

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino

Josie Gonzales Fifth District

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**JGFDS-PR-261 COUNTY 'S 2011-12 BUDGET ADOPTION
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CHAIR GONZALES' STATEMENT ON THE 2011-12 BUDGET ADOPTION

SAN BERNARDINO – On June 28th, the Board of Supervisors adopted a \$3.8 billion budget for the County of San Bernardino. When the Board set forth policies for this year's budget, we directed the County Administrative Office to build a fair and balanced budget – no gimmicks, no tricks, and no inflated revenue projections. As Chair, I can say with confidence that we set the county on a path towards fiscal solvency while reforming the way we do businesses.

Having closed two \$90 million deficits in the last 2 fiscal years, this year's budget closes an additional \$46 million gap. These reductions are the first steps in a multi-year process to align revenues and expenditures. In order to realize these savings the county, and its employees, must all play an equal part in the solution. The Board is asking employees to contribute to their retirement benefit package so the county can maintain levels of public safety and community services. These changes will impact our public employees; but given that many private businesses have already experienced mass layoffs, or closed altogether, it is only right that the county also live within its reduced means.

This budget not only demonstrates sound fiscal policies, it represents a new chapter for the Board of Supervisors and a responsible approach to managing the public's money. A clear example of this is the elimination of board discretionary funds. No individual Supervisor has the legal authority to direct county resources. We are one legislative body and we must work together to make the best decisions for the *entire* county. Eliminating the ability for Supervisors to independently hand out funds or direct multi-million dollar projects *is* reform.

This is a change in the political culture that will bring about greater accountability and enable the development of a unified plan that delivers the county's vision.

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