



Legislative Bulletin

DRAFT

A Publication of the County Executive Office/Legislative Affairs

February 25, 2025
Item No. 30

County of Orange Positions on Proposed Legislation

The Legislative Bulletin provides the Board of Supervisors with analyses of measures pending in Sacramento and Washington that are of interest to the County. Staff provides recommended positions that fall within the range of policies established by the Board. According to the County of Orange Legislative Affairs Program Guidelines adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 25, 2022, staff recommendations for formal County positions on legislation will be agendized and presented in this document for Board action at regular Board of Supervisors meetings. When the Board takes formal action on a piece of legislation, the CEO will direct the County's legislative advocates to promote the individual bills as approved by the Board. The Legislative Bulletin also provides the Board of Supervisors with informative updates on State and Federal issues.

The 2025-2026 Legislative Platform was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 19, 2024.

On February 25, 2025, the Board of Supervisors will consider the following actions:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1. CO-SPONSOR/SUPPORT – AB 571 (Quirk-Silva): California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery.**
- 2. APPROVE: 2025 State & Federal Legislative Priorities**
- 3. Receive and File Legislative Bulletin**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- 1. Sacramento Legislative Report**
- 2. Washington DC Legislative Report**

1. **CO-SPONSOR/SUPPORT – AB 571 (Quirk-Silva): California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery.**

CEO/Office of Legislative Affairs
Bill Analysis



BILL NUMBER:	Assembly Bill (AB) 571	INTRODUCED/AMENDED DATE:	<u>Introduced/Amended:</u> February 12, 2025
AUTHOR:	Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-Fullerton) Co-Authors: Assemblymembers Phil Chen, Laurie Davies, Diane Dixon, Bill Essayli, Blanca Pacheco, Cottie Petrie-Norris, Kate Sanchez, Tri Ta, Avelino Valencia. Senators Bob Archuleta, Steven Choi		
SUBJECT:	California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery		
BILL SPONSOR:			
STATUS:	Assembly Rules Committee		
REQUESTING DEPARTMENT/AGENCY:	County Executive Office of Legislative Affairs (CEO-LA)		
DEPARTMENT/AGENCY RECOMMENDED POSITION:	CO-SPONSOR/SUPPORT		
CEO RECOMMENDED POSITION:	CO-SPONSOR/SUPPORT		
<u>Current Law and Background:</u>	The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a lead agency, as defined, to prepare, or cause to be prepared, and certify the completion of an environmental impact report on a project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant effect on the environment or to adopt a negative declaration if it finds that the project will not have that effect.		

	CEQA also requires a lead agency to prepare a mitigated negative declaration for a project that may have a significant effect on the environment if revisions in the project would avoid or mitigate that effect and there is no substantial evidence that the project, as revised, would have a significant effect on the environment.
<u>Proposed Law:</u>	<p>This bill would exempt from the requirements of CEQA any activity or approval necessary for the completion of the Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery in the County of Orange. To the extent that a local agency would be required to determine whether an activity or approval qualifies for this exemption, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would repeal this provision on January 1, 2030.</p> <p>The Legislature finds and declares that a special statute is necessary and that a general statute cannot be made applicable within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California Constitution because the County of Orange, the state's largest county without a veterans cemetery, requires specific legislative action to establish the Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery and provide a final resting place for its veterans.</p> <p>This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect.</p>
<u>Prior Legislative Votes:</u>	AB 1995 (Quirk-Silva) authorized \$25 million in previously secured state funding for constructing a state-owned veterans cemetery at Gypsum Canyon. (<i>Chapter 579, September 27, 2022.</i>)
<u>Vote Threshold:</u>	2/3
<u>State Mandated Local Program:</u>	Yes
<u>Fiscal Committee:</u>	Yes
<u>Support and Opposition:</u>	Pending
<u>Impact on Orange County:</u>	See below:
<i>Mandates:</i>	N/A
<i>Operations:</i>	AB 571 will accelerate construction for a project that has already undergone extensive environmental review, in the form of an addendum to a certified Environmental Impact Report. Despite this, a frivolous lawsuit challenging the EIR was filed for the sole purpose of delaying the project, which plaintiffs

	openly admit is their intent in order to move the project to an alternate, impractical location.
<i>Costs:</i>	<p>On July 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved allocating \$20 million exclusively for site development of a veterans cemetery at Gypsum Canyon, and previously allocated over 200 acres of County-owned land at Gypsum Canyon in Anaheim Hills near the intersection of the 91 freeway and 241 toll road, which has been deeded to the Orange County Cemetery District for the purpose of building a veterans cemetery.</p> <p>No additional County costs expected.</p>
<i>Revenues:</i>	N/A
<u>Impact on Department Area of Responsibility:</u>	N/A
<u>Policy Platform References:</u>	<p><u>CS-50: VETERANS CEMETERY:</u> “Support efforts to fund and expedite development of the Southern California Veterans Cemetery at Gypsum Canyon in Anaheim Hills.”</p> <p><i>Page 28</i></p>

2. APPROVE: 2025 State & Federal Legislative Priorities

Approving the 2025 Orange County State and Federal Legislative Priorities will allow the County to pursue critical policy initiatives in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

On November 19, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved its 2025-26 Legislative Platform and directed staff to return with 2025 state and federal legislative priorities for Board adoption no later than February 25, 2025. The Legislative Platform identified eight Board Initiatives as a general two-year framework that would be adjusted once Congress and the Legislature reconvened in January and identified their respective policy and budget priorities. The eight Board Initiatives are as follows:

- **Homelessness**
- **Housing Assistance**
- **OC Builds**
- **OC CARES**
- **Orange County Veterans Cemetery**
- **Opioid Epidemic**
- **Sustainability & Resiliency**
- **Workforce Development**

Given the extraordinary dynamics in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, CEO-Legislative Affairs and the County's state and federal advocates are proposing nine state legislative priorities and five federal legislative priorities for Board consideration and approval. Staff's objective is to align previous direction from the Board and the County Executive Office with anticipated state and federal policy and budget priorities. It is important to note that the Board can adjust or amend its legislative priorities at any time throughout the year.

State:

- **County Budget: Federal/State Funding Stability**
- **Project Homekey/ Homeless Housing Assistance & Prevention (HHAP) Funding**
- **RHNA/Housing Element Requirements**
- **Fire Insurance Availability**
- **Proposition 4 Climate Bond Funding for County Sustainability Initiatives**
- **Orange County Veterans Cemetery**
- **California Children's Services (CCS) Orange County Allocation Deficit**
- **Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) Insurance Availability**
- **County Budget: Liability Exposure Mitigation**

Federal:

- **County Budget: Federal Funding Stability**
- **Safety Net Access**
- **Reauthorize the Older Americans Act**
- **State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT)**
- **Orange County Veterans Cemetery**

2025 State Priorities

Issue	Request
County Budget: Federal/State Funding Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the safety net program funds for the County’s most vulnerable residents to minimize impacts of any federal and state delays. • Minimize disruptions to County administration of critical programs supporting families, children, and seniors. • Provide assurance about the stability of alternative funding sources, such as grants, one-time allocations, and bond distributions, to reduce volatility in County service delivery.
Project Homekey/ Homeless Housing Assistance & Prevention (HHAP) Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain consistent Project Homekey, Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) and other program funding streams to support the provision of services to the unhoused. • Expedite and expand the provision of funding for affordable housing construction to support priority populations, such as veterans, those with behavioral health needs, and those experiencing homelessness.
RHNA/Housing Element Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek legislative actions to increase Orange County’s ability to meet its housing planning obligations.
Fire Insurance Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek legislative actions that review & update building hardening measures for property-level and communitywide wildfire mitigation. • Seek County funds for wildfire resiliency programs in next round of legislative budget discussions. • Increase California FAIR Plan liquidity & claims-paying capacity.
Proposition 4 Climate Bond Funding for County Sustainability Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for County sustainability programs that will align with initial Proposition 4 Climate Bond allocations, including County parks and open space, and wetlands & watershed restoration.
Orange County Veterans Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek legislative action to exempt Gypsum Canyon property from redundant CEQA requirements. • Expedite CalVet’s acquisition of land in Gypsum Canyon to start the design and construction of the Southern California Veterans Cemetery. • Authorize the transfer of \$50 million of state and local funds into the Southern California Veterans Cemetery Master Development Fund.
California Children’s Services (CCS) Orange County Allocation Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek regulatory action from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to restore Orange County’s full funding allocation.
Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) Insurance Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding to help offset the cost of higher liability insurance for FFAs, while also raising social worker rates, to ensure foster youth can continue to be served by FFAs.
County Budget: Liability Exposure Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek legislative action that responsibly addresses fiscal liabilities related to statute of limitations claims filed against the County that balances accountability and fair compensation for past harm with the need to protect local resources for the ongoing provision of county services.

2025 Federal Priorities

Issue	Request
County Budget: Federal Funding Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given the fiscal outlook for the County in the coming years, seek stability in state and federal funding allocations.• Seek consistent funding increases to cover unfunded mandates and reduce volatility in the timing of payments.• Reduce overly prescriptive fiscal constraints on County financial decision-making to ensure local input guides local solutions.
Safety Net Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek legislative actions to maintain uninterrupted access to existing safety net programs, including those that support seniors, persons living with disabilities, and foster youth.• Ensure adequate funding is provided for full utilization of the County's Housing Choice Voucher allocation.• Provide sufficient funding for County administration of safety net programs.
Reauthorize the Older Americans Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek prompt reauthorization of the bipartisan Older Americans Act to support the growth of the aging population in the County.• Protect the increased flexibility and full funding for counties and county partners through the reauthorization and annual appropriations process.
State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restore the SALT deduction limit to at least \$20,000, which addresses the County's housing affordability crisis and helps preserve essential local services.
Orange County Veterans Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain the priority listing of the Southern California Veterans Cemetery on the Department of Veterans Affairs Priority List of State and Tribal Governments Cemetery Construction Grant Pre-Applications.• Provide expeditious approval, review, or input, as needed, to ensure the Southern California Veterans Cemetery progresses.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Sacramento Legislative Report

Prepared by Precision Advocacy Group LLC

As of the afternoon of February 19, 807 Assembly bills are in print and 452 Senate bills. This leaves roughly 500-600 Assembly bills and 200-300 Senate bills remaining to be introduced prior to the February 21 deadline. Bill introductions have been heavily focused on wildfire, homeowner's insurance, and housing policy so far. We will report more specifically on the legislation introduced once all the bills are introduced. There are a significant number of spot bills and intent bills that will also be amended over the next month to contain substantive policy changes.

Insurance Commissioner Rejects State Farm's Proposed Emergency Rate Hike

Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara denied State Farm Insurance's request for an emergency rate hike last week. If approved, the increase would have raised rates by 22% on average for State Farm's California customers.

In a letter to State Farm, Commissioner Lara requested that the company appear in person later this month, writing "the burden is on State Farm to demonstrate that interim relief is warranted under the circumstances. My goal is to make sure policyholders do not have to pay more than is required. Considering the recent Los Angeles wildfires, State Farm's customers need real answers about why they are being asked to pay more and what responsibility the company's leadership is taking to get its financial house in order." Commissioner Lara also acknowledged that his staff had recommended approval of the rate hike.

In a response, State Farm wrote that it "must seriously consider its options within the California insurance market going forward."

The denial to State Farm follows the Commissioner's approval for the state FAIR Plan to levy an assessment totaling \$1 billion on its member insurance companies to ensure that it has sufficient operating capital to continue paying policyholder claims without interruption.

Under new regulations that recently took effect as part of Commissioner Lara's [Sustainable Insurance Strategy](#), insurance customers will have to shoulder 50% of any assessment through a temporary fee added to their premiums. Before the new rules took effect, the plan would have received the additional funds directly from its member companies, which would have then tried to recoup that money by raising premiums.

Most California home and fire insurance customers will see temporary fees added to their insurance bills as part of the assessment, marking the first time insurance companies have imposed an assessment directly on customers. Insurance companies will need to submit filings with the insurance department before they can collect the one-time fees from their customers, said Michael Soller, department spokesperson. It is unclear what percentage of policyholders' premiums the fees will be based on. The FAIR Plan itself will not be imposing the fees.

The Los Angeles fires collectively burned over 47,900 acres, destroying or damaging more than 16,250 structures. A [study](#) released by the UCLA Anderson School of Management estimates

total property and capital losses could range between \$95 billion and \$164 billion, with insured losses estimated at \$75 billion.

Legislative Analyst's Child Welfare Budget Comments

Per usual, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has begun releasing analysis and recommendations to the legislature in response to the governor's January budget proposal. Over the last week, the LAO released its [Child Welfare](#) brief among others. Related to the governor's child welfare budget proposals, the LAO comments and suggests inquiries for the legislature on the Continuum of Care tiered rate structure and BH-CONNECT. The county has the opportunity to weigh in on any of these proposals or the LAO's suggestions or comments with the budget committees and legislative delegation as appropriate.

Continuum of Care Tiered Rate Structure: California has reformed its foster care system over the past decade through Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), including foster care payment rates. The state will implement a new tiered rate structure in 2027-28, which uses the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment to determine a youth's needed level of care and corresponding rate. To continue preparing necessary automation systems for implementation, the governor's proposed budget includes \$16 million (\$11 million General Fund) in 2025-26 for the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) and CWS-CARES. In addition, the budget proposal includes \$1.7 million (\$1.2 million General Fund) to support training and fidelity tools for counties on CANS assessments.

Questions from the LAO include:

- What will the proposed training and fidelity tools for counties on CANS assessments entail?
- Aside from CANS assessments, are there other processes implemented as part of CCR with which counties could benefit from state assistance prior to implementing the tiered rate structure?
- What are the major implementation milestones that will need to be completed prior to the initial roll out of the new rates to families in 2027? Has the department developed a roadmap indicating anticipated timing for achieving these milestones that could be shared with the legislature?

BH-CONNECT: BH-CONNECT is a federal Medicaid waiver demonstration project that aims to enhance community-based behavioral health care services using Medi-Cal funding. The project seeks to deliver early interventions to reach children and families to help prevent entry into or deepening involvement with the child welfare system, including activity funds, transitional rent, and the establishment of managed care plan child welfare liaisons. The demonstration period is January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2029, and around \$8 billion in total funding will support the various components of the project.

The LAO notes that implementing these activities will require close coordination between the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health Care Services at the state level, and between child welfare and mental health staff at the county level. It suggests that the legislature inquire regarding what coordination has occurred/is occurring at the state level, and what guidance will the state departments provide to county agencies.

January Revenues

The Department of Finance (DOF) and State Controller released reports on January’s revenues as compared to the 2025-26 governor’s budget proposal.

<i>Tax Revenues</i>	<i><u>DOF January</u></i>	<i><u>DOF Fiscal YTD</u></i>	<i><u>Controller Fiscal YTD</u></i>
<i>Personal Income</i>	\$174 million below forecast	\$2.08 billion above forecast	\$2.318 billion above forecast
<i>Corporation</i>	\$535 million below forecast	\$186 million below forecast	\$265.208 million below forecast
<i>Sales and Use</i>	\$48 million below forecast	\$96 million below forecast	\$949.019 million above forecast
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$361 million below forecast	\$2.234 billion above forecast	\$3.387 billion above forecast

Upcoming Hearings

Agendas are typically posted on the committee websites in the [Assembly](#) and [Senate](#) a few days prior to the hearings. To view hearings after they take place, you may access them in the [Assembly](#) or [Senate](#) media archives where they are generally available within a few hours of committee adjournment.

Monday, February 24, 2025, 2:30 p.m.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health

Addis, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 127

Item No. Description

4265 Department of Public Health

- Annual State of the State's Public Health Report
- Oversight Issue: Report on Future of Public Health funding, ADAP Funding, others
- Department Update: Avian Flu Response, Wildfires Response

4120 Emergency Medical Services Authority

- Budget Overview and Budget Change Proposal

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 9 a.m.

Senate Joint Hearing Public Safety and Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 5 on Corrections, Public Safety, Judiciary, Labor, and Transportation

Arreguin and Richardson, Chairs

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 2200

Informational Hearing: Implementation of Proposition 36

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5 on State Administration

Quirk-Silva, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 447
Item No. Description
0559 Labor and Workforce Development Agency
7100 Employment Development Department
7350 Department of Industrial Relations
7120 California Workforce Development Board
7300 Agricultural Labor Relations Board

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Senate Environmental Quality

Blakespear, Chair

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 2200

Informational Hearing: Subject: Extended Producer Responsibility in Action: Policy, Progress, and Pitfalls

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 9 a.m.

Assembly Joint Hearing Emergency Management and Housing and Community Development and Economic Development, Growth, and Household Impact

Ransom, Haney, Solache, Chairs

Location: State Capitol, Room 437

Oversight Hearing: Recovering and Rebuilding after the Los Angeles Wildfires

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 9:30 a.m.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4 On Climate Crisis, Resources, Energy, And Transportation

Bennett, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 447

Item No. Description

Various Prop. 4 - Wildfire and Forest Resilience Spending Plan
3540 Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
3480 Department of Conservation
3340 California Conservation Corps
3125 California Tahoe Conservancy
3110 Special Resources Programs
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
0509 Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Human Services

Jackson, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 444

Item No. Description

5180 Department of Social Services

- CalWORKs Program
- CalFresh and Food Programs
- Immigration and Refugee Programs
- Guaranteed Income Pilot Program
- Program Updates and Priority Issues of Interest
- Governor's Budget Proposals

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Senate Joint Hearing Health and Public Safety

Menjivar and Arreguin, Chairs

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 1200

Informational Hearing: California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM): Enhanced Care Management, Community Supports, and Justice Involved Reentry Initiatives

Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session

Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 1 on Education

Laird, Chair

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 2100

Item Description

6100 Department of Education

- State of Education
- Proposition 98 Overview
- Local Control Funding Formula
- Fiscal Health of School Districts
- Disaster Recovery for Schools

Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session

Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection, and Energy

Allen, Chair

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 2200

Item Description

0540 Natural Resources Agency

0650 Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

0690 Office of Emergency Services

3125 California Tahoe Conservancy

3340 California Conservation Corps

3360 Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission

3480 Department of Conservation

3540 Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3600 Department of Fish and Wildlife

3640 Wildlife Conservation Board

3760 State Coastal Conservancy

3790 Department of Parks and Recreation

3810 Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session

Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources, Environmental Protection, and Energy

Allen, Chair

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 2200

Item Description

3825 San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy

3845 San Diego River Conservancy

3850 Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

3855 Sierra Nevada Conservancy

3860 Department of Water Resources

3875 Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

3940 State Water Resources Control Board

4700 Department of Community Services and Development
8570 Department of Food and Agriculture

***Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3 on Health and Human Services***

Weber Pierson, Chair

Location: 1021 O Street, Room 1200

Item Description

4260 Department of Health Care Services

- Medi-Cal Overview
- Medi-Cal Provider Rates and Access
- Medi-Cal Managed Care
- Medi-Cal Dental Services
- Medi-Cal Pharmacy

***Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 4 on State Administration and
General Government***

Cabaldon, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 113

Item Description

Housing and Civil Rights Funding and Program Oversight

0515 Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency

0968 Tax Credit Allocation Committee

2240 Department of Housing and Community Development

2245 California Housing Finance Agency

***Thursday, February 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. or upon adjournment of Session
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 5 on Corrections, Public Safety,
Judiciary, Labor, and Transportation***

Richardson, Chair

Location: State Capitol, Room 112

Item Description

0250 Judicial Branch

0690 Office of Emergency Services

2720 Department of California Highway Patrol

7870 California Victim Compensation Board

Governor's Press Releases

Below is a list of the governor's press releases beginning February 12.

February 19: [Governor Newsom proclaims A Day of Remembrance: Japanese American Evacuation 2025](#)

February 19: [The Golden State will soon be home to the world's most renowned athletic events](#)

February 19: [Governor Newsom proposes \\$125 million in mortgage relief to benefit victims of recent natural disasters](#)

February 19: [\\$300 million of illicit fentanyl seized in California since 2023](#)

February 14: [Governor Newsom announces appointments 2.14.25](#)

- Melissa Stone, of Elk Grove, has been appointed Chief Deputy Director at the Department of Child Support Services

- Stephanie Weldon, of McKinleyville, has been appointed Deputy Director of the Office of Health Equity at the Department of Public Health
- Melissa Gear, of Elk Grove, has been appointed Deputy Director of Legislative and Governmental Affairs at the Department of Health Care Access and Information
- Daniel Millsap, of Folsom, has been appointed Deputy Director of the Real Estate Services Division at the California Department of General Services
- Katie Hardeman, of Sacramento, has been appointed Chief Deputy Executive Director at the State Board of Education
- Richard Roth, of Riverside, has been appointed to the Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board
- Seanna Griffis, of Sacramento, has been appointed Special Assistant to the Secretary and Undersecretary at the Government Operations Agency
- Christopher Contreras, of Northridge, has been appointed to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
- Makenzie Cross, of Elk Grove, has been appointed to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
- Robert Callan, Jr., of San Francisco, has been appointed to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
- Jody Kolbach, of Watsonville, has been appointed to the 14th District Agricultural Association Santa Cruz Fair Board

February 14:[State and local actions to pre-deploy resources for storms helps save lives](#)

February 14:[Governor Newsom announces judicial appointments 2.14.25](#)

- Phu Nguyen, of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court.
- Sonia Dujan, of Ventura County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Mike Madokoro, of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- James Montgomery Jr., of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Jacob Yim, of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Helen Yang, of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Louis Parise, of Los Angeles County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Randall Harr, of Shasta County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Modoc County Superior Court
- Mickie Reed, of Riverside County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Riverside County Superior Court
- Michael Martin, of Riverside County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Riverside County Superior Court
- Chandra Reid, of San Diego County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the San Diego County Superior Court
- Mark McCannon, of San Francisco County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the San Mateo County Superior Court
- Jason Taylor, of Kings County, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Tulare County Superior Court

- Amy Van Sickle, of Ventura, has been appointed to serve as a Judge in the Ventura County Superior Court

February 14: [Governor Newsom issues emergency proclamation to help Santa Cruz recover from destructive winter storms](#)

February 14: [Governor Newsom marks new milestone in Delta Conveyance Project](#)

February 13: [Governor Newsom cuts more red tape by further streamlining permitting laws to accelerate rebuilding Los Angeles](#)

February 13: [Governor Newsom announces appointments 2.13.25](#)

- Vera Zakem, of Walnut Creek, has been appointed State Chief Technology Innovation Officer at the California Department of Technology
- Aaron Stockwell, of Fair Oaks, has been reappointed to the California Building Standards Commission
- Elham “Elley” Klausbruckner, of San Diego, has been reappointed to the California Building Standards Commission
- William Benedict, of Danville, has been appointed to the Board of Pilot Commissioners for the Bays of San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun
- Karen Tynan, of Fairfield, has been reappointed to the Board of Pilot Commissioners for the Bays of San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun
- Lynn Korwatch, of Alamo, has been reappointed to the Board of Pilot Commissioners for the Bays of San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun
- Mary-Ann Warmerdam, of Woodland, has been appointed to the 40th District Agricultural Association Yolo County Fair Board
- Phil Mercado, of Los Angeles, has been reappointed to the California Arts Council, where he has served since 2022

February 12: [Governor Newsom announces appointments 2.12.25](#)

- Kate Hoyt, of Sacramento, has been appointed Deputy Secretary of Communications at the California Department of Veterans Affairs
- Shaun Spillane, of Gold River, has been appointed Chief Deputy Inspector General at the Office of the Inspector General
- Michael “Mike” Detoy, of Hermosa Beach, has been appointed to the California Public Employees’ Retirement System Board of Administration
- Christopher Gonder, of Brawley, has been appointed to the Commission on Correctional Peace Officer Standards and Training
- Hellen Hong, of Los Angeles, has been reappointed to the Civil Rights Council, where she has served since 2021
- Hugh Crooks, of Los Angeles, has been reappointed to the California Veterans Board, where he has served since 2017

February 11: [Governor Newsom announces appointments 2.11.25](#)

- Karen Morrison, of Sacramento, has been appointed Director at the California Department of Pesticide Regulation
- Nicholas Lutton, of Fresno, has been appointed to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Eric Bergersen, of Long Beach, has been appointed to the Physician Assistant Board
- Ed Perez, of Sacramento, has been appointed to the Physician Assistant Board
- Drake Dillard, of Los Angeles, has been reappointed to the California Commission on Disability Access
- Jaqueline Jackson, of San Diego, has been reappointed to the California Commission on Disability Access

February 11: [With biggest winter storm of the season looming, California takes early, proactive steps to protect communities and harden burn scar areas](#)

February 11: [Governor Newsom issues executive order to support childcare providers impacted by LA fires](#)

2. Washington DC Legislative Report

Prepared by Townsend Public Affairs, Inc.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ACTIVITY

Senate Begins Debate on Budget Reconciliation

This week, the Senate advanced its budget resolution ([S. Con. Res. 7](#)) after advancing it out of the Budget Committee last week. Meanwhile, the House was not in session but is scheduled to bring its version of the resolution to the floor next week. This marks the next step in the budget reconciliation process, a legislative tool frequently used for partisan measures as it bypasses the Senate filibuster, allowing passage without minority party support.

S. Con. Res. 7 directs committees to develop legislation supporting President Trump's priorities on border security, defense, and energy. Senate Republicans aim to secure an early legislative and political victory for President Trump before pursuing a second reconciliation package focused on tax cuts later in the year. Last Thursday, the House Budget Committee advanced a draft resolution encompassing all of President Trump's priorities, including up to \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts and a \$4 trillion increase to the debt limit.

However, the House and Senate remain divided on how to proceed. To continue with the budget reconciliation process, both chambers must adopt the same budget resolution. President Trump has expressed a preference for the House's unified approach, while House leaders are concerned about passing two separate bills given the GOP's narrow majority. In contrast, Senate leaders argue that border security and defense priorities are too pressing to be delayed by tax negotiations. Discussions between the two chambers are expected to continue in the coming weeks.

FY2025 Appropriations Update

The federal government is operating under a continuing resolution (CR) that extends funding through March 14. There have been discussions around an extended CR that would allow Republicans time to work through their budget reconciliation process, but it is not clear whether or not this will occur. The current CR maintains government operations at the previous fiscal year's levels, providing Congress with additional time to finalize the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025) appropriations bills.

President Biden's budget for FY2025, released in March 2024, proposed \$895 billion in defense spending and \$711 billion in non-defense discretionary spending. However, partisan disagreements have delayed the passage of the 12 regular appropriations bills. The House has passed several bills along party lines, but the Senate has not yet approved them, leading to the reliance on continuing resolutions to maintain government funding.

Congressman Tran Appointed Ranking Member on Small Business Subcommittee

Congressman Derek Tran was appointed Ranking Member for the House Small Business Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations. The Ranking Member is the top member of the minority party on a given committee or subcommittee. The House Small Business Committee provides direct oversight for matters affecting small businesses, including access to capital, resources for minority, veteran and women entrepreneurs, and Small Business Administration lending programs. In particular, the Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations will review the regulatory burdens imposed on small businesses by federal agencies and how those burdens may be alleviated.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH ACTIVITY

White House Starts Unwinding Environmental Permitting Rules

The White House is dismantling the rules that clarify how environmental permits are issued for federal projects such as pipelines, highways, and transmission lines. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) submitted an [interim final rule](#), titled *Removal of National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations*, which circumvents the typical notice and comment process and can take effect immediately. The rule change aims to speed up permitting, but opponents argue that it will accelerate climate change, harm communities, and lead to more litigation.

Previously, President Trump signed an [executive order](#) giving the CEQ until February 19 to consider rescinding all rules issued under the National Environmental Policy Act and replace them with nonbinding guidance. Agencies would still have to do National Environmental Policy Act analyses if the rules are scrapped. The issue has the attention of Congress, which has tried to pass permitting-overhaul legislation. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing on Wednesday on improving the federal environmental review and permitting processes.

This is consistent with President Trump's efforts to reduce red tape and regulation. President Trump set a goal during his first term to eliminate two regulations for every new one. This time, he has said, he wants to slash 10 regulations for each new one. President Trump has also signed a series of executive orders aimed at boosting American fossil fuels and undoing policies that favor electric vehicles.

Trump Administration Challenges California Over Ban on Gasoline Cars

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will submit air pollution waivers to Congress for review in an initial strike against California car pollution regulations. The regulations compel zero-emission vehicle sales, which the President says limits consumer choice. EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin said he would formally subject EPA's approval of those California rules to congressional scrutiny.

The move empowers congressional Republicans to swiftly repeal the pollution standards using expedited procedures under a law known as the Congressional Review Act. Doing so could effectively wipe away California's Clean Cars II program, which mandates zero-emission vehicles and ultimately bans the sale of gasoline-powered cars in 2035. Carmakers, auto dealers and fuel producers that have called California's standards unachievable. Refiners and biofuel producers have challenged some of the requirements in federal court.

The Congressional Review Act allows Congress to review and repeal federal regulations issued by executive agencies within a specified time frame through a joint resolution of disapproval. It could take months for the agency to justify a reversal. In the meantime, the requirements are already affecting automakers. Under Clean Cars II, automakers in California and others abiding by the regulation must sell at least 35% zero-emission vehicles in 2026.

HUD Halts Enforcement of Equal Access Rule

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Scott Turner has directed the department to halt enforcement of the 2016 Equal Access Rule, which prohibits discrimination in HUD-funded housing and shelter programs based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. The Equal Access Rule was initially published in 2012 and it expanded in 2016 to specifically protect transgender individuals from discrimination in emergency and transitional housing. This expansion was intended to protect transgender individuals from discrimination in accessing emergency and transitional housing. The Equal Access Rule remains in place, rescinding it would require a formal regulatory process. Secretary Turner has indicated that this is just the first of many upcoming policy shifts within HUD.

Below are the impacts of Secretary Turner's order:

- HUD-funded programs, shelters, and service providers will determine eligibility based on an individual's biological sex at birth (male or female).

- The previous mandate allowing individuals to self-identify their gender for housing and shelter access will no longer be enforced.
- The directive aligns HUD's policies with President Trump's executive order to recognize only male and female sexes within federal agencies.

President Trump Signs Executive Order Limiting the Role of Independent Agencies

On Tuesday, President Trump signed an executive order granting the White House direct oversight of independent federal regulators, including the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Federal Communications Commission. These agencies typically are run by bipartisan panels whose members are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for fixed terms. The White House believes that independent regulators could undermine the President's agenda and the will of the voting public.

The order allows the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to set performance standards and management objectives for agency heads. OMB may also adjust agency funding based on "activity, function, project, or object" that could conflict with the President's agenda. Additionally, independent agency leaders will be required to appoint White House liaisons to coordinate with the administration.

Critics argue this move could limit Congress's control over agency spending and prompt legal challenges, as courts may need to weigh in on the extent of executive authority over independent bodies.

DOGE Updates and Federal Workforce Reductions

The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), led by Elon Musk, has aggressively pursued cost-cutting measures to streamline federal operations and reduce expenditures. The department claims to have saved U.S. taxpayers approximately \$55 billion since President Trump's inauguration in January. These savings have reportedly been achieved through contract and lease renegotiations, grant cancellations, workforce reductions, and regulatory adjustments. Significant cuts have targeted agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Education.

As part of these efforts, the Trump administration has initiated large-scale layoffs of probationary federal employees who have not yet secured civil service protections. These cuts, directed by the Office of Personnel Management, align with President Trump's executive order mandating significant staff reductions to shrink the federal workforce. DOGE has been tasked with leading this initiative, though legal experts argue the moves could face legal challenges and may undermine critical government functions. The confirmed agencies experiencing mass layoffs include:

- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- General Services Administration
- Office of Personnel Management
- Small Business Administration
- U.S. Forest Service
- Veterans Affairs
- National Nuclear Security Administration
- and Housing and Urban Development

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED BY ORANGE COUNTY DELEGATION

Bill Number	Bill Title	Introduction Date	Sponsor	Total Cosponsors	Summary	Latest Major Action
H.R.1423	Not Available Yet	02/18/25	Rep. Mike Levin	10	To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to members of the National Guard who perform certain full-time duty, and for other purposes.	Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs., 02/18/25
H.R.1332	Aquatic Biodiversity Preservation Act of 2025	2/13/2025	Rep. Dave Min	2	To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish and carry out a program to sequence the genomes of aquatic species.	Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources., 02/13/25
S.597	Age 21 Act	02/13/25	Sen. Alex Padilla	18	A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the purchase of certain firearms by individuals under 21 years of age, and for other purposes.	Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary., 02/13/25
S.602	Not Available Yet	02/13/25	Sen. Alex Padilla	3	A bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to support research and development of ungulate grazing land management techniques for purposes of wildfire mitigation, fuel reduction, and post-fire recovery.	Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry., 02/13/25

If you or your staff have any questions or require additional information on any of the items in this bulletin, please contact Peter DeMarco at 714-834-5777.