

# Washington Update

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

April 30, 2013

## FY 2014 FEDERAL FUNDING

Following the release of President Obama's FY 2014 Budget Proposal on April 10, we provided County staff with a variety of briefing summaries and analyses provided by the respective Federal agencies and other resources. The President's Proposals would be a decidedly mixed bag for counties, proposing new programs such as the \$15 billion Project Rebuild redevelopment program; increases to public safety programs such as COPS and the Byrne Justice Assistance grants; major reductions to programs such as the Community Development Block Grants, HUD's HOME program, HHS' Hospital Preparedness Program, and Community Services Block Grants; and elimination of such programs as SCAAP and the National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund. Meanwhile, both the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees continue to hold hearings in anticipation of drafting their respective pending bills. The various appropriations measures will ultimately determine the FY 2014 spending levels for all Federal programs.

## IMMIGRATION REFORM

Following your Board's April 16 action, we contacted President Obama, House and Senate Congressional leaders, the Congressional committees of jurisdiction, and the local delegation to advocate in support of the policy framework for Comprehensive Immigration Reform adopted by NACo at its March Legislative Conference. The guidelines are consistent with the much-discussed proposal being developed by a bipartisan group of eight Senators, and on April 17, they introduced that proposal as S. 744, the *Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act*. The Senate Judiciary Committee has begun a series of hearings on the legislation, and a committee markup of S. 744 may take place in May. Senator Feinstein was instrumental in the negotiations on the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security (AgJOBS Act)

included in the legislation, which would establish a new agricultural guest worker program. Meanwhile, a similar but more secretive bipartisan effort is underway in the House, with little information released regarding participants or content of proposals. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Goodlatte (R-VA) has indicated that the group's proposals will be given full consideration, but emphasized that his committee has ultimate responsibility for immigration reform legislation. Chairman Goodlatte may pursue a piecemeal approach to immigration reform, taking up a series of targeted bills rather than the comprehensive approach being utilized in the Senate. There are concerns that this could be used by detractors to derail the effort.

## WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

We reviewed and provided feedback on the County's letter to Governor Brown regarding support for a proposed amendment to the Federal Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to establish a Federal project authority for the implementation of Regional Sediment Management projects on the coast of California. We are also following up with other Washington, DC advocates for the proposal. Senate Majority Leader Reid (D-NV) has indicated that floor consideration of Senate Environment and Public Works Chair Boxer's S. 601, the *Water Resources Development Act of 2013*, could begin as early as the week of May 6, and her committee staff are currently working on the manager's amendment that will be the basis for that debate. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held the first of a series of hearings on a new WRDA bill on April 16.

## 2013 FARM BILL

In anticipation of upcoming action on a 2013 Farm Bill, we contacted the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and our local Congressional delegation to advocate for the inclusion of adequate resources in the areas

of pest and disease management, and invasive noxious weed management, and wildlife services, including the Section 10201 program for specific funding to State and local agencies. The Senate committee is targeting mid-May for the markup of a bill, using the Senate-passed proposal from last year as a starting point, and Senate Majority Leader Reid (D-NV) wants the Senate bill scheduled for floor debate shortly thereafter. House Committee Chairman Lucas (R-OK) is also targeting mid-May for action by his committee, but the House bill is expected to be more controversial as he wants to increase savings in the measure by cutting SNAP (food stamps) and agricultural conservation programs.

#### **TAXATION OF INTERNET RETAILERS**

We provided County staff with the House and Senate versions of the *Marketplace Equity Act*, which would overturn a 1992 Supreme Court decision and allow State and local governments to enforce existing sales taxes on online retailers outside their borders. Introduced by Senator Enzi (R-WY) as S. 743 and Congressman Womack (R-AR) as H.R. 864 the legislation has bipartisan support and is being lobbied aggressively by NACo. The Senate has begun floor debate on its bill.

#### **IMMIGRATION IMPACTS - SCAAP**

We provided the County with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) requirements for seeking reimbursements for costs associated with the incarceration of illegal alien criminals under the FY 2013 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Applications must be submitted by close of business, Eastern Daylight Time, on May 13, and BJA is adamant that no extensions will be granted. Santa Barbara County received \$359,289 from the program for FY 2012. SCAAP reimbursements can be used for correctional purposes only.

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