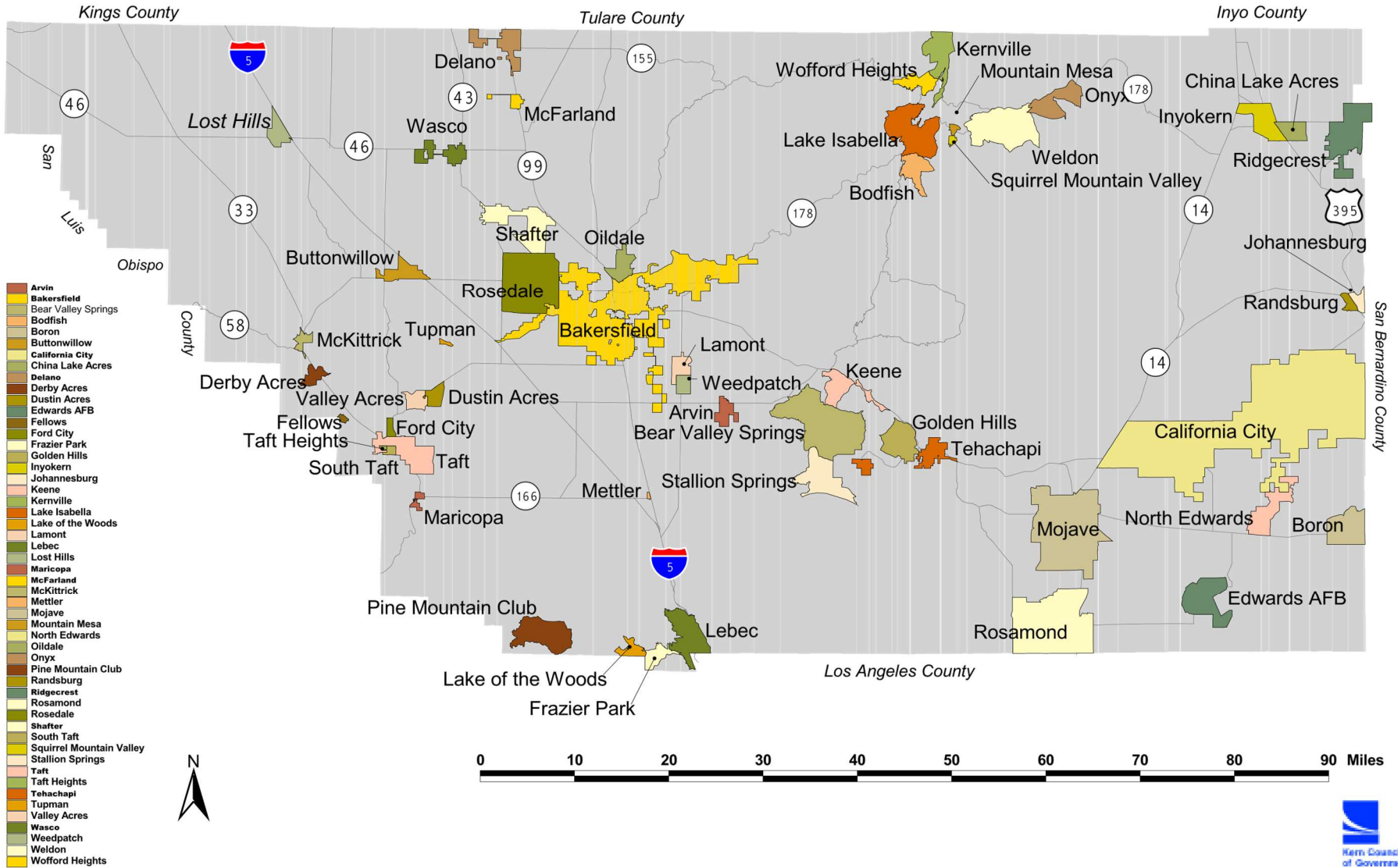


# 2024

## State & Federal Legislative Platform



# Kern's Communities



# Overview

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Kern County is a general law county with a rapidly growing population that now stands at approximately 917,000. Situated at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley, Kern County has more than 8,000 square miles of valley farmland, foothills, mountains, and the Mojave Desert. The county's economy relies primarily on agriculture, petroleum extraction, and the development of renewable energy (solar, wind, and battery storage) and emerging energy technology (carbon capture and sequestration, direct air capture, lithium mining operations, and hydrogen production). There is also a strong aviation, aerospace, and military presence evidenced by Edwards Air Force Base, the China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, and the Mojave Air and Space Port.

As a full-service community, Kern County recognizes the need for active legislative engagement at the state and federal levels to protect and enhance the interests of Kern County's residents and businesses. Accordingly, County officials maintain close relationships with state and federal representatives to advocate, influence, and monitor pertinent legislation.

The purpose of this Legislative Platform is to clearly outline the position of the County on priority issues and matters that impact the County's ability to operate effectively, while allowing flexibility for the consideration of additional legislative and budgetary issues that arise during the legislative session.

Overall, the County of Kern supports legislation that provides governmental decision making at the level closest to the people whenever it is likely to produce the most effective and efficient results. We support further reforms in the federal-State-local fiscal relationship that will improve the County's ability to finance and efficiently administer both mandated and discretionary services while opposing legislation that creates mandates without federal or State funding sources to carry them out.

It is also our general legislative aim to preserve and build the County's job base and to improve the regulatory climate for private enterprise. We support federal and State investment in local infrastructure; federal-State-local initiatives to provide venture capital; tax and financial incentives that will encourage the growth of new and existing businesses in the County; and development and funding of a local education and workforce training investment plan that matches the requirements of growing and emerging industries.

## **County Government Mission Statement:**

*– Enhance the quality of life in Kern County by protecting and serving our citizens –*



# State Advocacy Priorities

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## General Legislative Principles

The County will seek to maximize State revenues; full funding for the costs of State programs; additional funding for programs where service needs have outpaced stagnant or slow growing revenues; funding formulae which ensure an equitable allocation of State funding; minimize the adverse impact of State actions; achieve greater flexibility over the use of State funds; secure State assistance whenever possible, especially from non-General Fund sources, to preserve the County's property tax, sales tax, locally imposed taxes or fees, or Vehicle License Fee revenue base; oppose the shift of programs unless control is also shifted and State funding is guaranteed, and oppose new unfunded mandates unless they promote a higher priority.

## *Programs, Revenue, Fees, and Taxation*

- Mandated programs that are not fully funded should be made optional at the local level, and counties should have broad management authority of all mandated programs.
- Support legislation requiring the State to pay interest to counties on all delayed payments for State mandated programs.
- Support legislation to provide State constitutional protection exempting counties from incurring any costs to carry out unfunded mandates.
- Support legislation that advocates local control over program scope and implementation, including the ability to privatize or utilize contract services when it is more effective and cost-efficient to do so.
- Support legislation that reduces the administrative burdens on local government, particularly changes that simplify, consolidate, standardize, reduce, or eliminate data-gathering, reporting, and licensing requirements imposed on counties.
- Support reforms that provide greater authority to generate local revenues for discretionary services and to protect local revenue streams against State budgetary incursions.
- Require that any proposed new or increased fee must represent the actual cost of service delivery.
- Support full continuation of all dedicated realignment revenues from sales tax and Vehicle License Fees for health, mental health, and social services.
- Oppose any efforts to divert county safety behavioral health funding away from the county Behavioral Health Safety Net, including efforts targeting the Mental Health Services Act.
- Oppose any legislation that would enact an oil or gas severance tax on California producers.
- Oppose any legislation that would extend the property tax exclusion for commercial-scale solar projects or provide any such exclusion for hydrogen, direct air capture, or other clean energy industries.
- Support inclusion of County General Fund revenue backfill in the State Budget for losses caused by reductions in local property taxes due to state policies such as the extension of the solar tax exclusion and efforts to dismantle the oil and gas industry in California by denying new permits and implementing policies that restrict the extraction of oil and gas in the state.
- Oppose any legislation that would prohibit local agencies from entering into any form of agreement that would result in the payment, transfer, diversion, or rebate of local revenues to any retailer or other business in exchange for the retailer/business locating or continuing to maintain a place of business within the territorial jurisdiction of the local agency.

- Oppose any legislation that reallocates, redistributes, or otherwise alters the collection of local tax revenues from retailers/businesses that serve as the place of sale of tangible property delivered to and received by purchasers in the territorial jurisdiction of another local agency.

## *Public Protection*

- System and process changes in the criminal justice system must recognize that the 58 California counties have unique characteristics, differing capacities, and diverse environments. Programs should be designed to promote innovation at the local level and permit maximum flexibility, so that services can best target individual community needs and capacities. Data collection and sharing is additionally critical as counties implement new criminal justice efforts.
- Require any legislation that significantly impacts the prosecution/defense of criminal cases or the overall administration of justice to be accompanied by adequate funding to local district attorneys and public defenders in the performance of their duties.
- Require any legislation that seeks to increase penalties or add treatment, specialty court, or other requirements to criminal offense convictions or adjudications that require monitoring, supervision, and oversight to be accompanied by adequate funding for local probation departments.
- Include local jurisdictions in state-level discussions and decision-making processes regarding changes to the juvenile justice system and adopt policies that support incremental change.
- Support legislation that provides sufficient funding for local pretrial services rendered by probation departments.
- Support legislation that provides bond options and other creative and collaborative public financing mechanisms for the renovation and construction of modern juvenile justice facilities that accommodate more therapeutics and rehabilitation.
- Support the independent and investigative function of the coroner. The decision as to whether this responsibility should be fulfilled by an independent coroner, sheriff-coroner combination, or a medical examiner must be left to the individual boards of supervisors.
- Existing corrections realignment mandates must deliver sufficient resources to counties for adult and juvenile offenders created by enactment of AB 109. Allocation of public safety realignment funds to counties should be based on the number of offenders each county must supervise and each county's associated costs.
- Support more education and training of inmates to reduce recidivism.
- Support efforts at the state and federal level to permit local governments to access third-party payments for health care provided in detention facilities, including medical services provided for those who are accused, but not yet convicted.
- Support efforts to ensure continuity of benefits for those detained in county detention facilities – adult and juvenile – and for swift reenrollment in the appropriate benefits program upon a detainee's release.
- Support legislation and state expenditures to promote local law enforcement training, to aid in drug and rural crime prevention, to bolster juvenile justice intervention and prevention efforts, to counteract and prevent gang violence, and to help prepare and equip local law enforcement agencies to fulfill their role in preventing and responding to foreign and domestic terrorist attacks.
- Support legislation that improves the safety of peace officers and provides sufficient autonomy to local law enforcement agencies to carry out their duties.
- Support amendments to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) "Gray Book" calculations to adequately reimburse counties for local fire protection resources allocated to

State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands and extend the duration of the budgeted and peak fire season to acknowledge California's year-round threat of catastrophic wildfire.

- Support legislative and budgetary efforts to fund Cal Fire and local fire protection agencies to aid in the removal of dead or dying trees due to the drought and subsequent bark beetle infestation of California's forests.
- Support administrative improvements in both Cal OES and Cal Fire that result in timely reimbursement of County Fire invoices.

## *Health and Human Services*

- Support improved funding formulas and annual adjustments for legislatively mandated programs including Foster Care, Child Welfare Services, Child Support Services, CalWORKs, Adoptions, Adult Protective Services, CalFresh, and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). Funding for these services must cover county costs to avoid backfilling funding gaps with limited local resources or cutting services.
- Support legislation that provides sufficient program flexibility to coordinate and consolidate the delivery of services to children, adults, disabled individuals, senior citizens, and veterans as cost-effectively as possible.
- Support increased State subvention of County Veterans Service Offices.
- Support reimbursement that is proportional to the health care burdens of counties having unusual levels of poverty and uninsured populations.
- Support legislation and budget actions that enhance prevention, intervention, diversion, and housing services for mentally ill and chemically dependent individuals as well as delinquent and/or emotionally disturbed minors.
- Support funding for substance use prevention, intervention, and treatment aimed at combating the ongoing opioid crisis and diverting individuals from the criminal justice system.
- Secure dedicated flexible housing subsidy pool funding for homeless individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance used disorders and individuals being released or diverted from the prison system.
- Support integrated school-based behavioral health services with full reimbursement to counties for services.
- Support legislation and funding that strengthens the ability of county behavioral health agencies to partner with schools to provide critical school-based services and legislation that strengthens the ability of county behavioral health systems to serve foster youth, including youth placed outside of the county.
- Oppose any effort to divert Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding to new and existing state services instead of the local services for which the funding was designated by California voters.
- Support data-driven, distinctly measurable, timely, and clear reporting standards, including reversion timelines, for MHSA expenditures with guidance from the Department of Health Care Services on all reporting standards, deadlines, and formats. Any development or update to reporting or outcome standards should be clearly established with robust county stakeholder engagement, keeping the needs of local communities at the forefront without disruption to current programming levels.
- Secure funding to implement the Peer Support Specialist certification program to diversify the county behavioral workforce and expand the use of peers and peer support services in Medi-Cal.
- Support new county behavioral health funding for acquisition and rehabilitation to address short-term crisis stabilization, acute needs, peer respite, and other clinically enriched longer-term treatment and

rehabilitation opportunities for individuals with behavioral health needs in the least restrictive and least costly setting.

- Support legislation to develop county behavioral health statewide outcomes and performance measures to increase the understanding of the impact of the county behavioral health delivery system.
- Support legislation for Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act data collection to better understand the behavioral health needs of those placed on emergency holds.
- Oppose legislation that creates additional duties, mandates, and requirements for public guardians, conservators, and administrators without the provision of adequate funding to carry out these services. Any proposal from the Legislature to expand the responsibility of county public conservators of LPS “gravely disabled” individuals must come with additional funding and time for the system to treat and manage the expanded population.
- Support for adequate startup and ongoing funding to cover county cost impacts related to the implementation of the CARE Court program. Consideration for funding requirements across multiple county departments including behavioral health, public defender, county counsel, public guardians and conservators, and county social services along with outcomes that are practical and achievable must be prioritized by the Legislature.
- Support legislation that allows local jurisdictions, through public-private partnerships and other creative means, the flexibility and funding to explore and implement best practices aimed at addressing homelessness.
- Advocate for CalAIM implementation funding to create incentives that help county behavioral health agencies reach specific milestones in the implementation of CalAIM, including coding and medical necessity-related infrastructure changes.
- Advocate for current probation clients and new probation clients to have continued access to Targeted Care Management who are not enrolled in the Enhanced Case Management program.
- Advocate for more commercial coverage from health plans in California to cover behavioral health needs.
- Advocate for and support legislative, administrative, and budgetary efforts that modernize the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) funding allocation methodology and secure equitable child support program funding to assist families and children in achieving financial self-sufficiency.
- Support legislation enhancing the flexibility of the child support program in establishing, enforcing, and collecting child support orders.
- Support legislation promoting equal access to justice through greater efficiency and broad delivery of Child Support Services tailored to the unique needs of parents and families using available and emerging technology and innovations.
- Support ongoing efforts by the Department of Child Support Services to expand collaborative community and supportive-services partnerships that broaden program awareness to the public, help parents and families succeed, and reduce poverty.
- Support legislation that provides sufficient program flexibility and ongoing funding to cover the cost of coordinating and providing robust services to children and families served by Child Support Services.
- Restore current funding and support future allocations that are equitable and representative of service-level demand for the California Works Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Single Allocation.

- Oppose efforts to implement new In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) provisions that adjust the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) without simultaneously allocating offsetting revenue for counties.
- Support increased funding for senior nutrition that will allow more adults over age 60 to receive meals.
- Support additional funding to Adult Protective Services to prevent elder/dependent abuse, self-neglect, and scams.
- Support legislation that provides local health authorities with standardized methodologies for accurately testing and reporting cases of Valley Fever and promotes a collaborative relationship between state and local officials to educate, raise awareness for, and eradicate the disease.

### *Economic Development*

- Oppose regulatory barriers including permitting issues, fees, and taxes on businesses in California and the streamlining of government to improve business startups and job creation and retention.
- Support manufacturing retention and expansion programs as well as tools to create and expand manufacturing jobs and capacity throughout Kern and California.
- Support the Office of Military Base Retention and Reuse to provide ongoing assistance and support to communities with closed bases, as well as communities with active installations, to ensure the continued viability, retention, and overall health of military communities in California.
- Support the formation of a California Space and/or Aerospace Commission to support the health and competitiveness of space, aerospace, and aviation industries in California and serve to enhance the business climate and opportunities for marketing, visibility, business attraction, and retention in these burgeoning industries.
- Support Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (iBank) mission to issue tax-exempt and taxable revenue bonds, provide financing to public agencies, provide credit enhancements, acquire or lease facilities, and leverage state and federal funds while also providing low-cost financing to public agencies for infrastructure projects that help create jobs in Kern and California.
- Support Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) as program links between federal, state, educational, and private resources designed for small businesses and a one-stop access to free business counseling, planning, marketing, and training programs.
- Support tourism efforts to attract tourist dollars to Kern and efforts to promote agricultural, historic, and natural resources tourism throughout the County.
- Support efforts to retain film production in the State and County, and continued collaboration between the State and the efforts of regional and local film commissions.
- Support adequate and efficient electrical grid and transmission infrastructure development that provides timely electrical service to customers and electrification of new projects.
- Support legislation that protects and enhances the viability and competitiveness of domestic agricultural and livestock commodity production systems.

### *Land Use*

- Support legislation that promotes local land use authority and that authorizes, but does not mandate, the formation of regional alliances.
- Support incentives to encourage counties to preserve farmland and open space.



- Support restoration of Williamson Act subvention payments to encourage farmland preservation or modification of the program to allow more flexibility for landowners to find alternative uses for property with water limitations.
- Support a flexible approach to addressing climate change that uses incentives to meet technically achievable goals in reducing emissions.
- Support legislation that focuses on innovative ways to spur traditional and affordable housing development to meet local housing demands.

### *Environmental Quality*

- Retain the ability to manage programs efficiently, cost-effectively and without excessive permitting requirements.
- Support streamlining of environmental regulations and consolidation of permitting to reduce costs and unnecessary delays.
- Support legislative reforms that will prevent the California Environmental Quality Act from being used to halt environmentally sound projects and provide for reasonable and appropriate exemptions.
- Support the implementation of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts that balances social and economic benefits with species protection and ensures that policies are based on good science.
- Support the creation of a statewide Commission to address recycling and waste diversion goals and the significant challenges posed by SB 1383 (Chapters 395, 2016).

### *Energy*

- Oppose legislation that seeks to phase out fossil fuels.
- Oppose legislation that imposes additional taxes or monetary penalties on oil and gas production.
- Oppose legislation that promulgates redundant and unnecessary regulation of the oil and gas well permitting processes.
- Oppose legislation that seeks to supplant local permitting and siting of renewable energy facilities with processes managed and administered by State regulators.
- Support legislation that enables local jurisdictions to site, permit as approve or deny, and impose necessary mitigation for carbon capture and sequestration projects, direct air capture projects, hydrogen, CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines, and any other method of carbon management.
- Support restoring counties' authority to assess alternative energy facilities, such as large-scale commercial solar, which currently benefit from assessment exclusions and oppose efforts to exempt or exclude other renewable energy facilities from county property tax assessment.
- Support the procurement of agricultural wood waste and other biomass baseload power by electrical utilities and other load-serving entities in California.
- Support legislation that seeks greater transparency, oversight, and adequate compensation to property owners (homes and businesses) for the disruptions caused by Investor-Owned Utility Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events.

### *Water*

- Support stable water supplies for urban and agricultural users in the County and expand facilities for storing, banking, conveying, distributing, conserving, and reclaiming water; flood control and storm water management, and enhancing and restoring wetlands and open space.

- Support the water infrastructure funding and any legislation that seeks to improve water conveyance restoration to the Kern-Friant Canal and other projects that furnish an adequate supply of water to Kern and throughout California.
- Support a Delta conveyance system to deliver water to the California Aqueduct while protecting the Delta ecosystem.
- Support CEQA exemption for certain water infrastructure improvements/developments.
- Support legislative efforts that enable counties to successfully implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and promote water conservation issues and the development of additional stormwater and water quality funding tools.
- Oppose legislation that adds additional administrative or legal burdens to local water well permitting and local groundwater management efforts.

### *Transportation and Infrastructure*

- Support legislation that provides equitable State funding for roads, highways, airports, and public transit and that promotes the timely development of local transportation projects at counties' discretion.
- Support continued State funding and assistance formulas for grade separation projects, maintaining existing funding levels that ensure adequate resources are available to counties for road maintenance, and state traffic congestion relief projects.
- Oppose legislation that shifts taxation from fuel sales taxes, which are constitutionally guaranteed for local transportation.
- Support the equitable and responsible deployment of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure that preserves local jurisdictions' ability to negotiate on behalf of the public interest.
- Support the immediate abandonment of the California High-Speed Rail Project and reassignment and/or reappropriation of remaining State funds to local projects and programs that will provide immediate benefit to Kern County residents.

# Federal Advocacy Priorities

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## General Legislative Principles

The federal government should recognize the inalienable right of state and local governments to participate in the decision-making process of a federal system. It should further recognize that because local government is the closest to the citizenry, it is often best equipped to deliver services and administer programs. Strong county government is an essential component and partner in the effective operation of national-state-local government activities. The County will seek to support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding; support proposals which would provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of Federal funds, and which provide for direct grants or mandatory pass-through allocations to large rural counties; oppose proposals which would impose new unfunded mandates on the County; oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County; support proposals to reduce or relax match requirements which hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds; support Federal fiscal relief for financially distressed state and local governments; and oppose Federal preemption of state and local government authority.

## *Programs, Revenue, Fees and Taxation*

- Support Federal efforts to address certain domestic needs in partnership with counties and that adequately provide for county administrative costs, provide flexibility to adjust to local needs and circumstances, provide for long-term program planning, and provide for program stability.
- Support government reform that shares the benefits of the federal government's taxing ability with state and local government in a more equitable and non-restrictive manner. When possible, shared revenues should be provided in the form of block grants.
- Support the maintenance and development of state and local infrastructure through federal tax exemptions for state and municipal debt and by special taxing and expenditure programs to meet priority needs. Kern supports the right of counties to issue governmental debt for essential public services by marketing bonds to investors with interest on such bonds remaining totally exempt from federal taxation.
- Support full payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) whenever the federal government removes or withholds otherwise productive property from the property tax rolls. PILT payments should receive full cost of living adjustments annually.

## *Public Protection*

- Support increased Federal expenditures to assist local law enforcement agencies with crime prevention and prosecution, technology improvements, forensic science, and training.
- Support increased Federal expenditures to help prepare and equip local law enforcement agencies to fulfill their role in preventing and responding to foreign and domestic terrorist attacks.
- Support Federal policies that recognize and enhance the safety of people and the livability of communities by dedicating significant Federal resources for disaster planning, mitigation and recovery that are provided directly to both state and local governments. These resources should

provide for coordinated planning and education and should encourage the use of innovative approaches that result in positive changes.

- Support changes in current Federal policy that would allow a person receiving Federal benefits who has been charged with a crime, but not convicted, to continue to be eligible for entitlements – including, but not limited to Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Veterans Administration health care and disability insurance, and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) benefits – until such time as they may be convicted and sentenced to an institution.
- Advocate for full Federal reimbursement of state and local costs of incarcerating undocumented immigrants through the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Although it is the Federal Government’s responsibility to protect and secure our nation’s borders, counties incur millions of dollars in un-reimbursed expenses each year as a result of housing undocumented individuals who violate state or local laws.
- Petition Congress to continue providing adequate funding for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to support local domestic violence shelters, services for victims of human trafficking, and other victims of violent crime.
- Support continued efforts for criminal justice reform, particularly legislation such as the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) aimed at reducing the significant number of mentally ill individuals admitted to local jails each year.
- Support Federal grants aimed at supplementing opioid abuse prevention and treatment activities.
- Support expenditures to assist county public safety agencies in preparing and executing an early warning system and evacuation plan for communities downstream from the Lake Isabella Dam, which is operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Support increased Federal efforts to prevent and respond to wildland fires through local assistance and through active and robust fuel management programs aimed at promoting healthy forests.
- Support administrative improvements in the U.S. Forest Service that result in timely reimbursement of County Fire invoices.

### *Health and Human Services*

- Support Federal health care reform that ensures hospitals operating as California’s safety net receive sufficient continued Federal funding to care for the indigent and uninsured populations they are mandated to serve.
- Support federal-state-local partnership for financing and delivering Medicaid services, including the 340B drug program.
- Support Federal legislation that provides flexibility to coordinate and consolidate the delivery of health and human services as cost-effectively as possible, as well as sufficient funding to fulfill mandated responsibilities in these areas.
- Support increased Federal funding for public health activities such as detecting and combating bioterrorism and pandemic disease, immunizations, maternal and child health, and food safety.
- Support funding for emergency preparedness and response, trauma care, and health care for the uninsured.
- Support reimbursement that is proportional to the health care burdens of counties having unusual levels of poverty and uninsured populations.
- Support funding aimed at diverting mentally ill and chemically dependent individuals from the criminal justice system and into behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment.

- Support funding for substance use prevention, intervention, and treatment aimed at combating the ongoing opioid crisis.
- Oppose proposals that would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health and human services, such as health care for uninsured or indigent residents.
- Support Federal legislation that improves access to health care for veterans by bringing primary and specialty care services closer to the patient, reducing wait times, and providing easy to understand medical and administrative patient information.

### *Federal Lands and Installations*

- Support continued full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program by which local government is reimbursed for the cost of providing services to property tax-exempt Federal lands and installations.
- Support PILT amendments to include active military installations in the payment formula.
- Support Federal expenditures that fully utilize the flight and weapons research, development, test, and evaluation capabilities of Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake and Edwards Air Force Base.
- Oppose policies that promote urban or environmental encroachment upon the future ability of our military installations to fulfill missions critical to national defense.

### *Community Development & Workforce Investment*

- Support Federal investment in local infrastructure and workforce training.
- Support Federal investment programs that target economic development and workforce training in communities experiencing higher levels of poverty and chronically high unemployment.
- Support full and continued funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), public and assisted housing, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs.
- Support Federal funding for local education and workforce training investment that matches the requirements for growing and emerging industries.
- Support an improved and streamlined regulatory climate for private enterprise.
- Support legislation, policies, and programs, including Opportunity Zones and other designations, that expand community revitalization and economic development tools.

### *Environmental Quality*

- Support streamlining of environmental regulations.
- Support Federal Endangered Species Act amendments that balance social and economic benefits with species protection and ensure that policies are based on good science.

### *Energy*

- Support regulatory streamlining and exemptions to speed the development of renewable energy generation and transmission facilities that will help to increase U.S. energy independence and support business and all forms of energy production.
- Support Federal legislation that encourages the exploration and use of American energy resources to help reduce the price of energy and increase local economic output.

## *Water*

- Support federal advocacy for stable water supplies for urban and agricultural users in the County and enactment of Federal appropriations to assist funding of programs that expand facilities for storing, banking, conveying, distributing, conserving, and reclaiming water; flood control and storm water management, and enhancing and restoring wetlands and open space.
- Support legislation to provide funding for renewal, enhancement, and maintenance of community potable water systems.
- Support efforts by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency to rewrite the Waters of the U.S. rule to ensure that the rule provides clarity, and the agencies consult with state and local governments.

## *Agriculture*

- Support policies that increase the export of agricultural commodities and development of trade policies with foreign governments that expedite new market access for commodities grown in Kern County.
- Support the implementation of comprehensive and permanent immigration reform, including the enhancement of the H-2A program to promote year-round employment opportunities to fulfill the needs of Kern County agriculture.

## *Transportation & Infrastructure*

- Support legislation to increase, streamline, and improve flexibility of Federal funding for the repair and maintenance of roads, highways, airports, and public transit and that promotes the timely development of local transportation projects at local government's discretion.
- Support Federal investment in local infrastructure and actively advocate for new revenues to bolster the county road systems through programs such as the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant program.
- Support the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and actively engage in legislative efforts to increase Federal funding for local airports, including funding for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

