

TO: Members, Legislative Committee
County of Santa Barbara

FROM: Monica Miller, Legislative Advocate
Cliff Berg, Legislative Advocate

RE: November Update

DATE: December 3, 2010

With the election behind us and the swearing-in of the new members of the legislature in front of us, we have a big year ahead. On Monday, December 6, 2010 the new members of the legislature will be sworn-in; their first order of business will be to begin to deal with the special session on budget that the current Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, called in mid-November. Keep in mind, he will be termed out on January 3, 2011 and Governor-Elect Jerry Brown will be sworn-in. While Governor-Elect Jerry Brown has worked closely as part of the transition with this current administration we do anticipate that the proposed cuts that would have been on the table will be different under a new administration. None the less, the discussions will begin in December upon the legislature's return.

Also, keep in mind that on January 10, 2011 the Governor-Elect Brown is required to submit a Governor's budget to the legislature. This budget must be balanced and as the Legislative Analyst's office has pointed out we are already \$25.4 Billion in the red with the current year budget and the 2011-12 budget year. This Governor has already begun discussions with the legislative leaders and the current Administration. In an effort to get all state-wide electeds on the same page, he has scheduled a forum on Wednesday, December 8, 2010 in Sacramento where they will discuss the dire straights of our budget crisis. There are additional forums being discussed at this time, one with education leaders and one with health and human service stakeholders. However, these have yet to be scheduled at this time.

On another note, the Assembly Republican Caucus has replaced their leader, Assembly Member Martin Garrick lost his post when he failed to pick up any new seats on behalf of the party and lost one that has long been held by a republican. The new leader is Assembly Member Connie Conway as of their November meeting. As you many recall, she is a former President of CSAC and was a county supervisor for a number of years in Tulare. We are optimistic that this may help from a County perspective with an effort finally made to try to protect county services from a state raid. Although we must realize that everything is on the table for discussion at this point given the magnitude of the deficit.

When the legislature officially returns on January 3, 2011 to start the business at hand, we will have two new Assembly Members, Das Williams from the 35th District and K.H.

“Katcho” Achadjian from the 33rd District. We have already begun discussion with Assembly Member Williams office on the County priorities and have requested a meeting with Assembly Member “Katcho” Achadjian to share our platform. Additionally, we will meet with both Senator Tony Strickland and Senator Sam Blakeslee to brief them on our priorities for the year as well as to see how we can best work together for the greater good of the County.

With the new session we will also see a flurry of bills introduced. The deadline for the Legislative Counsel is January 21, 2011 and the bill introduction deadline is February 18, 2011. Keep in mind, the Senate significantly reduced the number of bills that could be introduced in the last couple of years due to budget constraints, however the Assembly did not. At this time we are uncertain if either house will request the membership reduce these numbers, we will keep you posted on this issue.

After the Governor’s budget is submitted to the legislature we fully anticipate that there will be a flurry of committee meetings in an effort to reach an agreement on the special session issues, at the moment we are unclear on what will be part of the special session but have to assume that once again the entire budget will be up for discussion. We are speculating that this year will be similar to 2009 when they adopted a full budget in February and then spent the rest of the year tinkering with it as needed, but are uncertain if this will be the case.

As always, we will continue to keep you posted on any and all new information as it arises. Should you or your staff have any questions, we are available as a resource for you.