

NEWS

From Supervisor Gary Ovitt
Fourth District, San Bernardino County



Press Statement

February 26, 2007

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Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend the board meeting on Tuesday, February 27th. I will be lobbying on behalf of Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in Washington D.C. to secure funding for Southern California regions that have been affected by the Goods Movement. I will also be attending the National Association of Counties (NACO) legislative conference to familiarize myself of changes that have been made by the 110th Congress, and what that will mean for San Bernardino County.

Though I won't be there to vote on these items, I feel there are a few items on Tuesday's agenda that require some special attention:

Item 46 - Increased Force Account Limits for Public Works Projects

This item is an important item to the Department of Public Works - Transportation. This item will authorize the Director of Public Works to establish a force account limit in the amount of \$150,000 for Public Works Projects. In the past, the Director could only authorize an amount of \$30,000 of work to be performed by the employees of a public agency. All other requests higher than this amount had to be contracted out. Due to this limit and the escalating construction costs, most projects had to be contracted out. By increasing the amount, the County is encouraging more work by employees, and limiting the amount of projects held up in the contract process.

This item will be very helpful to the County. I whole-heartedly support the increased force account limits for Public Works Projects

Item 73 - Contract with San Bernardino Community College District for School Readiness Program Services

This item will approve a revenue contract between the County Preschool Services Department and the San Bernardino Community College District. Approval of this item will allow Preschool Services Department to provide School Readiness Program services to approximately fifty-two (52) children at the Rialto site each Friday. The funds will be used to improve the ability of families, schools, and communities to prepare children to enter school ready to succeed.

As Chairman of the Shared Governance Board for Preschool Services, our mission is to provide a foundation for success for each child by giving them the highest quality child development and family support services. I support the contract with San Bernardino Community College District for School Readiness Program Services.

Item 84 - Federal Legislative Lobbying Contract

This item will approve a contract for federal legislative advocacy services to the County with Smith Dawson & Andrews. The County's legislative program utilizes advocacy services at both the federal

and state level to represent the County. Approval of this contract will allow Smith Dawson & Andrews to represent the County of San Bernardino in Washington, D.C. to help foster relationships and encourage more funding for the County.

I interviewed several of the top candidates for this contract and felt that Smith Dawson & Andrews would provide a high level of service with the County of San Bernardino. Their low priced bid and excellent reputation make a great combination for the county. I support the Federal Legislative Lobbying Contract with Smith Dawson & Andrews.

Item 120 - Appeal of a Planning Commission Approval of a Conditional Use Permit: Appellant: Kevin Sage; Applicant: Nursery Products, LLC; Community: Hinkley

This item will conduct a public hearing to consider the appeal of the Planning Commission's action to approve the Conditional Use Permit for Nursery Products. The approval of the Conditional Use Permit by the Planning Commission was based on the findings contained in the staff report and the fact that the facility meets the additional use criteria for the site. Two appeals have been filed, one on behalf of Kevin Sage, and the other on behalf of Center for Biological Diversity, Helphinkley.org, Desert Citizens Against Pollution, and the Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment. The appellants object to the approval based on inadequacies of the Final Environmental Impact Report and the approval process. I personally have received over 300 emails from constituents who live in and outside the area objecting to the Conditional Use Permit. While the Planning Commission's decision may have substantial merit, ***I have strong reservations about this item given the universal opposition by the residents of the community.***

Given the need for such a service and the strong opposition it has received, a compromise should be made that would better serve the residents of Hinkley and the County of San Bernardino.