

TO: Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michelle Rubalcava, Partner
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RE: 2025 End-of-Year Report

The County's team of state advocates is pleased to provide to the Board of Supervisors this report which provides an overview of state legislative and administrative activities impacting the County during 2025 and insights into what to expect in 2026.

Nielsen Merksamer is honored to represent Contra Costa County in Sacramento. For many years, the firm has lobbied the Legislature and the Governor's Administration to advance the County's policy positions and budget priorities, facilitate meetings with state officials, and coordinate with CSAC, UCC, CWDA, and other allies and county representatives.

This year, in addition to advocating on the issues below with the County's delegation members and when they were heard in legislative committees, we met with supervisors and staff at the CSAC Annual Meeting, visited the County on multiple occasions including the in-district legislative briefing, provided compliance training for department heads, met with all of the health agency's executives and several other department heads in person and virtually, and provided regular updates to the Board's Legislative Committee and to Senior Deputy County Administrator Struthers.

2025 LEGISLATIVE RECAP

This was a year of transition, as a new federal administration took power, new legislators began representing the County, and a the California Senate chose a new President Pro Tem. Next year will be more of the same: transition and unpredictability. Governor Newsom will finish his term as Governor, new congressional districts will shuffle legislative races, and a crowded field of high-profile ballot measures are negotiated alongside a state budget facing deep deficits and excruciating federal cost shifts to states and counties.

The County's legislative delegation is well-positioned, chairing committees overseeing housing, public safety, privacy and consumer protection, banking, transportation, and appropriations.

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While the County did not sponsor any bills in 2025, it took positions on a number of important measures, listed here, in addition to significant advocacy on a number of budget proposals.

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Position
AB 144	Committee on Budget	Health.	09/17/2025 - Assembly CHAPTERED	Support
AB 274	Ransom, D	Abandoned and derelict vessels: inventory.	05/23/2025 - Assembly 2 YEAR	Support
AB 306	Schultz, D	Building regulations: state building standards.	04/23/2025 - Senate Housing	Oppose
AB 339	Ortega, D	Local public employee organizations: notice requirements.	10/13/2025 - Assembly CHAPTERED	Oppose
AB 871	Stefani, D	Mandated reporters of suspected financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult.	05/08/2025 - Assembly 2 YEAR	Support
AB 1018	Bauer-Kahan, D	Automated decision systems.	09/13/2025 - Senate 2 YEAR	Oppose Unless Amended
AB 1288	Addis, D	Registered environmental health specialists.	10/03/2025 - Assembly CHAPTERED	Support
AB 1337	Ward, D	Information Practices Act of 1977.	07/17/2025 - Senate 2 YEAR	Oppose
AB 1383	McKinnor, D	Public employees' retirement benefits.	05/23/2025 - Assembly 2 YEAR	Oppose
AB 1430	Bennett, D	County recorders: fees.	10/06/2025 - Assembly VETOED	Support
SB 79	Wiener, D	Housing development: transit- oriented development.	10/10/2025 - Senate CHAPTERED	Neutral
SB 146	Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review	Human services.	09/17/2025 - Senate CHAPTERED	Support
SB 239	Arreguín, D	Open meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body.	Added to SB 707	Support
SB 346	Durazo, D	Local agencies: transient occupancy taxes: short-term rental facilitator.	10/13/2025 - Senate CHAPTERED	Support

SB 357	Menjivar, D	Juveniles: delinquency.	09/12/2025 - Assembly 2 YEAR	Oppose
SB 392	Grayson, D	Regional park districts: East Bay Regional Park District: East Bay Hills Conservation Program.	10/13/2025 - Senate CHAPTERED	Support
SB 694	Archuleta, D	Deceptive practices: service members and veterans.	09/09/2025 - Senate Rules	Support

A LOOK AHEAD TO 2026

The Legislature returns from their interim recess on Monday, January 5, and they will have a number of serious issues to deal with immediately.

First, any fiscal and policy fallout from the extended federal government shutdown. Second, and longer-term, are the effects on counties and the state from H.R. 1, which cuts benefits and shifts costs for many health and human service programs to the state and counties and away from the federal government. Those are difficulties that have no easy solutions and counties will need to advocate strongly and in concert with their allies for their interests.

The Legislature will also continue to grapple with the appropriate policies for artificial intelligence and automated decision systems, electricity markets, insurance costs, housing sufficiency and affordability, homelessness, behavioral health services, the clean-energy transition, the effects of climate change, policing, and water infrastructure, all while dealing with a dire budget situation.

Contra Costa County has a unique position in the state due to its location, demographics, and service mix, especially for health care, and has a strong legislative delegation. The County should continue to use its position to advocate for its priorities with state policymakers.