

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

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Purpose

To establish the Board of Supervisors’ policy regarding legislative advocacy, which includes proactive engagement on policy and non-policy issues, responsive advocacy on pending legislation, and correspondence with legislators, other elected officials and staff, or policy makers.

Background

An effective program of legislative representation includes proactively advocating the legislative policies of the Board of Supervisors to members, committees, and staff of the State Legislature and United States Congress, to the elected, appointed officials, and staff of State and federal agencies, boards, commissions and other entities, and to the office of the Governor and President (hereinafter referred to as governmental bodies).

Occasionally it may be necessary to direct legislative advocacy activities toward or with local or regional governmental bodies. These governmental bodies include, but are not limited to: city councils, local tribal nations, bi-national partners, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), North County Transit District (NCTD), the Regional Airport Authority, the Unified Port of San Diego, local school districts, and others.

This policy establishes the parameters for the use of the annual Board adopted Legislative Program and provides direction to the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs (EDGA) and the County’s Sacramento and Washington, D.C. advocates. At times when advance notification and authorization of the Board is impracticable and where it is imperative that the County act quickly and proactively to ensure that the Board’s established priorities are conveyed to the appropriate State and/or federal entities, this policy provides direction on how the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs and outside advocates may advocate for the County’s interests.

Policy

The legislative advocacy policy of the County of San Diego is as follows:

A. Advocacy by County Staff

1. The following County staff are authorized to advocate at the local, State, and federal levels positions consistent with the Board’s annually adopted Legislative Program and other Board authorized matters:

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- a. The Chief Administrative Officer, or the Chief Administrative Officer's designee,
- b. County Legislative Advocates,
- c. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

2. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs may authorize other County staff, as appropriate, to advocate the Board's legislative positions before governmental bodies.

3. Written communications to local, State, or federal governmental bodies advocating County legislative positions shall be signed by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, the Chief Administrative Officer, or the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs. This limitation shall not apply to correspondence on behalf of the County by the County's Sacramento and Washington Advocates.

B. Advocacy Involving Policy Issues

1. Advocacy on policy issues not in the Legislative Program or authorized by other Board action requires prior Board approval.

2. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall, when possible, provide materials to be used in testimony before another governmental body to the Board of Supervisors two weeks before the scheduled testimony, or as soon thereafter as available. County staff shall coordinate in advance with the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs in preparing testimony and materials to be used when communicating with or testifying before governmental bodies.

3. The Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall coordinate the scheduling of presentations before governmental bodies with the County's Legislative Advocates.

C. Advocacy Involving Prior Board Positions on Pending Legislation

1. Legislative positions adopted by the Board of Supervisors on pending legislation shall remain in effect during the current session of the State Legislature and during the current session of the Congress.

2. County staff, as defined above, are authorized to advocate positions on pending legislation that are consistent with the Board's Legislative Program or authorized by other current Board action.

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3. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs may authorize County staff to advocate positions on current legislation that are consistent with the Board's Legislative Program or authorized by other Board action.

4. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall provide written notification to the Board of Supervisors before or concurrently with taking advocacy actions based on the Board's Legislative Program or authorized by other Board action.

5. For any legislative proposals that impact the County or may be of interest to the Board, but where the Board's Legislative Program or other Board actions do not allow the County to advocate for or against the legislative proposal, the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall submit a Legislation of Interest Memorandum to the Board notifying the Board of the lack of authority, and include an analysis on the proposal.

D. Advocacy Involving Non-Policy Issues

1. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall decide, in each case, whether proposed presentations before governmental bodies are of a policy or non-policy nature. Information of a non-policy nature shall be defined as technical or factual in nature. In cases in which the nature of the proposed presentation is not clear, the Director shall obtain the concurrence of the Chair of the Board.

2. Appropriate County staff and staff authorized by the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs may present to governmental bodies information of a non-policy nature without prior specific Board authorization.

3. Presentation of information of a non-policy nature shall be coordinated with the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

4. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall, in all cases, provide written notification to the Board of Supervisors before or concurrently with the authorization of any such presentations made on behalf of the County.

5. This policy does not apply to actions where the County is a party to a regulatory proceeding.

E. Communications with Elected Officials

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1. Written correspondence to federal, state, or local elected officials on behalf of the County shall be signed by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Chief Administrative Officer, or the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

a. The Chief Administrative Officer may delegate signature authority if necessary and appropriate.

b. This limitation shall not affect correspondence on behalf of the County by the County's Sacramento and Washington Advocates.

2. Before seeking the signature of the appropriate County official, as described above, County departments shall obtain the prior concurrence of the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

3. The Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs shall provide copies of written correspondence covered by this section to the Board of Supervisors before or concurrently with mailing.

4. Except as otherwise authorized by the Policy, all direct communications with elected officials, whether written or oral, shall be coordinated with the Director of the Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

F. Regional Advocacy

1. It is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to work cooperatively with regional partners such as cities, special districts, tribal nations, bi-national partners, and other local decision-making bodies to influence legislation that has an impact to our region.

Responsible Department

Chief Administrative Office

Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-24.

References

Board Action 2-11-75 (67)

Board Action 8-17-77 (9)

Board Action 12-17-80 (12)

Board Action 12-11-84 (20)

Board Action 4-19-88 (6)

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Board Action 6-16-98 (2)
Board Action 10-31-06 (14)
Board Action 12-09-08 (33)
Board Action 12-07-10 (27)
Board Action 11-14-17 (27)
Board Action 1-26-21 (14)