



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: August 31, 2021

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TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

ADVANCING FEDERAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On January 26, 2021(14), the Board authorized a revised 2021 Legislative Program that includes focused and succinct guiding principles and key legislative initiatives and priorities which set the County on a new course of advocacy. This Board also directed the CAO to review and calibrate the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs staff and functions according to the new legislative program to focus on proactive action and nimble advocacy of the adopted guiding principles and legislative priorities. Building on that direction, and in response to recent federal actions, it has become clear that the County would greatly benefit from having staff based in Washington, D.C. and co-located with the National Association of Counties (NACo).

The changing dynamics in Washington, D.C. over the first few months of the Biden Administration has provided fiscal and policy opportunities that greatly benefit the County of San Diego, with more opportunities on the horizon. Combined with our new, flexible Legislative Program that has allowed the County to engage for the first time proactively in a broad array of legislative opportunities, it is the right time to build momentum on the ground in Washington, D.C. Replicating a model adopted by Miami-Dade County, co-locating a staff member with NACo provides real-time and face-to-face access to the county-focused advocacy NACo provides as well as close proximity to Capitol Hill and our delegation's D.C. offices.

Today's action would add a staff member to the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs to be based in Washington, D.C. in the offices of NACo, and be responsible for focused efforts on advancing the Board's Legislative Program on all federal advocacy efforts.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

- 1) Approve the request to add one staff year(s) to support the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs, take appropriate administrative actions to on-board, and direct the Department of Human Resources to classify the position at the appropriate level.

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- 2) Authorize the Director of the Department of General Services, and upon successful negotiations, enter into a lease or license, and any other necessary agreement(s), with the National Association of Counties for office space and associated support services for one County employee for an initial term of up to five years with five one-year options.
- 3) Transfer appropriations of \$270,000 from the Finance and General Government Group Executive Office, Service and Supplies to the Chief Administrative Office, Salaries & Benefits (\$245,000) and Services & Supplies (\$25,000) in support of the addition of one staff year.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The County of San Diego has had items on two Board agendas this year to address crafting a Legislative Program that meets the needs of the entire region. This includes adding to the legislative priorities an Equity and Justice section as well as creating Guiding Principles to advocate for legislation that ensures equity, transparency, and access for all residents. By advancing these efforts through legislative advocacy at the federal level, we are ensuring policy change and financial resources for programs and services that benefit and uplift the residents we serve.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Operational Plan in the Finance and General Government Group Executive Office. If approved, this request will result in estimated current year costs of \$270,000 based on unassigned General Fund fund balance, and similar ongoing annual costs in subsequent years based on General Purpose Revenue. There will be an increase in net General Fund cost and an increase of one staff year.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The Board of Supervisor's Legislative Program provides policy direction to staff and to the County's Sacramento and Washington, D.C. representatives regarding advocacy efforts on the County's behalf. On January 26, our Board authorized a revised 2021 Legislative Program that includes focused and succinct guiding principles and key legislative initiatives and priorities which set the County on a new course of advocacy.

The changing dynamics in Washington, D.C. in the first few months of the Biden Administration has provided fiscal and policy opportunities that greatly benefit the County of San Diego, with more opportunities on the horizon. This includes the re-establishment of Congressional earmarks after more than a decade, large-scale COVID-19 relief from the American Rescue Plan Act, and current negotiations on an infrastructure plan. Combined with our new, flexible Legislative Program that has allowed the County to engage for the first time proactively in a broad array of legislative opportunities, it is the right time to build momentum on the ground in Washington, D.C.

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Miami-Dade County has benefitted greatly from having co-located a county staff person in the offices of the National Association of Counties (NACo). This staff person reports to their Office of Intergovernmental Affairs in Miami, and is responsible for coordinating their Federal Advocacy, visits from their County elected officials, and working with NACo and Miami-Dade's contracted advocates to move forward their federal priorities. By adopting a similar model, we will have real-time and face-to-face access to the county-focused advocacy NACo provides as well as close proximity to Capitol Hill and our delegation's D.C. offices.

Utilizing the office space at NACo is critical to the success of this model as NACo is the only national organization completely focused on advocacy for counties and provides myriad resources both in personnel and in services and supports that advance our goals. In addition, NACo is able to offer fully furnished rental office space at cost and provides with that office space access to conference rooms, a print shop, and onsite IT services. Evaluation of this staff position will be conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the fiscal year to ensure the County's federal advocacy needs are being met.

As we continue to implement the Framework for the Future, today's action provides another tool in the toolbox to advance our priorities now and for years to come.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Building Better Health, Living Safely, Sustainable Environments/Thriving and Operational Excellence initiatives of the County of San Diego's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan by providing additional staff in the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs for advancing the Board's Legislative Program on federal advocacy efforts on behalf of the County.

Respectfully submitted,



HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: ☐ Yes ☒ No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED

☐ Yes ☒ No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

January 12, 2021 (12) - Framework for our Future: Reforming the County Legislative Agenda;
January 26, 2021 (14) - 2021 Revised Legislative Program.

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

M-1 Legislative Proposals Sponsored by the Board of Supervisors
M-2 Legislative Policy: Legislative Advocacy

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION
NUMBER(S):**

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): Chief Administrative Office

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