

Washington Update

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

September 27, 2016

FY 2017 APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

With the beginning of Federal Fiscal Year 2017 looming just a few days away on October 1, Congress once again finds itself in a crisis of its own making as it attempts to negotiate a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep Federal agencies funded and operating. Today (Tuesday, September 27), the Senate rejected a short term CR to fund the government through December 9 because it did not include funding to address the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. The Flint issue appears at this point to be the last remaining stumbling block, and negotiations continue as the deadline approaches.

FOSTER CARE

We continue to monitor congressional action on the *Family First Prevention Services Act*. Introduced in the House as H.R. 5456 by House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee Chairman Buchanan (R-FL) and in the Senate by Finance Committee Chairman Hatch (R-UT) as S. 3065, the measure is intended to ensure that children in foster care are placed in the least restrictive, most family-like, and appropriate settings. The proposal was introduced with broad bipartisan and bicameral support, as well as the backing of national advocacy groups such as the Children's Defense Fund, American Public Human Services Association, and Child Welfare League of America. However, concerns arose under closer analysis, and CWDA, CSAC and the California Department of Social Services have lobbied against the proposal, citing provisions regarding congregate care that would conflict with efforts under way in California. Nevertheless, it was approved unanimously by the House on June 21. However, in the Senate, Senator Boxer has put a hold on the legislation, which prevents it from being considered on the Senate floor. During Supervisor Wolf's trip to Washington, DC earlier in September, she was told in her meeting with Senate Finance Committee staff that if Senator Boxer does not release her hold, the legislation is dead for the year.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

We continued to advocate support for adequate Federal resources to assist local agencies such as the County in addressing juvenile justice and delinquency prevention needs in the community. Congressman Curbelo (R-FL) recently introduced H.R. 5963, the *Supporting Youth Opportunity and Preventing Delinquency Act*, which would reauthorize and amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Co-sponsored by Ranking Member Scott (D-VA) of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, the bill includes provisions to provide State and local governments such as the County with flexibility to deliver services to meet the specific needs of delinquent youth, promote opportunities for juvenile offenders to acquire employment skills, and help at-risk youth avoid the juvenile justice system by supporting prevention services. H.R. 5963 was marked up by the committee in mid-September, and subsequently overwhelmingly approved by the full House, 382-29. In the Senate, the Judiciary Committee approved Chairman Grassley's bipartisan S. 1169, the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization*, last December, but full Senate consideration has not taken place. The strong support for the House measure may lead to further action in the Lame Duck session.

HEALTH CENTER IT ENHANCEMENTS

On September 15, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Burwell announced more than \$87 million in funding for 1,310 health centers across the country for information technology enhancements. We were informed that the County of Santa Barbara will receive \$80,536 under the program. The funding is to be used to support health information technology enhancements to accelerate health centers' transition to value-based models of care, and improve efforts to share and use information to support better decisions.

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUNDING

The US Fish and Wildlife Service recently announced its FY 2016 awards under the Section 6, Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund program. This year's awards includes \$750,000 for conservation easements to permanently protect three parcels on the Careaga Canyon Ranch property, one of the largest undeveloped areas of riparian, oak woodland, grassland, and scrub habitats between existing coastal and inland natural areas of Santa Barbara County. Funding under Section 6 is highly competitive, with only \$44.8 million allocated in FY 2016.

v Tom Walters v