for the most vulnerable residents (DA/HSA)
- 8.7 *Federal only* - Reauthorization and increased funding for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP), and related anti-poverty programs (HSA)
- 8.8 *Federal only* - The improvement and expansion of the Older American's ACT (OAA) to keep pace with an expanding older adult population and the increasingly complex needs of that population (HSA)

### **Diverse and Innovative Workforce Dedicated to Service Excellence**

The County supports:

- 9.1 Sustained funding to build a modern workforce and infrastructure across County departments, enabling effective responses to emerging threats and ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents (CEO)
- 9.2 Efforts that expand the pipeline of qualified professionals in critical fields, including health care, public safety, infrastructure, and administrative services, by supporting education and training opportunities for current and prospective County employees (CEO)
- 9.3 Initiatives that support the mental health and wellness of the County workforce, including first responders and public safety personnel, through enhanced training, standards, and access to mental health resources (CEO)
- 9.4 Legislation and resources for Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools that enhance service delivery, safeguard privacy, ensure accurate outputs, and respect local implementation autonomy (CEO)
- 9.5 Public Records Act (PRA) revisions that uphold government transparency while ensuring timeframes and exemptions balance public access with the need to protect personal information, deliberative process privilege, attorney-client privilege, employee safety, and prevent overextension of government resources for overly burdensome requests and prevent unnecessary litigation by giving

public agencies the opportunity to cure an alleged violation of the PRA before a lawsuit can be filed (CEO)

- 9.6 Efforts to modernize the Brown Act to expand remote access by the public and legislative body members, promote equity, ensure robust public participation, and enable effective, well-managed meetings that uphold decorum and transparency (CEO)

## **STATE AND FEDERAL BUDGET REQUESTS**

- A. New Animal Shelter. Funding is requested to expand the existing footprint of the property and construct several new structures to increase the capacity of animal services for the unincorporated area and eight of the County's ten cities.
- B. Ventura County Family Justice Centers. Funding is requested for administrative services and emergency shelter beds for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault who have been displaced because of their victimization.
- C. Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC). Funding is requested for the renovation of an existing County building to provide placements for intensive support and rehabilitative services for adults with severe mental disorders.
- D. Public Works Projects. Funding is requested for the following projects, which is vital to the County's infrastructure:
- i. Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project
  - ii. Regional Desalter Projects
  - iii. Santa Paula Creek Flood Control Restoration Project
  - iv. Santa Clara River Watershed Protection Plan/Capital Facilities Plan
  - v. Santa Clara River Levee (SCR-1) Improvements Project
  - vi. Ventura River Levee (VR-1) Improvements Project
- E. Channel Islands Harbor. Funding is requested via the US Army Corps of Engineers' Operations and Maintenance/Navigation account for maintenance dredging to clear the Channel Islands Harbor sand trap.
- F. Harvest Medical Pavilion. Funding is requested for the construction of a rural-based acute care hospital and accompanying ambulatory medical clinics in the Heritage Valley to provide medical, dental and optometry services to disadvantaged and underserved individuals residing in areas geographically separated from the more urban areas of the county.