

Alpine Amador Butte Calaveras Colusa Del Norte
El Dorado Glenn Humboldt Imperial Inyo Lake
Lassen Madera Mariposa Mendocino Merced Modoc



Mono Napa Nevada Placer Plumas San Benito
San Luis Obispo Shasta Sierra Siskiyou Sutter
Tehama Trinity Tulare Tuolumne Yolo Yuba

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:
Justin Caporusso
(916) 447-4806

JCaporusso@rcrcnet.org

Rural Issues Remain to be Addressed As Legislature Returns from Summer Recess

SACRAMENTO, CA – August 21, 2017 – The California Legislature returns from their month-long summer recess today, leaving fewer than 30 days to address several outstanding issues of particular importance to California’s rural counties. The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) advocacy team has been instrumental in ensuring the rural voice is heard in the State Capitol, and now it’s time for the Legislature to decide the fate of a number of legislative proposals that would impact California’s rural counties.

While not comprehensive, the following priority issues remain for California’s rural counties:

Senate Bill 649 (Opposed)

SB 649, authored by Senator Hueso (D-San Diego), would eliminate local consideration of the aesthetic and environmental impacts of “small cell” structures, and force counties and cities to lease space to wireless companies at a rate set by the Legislature. The bill, which RCRC strongly opposes, is slated to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on August 23, 2017. Additional information on SB 649 can be accessed [here](#).

Assembly Bill 1250 (Opposed)

Assembly Bill 1250, authored by Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles), would establish burdensome contract procurement requirements for counties before they may enter into a contract or renew/extend an existing contract after January 1, 2018 for county-related services. The bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee today. RCRC’s joint opposition letter can be accessed [here](#). The coalition website can be accessed [here](#).

Cap-and-Trade Expenditure Plan

Last month, the Legislature passed an extension of the State’s Cap-and-Trade auction program, which requires certain large greenhouse gas emitters to either purchase carbon credits or take measures to reduce their emissions to meet a set emissions cap.

The extension was part of a three-bill package, part of which included the elimination of the State Responsibility Area fee.

Of particular interest to rural counties will be the finalization of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund funding allocation plan for 2017-18. RCRC is seeking substantial funding for healthy forest programs – specifically tree mortality mitigation, and wildfire prevention projects. Both the Senate and the Assembly budget subcommittees are set to discuss Cap-and-Trade expenditures this week.

Disadvantaged Communities

As part of the Cap-and-Trade extension package, RCRC is advocating for a more equitable definition of “disadvantaged communities” (DACs) and/or “low income communities.” A change in the language would capture more communities in RCRC Member counties. Under the current definition, 27 of California’s rural counties are immediately disqualified from accessing funding specifically directed at DACs.

Affordable Housing Package

Before adjourning for their summer recess, the Legislature amended a number of housing and land-use bills as part of a proposed “housing package.” The package is estimated to contain 17 measures, including two affordable housing funding bills. Senate Bill 2, authored by Senator Atkins (D-San Diego), provides a permanent source of affordable housing funding, while Senate Bill 3, authored by Senator Beall (D-San Jose), would authorize a \$3 billion bond for housing, which would require voter approval in November 2018. The bulk of the housing package is intended to streamline local regulatory processes and incentivize housing development through increased enforcement of existing housing laws. The housing package is expected to be considered immediately and without further amendments. RCRC, along with its local government partners, continue to discuss concerns with a number of items in the package. The local government coalition letter can be accessed [here](#).

Water Bonds

The Legislature has two bond proposals that would provide funding for water and parks – Senate Bill 5 authored by Senate President pro Tem Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles), and Assembly Bill 18 authored by Eduardo Garcia (D-Riverside). It is unclear whether one or both legislative measures will proceed before the September 15 adjournment date. It is also unclear as to what the focus will ultimately be: funding for water-related projects, or parks. In addition, there are efforts to pursue a water bond via the initiative process so that California voters could consider a measure in November 2018. RCRC is keenly aware of all of the proposals and is working to ensure that none of these efforts would erode water rights or place rural communities at a disadvantage in receiving monies. More importantly, RCRC is advocating that monies be provided in these efforts for forest/watershed health and wastewater infrastructure improvements.

ABOUT RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF CALIFORNIA (RCRC)

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) is a thirty-five member county strong service organization that champions policies on behalf of California’s rural counties. RCRC is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services for its members to enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. To learn more about RCRC, visit rcrcnet.org and follow @RuralCounties on Twitter.

###