

NEWS

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Supervisors complete annual legislative visit to Sacramento

SACRAMENTO – The Board of Supervisors completed its annual legislative visit to Sacramento today, wrapping up two days of meetings with legislators and administration officials and delivering the County’s recently adopted 60-page State Legislative Platform, which outlines the desired law changes and funding requests of the state’s fourth most populous county.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus, along with Vice Chairman and Second District Supervisor Paul Biane and Fourth District Supervisor Gary Ovitt took part in the two-day event that included visits to legislators’ Capitol offices. Also participating were Sheriff Gary Penrod, Treasurer/Tax-Collector Richard Larsen and Assessor Donald Williamson.

As is customary, the Board held a formal meeting Wednesday night near the Capitol to receive a briefing from the county’s legislative advocates, and hosted a dinner meeting with the county’s bi-partisan delegation of Senators and Assembly Members.

Thursday morning featured a briefing from Governor Schwarzenegger’s chief budget official, Finance Director Michael C. Genest. Genest spoke about the upcoming budget cycle, the economy and the anticipated Infrastructure Revenue Bond. Chairman Postmus said, all things considered, he found Genest’s talk to be encouraging. “It looks like hopefully the state is looking at dealing with its own issues and not balancing their problems on the backs of local government,” Postmus said. “They’re very interested in solving the structural deficit, which is important to all of us and will be key to improving California’s financial ratings on Wall Street. He also said the state will be putting more money into infrastructure, including transportation and schools. We also need a lot more judges to reduce the backlog in our courts, and they’re keenly aware of that.”

Board Members later on Thursday met with the Governor’s Cabinet Secretary, former San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chairman Fred Aguiar.

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Supervisor Biane said the value of taking the time for elected officials to meet face to face to discuss the needs of the county is immeasurable. "I'm committed as always to working with other levels of government to assure our county concerns are heard and addressed. By working together with the legislature, we can successfully address issues as diverse as aging services, habitat mitigation, land use and more."

Added Supervisor Ovitt: "Trips such as this help us build strong relationships with legislators and allow us to demonstrate our commitment to issues of mutual concern, such as protecting our children through Jessica's Law and the Safe Routes to School program. Also, we need to continually stress the importance of legislation to strengthen state revenue streams to education and veterans' services. There's nothing like face-to-face communications with legislators to convey how important these issues are to San Bernardino County."