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Humboldt County



2021 State and Federal Legislative Platform

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COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



**REX
BOHN**
District 1



**ESTELLE
FENNELL**
District 2



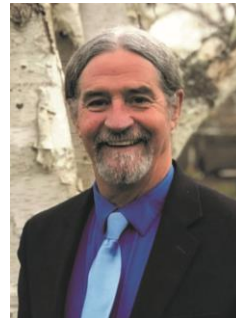
**MIKE
WILSON**
District 3
Chair

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Chair

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**VIRGINIA
BASS**
District 4
Vice-Chair



**STEVE
MADRONE**
District 5

HUMBOLDT COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATIONS

Governor Gavin Newsom (D) Governor of California State Capitol Building Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-445-2841	Website: gov.ca.gov 124 Hall of States 444 North Capitol Street NW Washington, D.C. 20001 Phone: 202-624-5270
State Representatives	
State Senate	
Senator Mike McGuire (D) State Senate District 2 1036 5 th Street, Suite D Eureka, CA 95501 Phone: 707-445-6508	Website: http://sd02.senate.ca.gov State Capitol 1303 10 th Street, Room 5061 Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-651-4002
State Assembly	
Assemblymember Jim Wood (D) State Assembly District 2 1036 5 th Street, Suite D Eureka, CA 95501 707-445-7014	Website: http://a02.asmdc.org State Capitol P.O. Box 942849 Sacramento, CA 94249 Phone: 916-319-2002
Federal Representatives	
United States Senate	
Vice President-Elect /Senator Kamala Harris (D) United States Senate 201 I Street, Suite 7-600 Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-448-2787	Website: www.harris.senate.gov 112 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: 202-224-3553
Senator Dianne Feinstein (D) United States Senate One Post Street, Suite 2450 San Francisco, CA 94104 Phone: 415-393-0707	Website: www.feinstein.senate.gov 331 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: 202-224-3841
United State House of Representatives	
Congressman Jared Huffman (D) California's 2nd Congressional District 317 Third Street, Suite 1 Eureka, CA 95501 Phone: 707-407-3585	Website: www.huffman.house.gov 1406 Longworth HOB Washington, DC 20515-0501 Phone: 202-225-5161

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STATE LEGISLATIVE GOALS

Humboldt County's primary, overarching goals for 2021 include:

SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT ADVOCATES FOR MAXIMUM LOCAL CONTROL AND FLEXIBILITY IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF COUNTY PROGRAMS.

SUPPORT RELIEF FROM STATE MANDATES AND/OR ELIMINATION OF STATUTORY BARRIERS.

OPPOSE ATTEMPTS TO SHIFT COSTS FROM STATE TO COUNTIES.

OPPOSE REDUCTIONS TO THE CURRENT LEVEL OF STATE FUNDING FOR COUNTY PROGRAMS.

SUPPORT EFFORTS TO BRING MODERN SERVICES TO RURAL COMMUNITIES.

SUPPORT AND ADVANCE LOCAL INTERESTS IN NATURAL RESOURCE DISCUSSIONS.

INCREASE EFFORTS AND FUNDING FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION, RENEWABLE ENERGY.

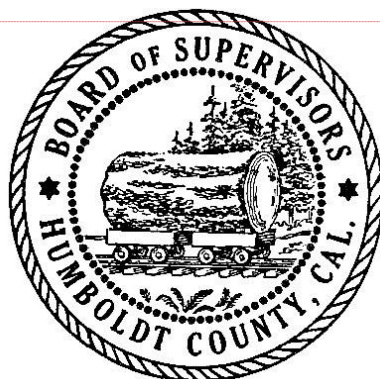
PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE COUNTY'S ABILITY TO FUND LOCAL PROGRAMS.

SUPPORT STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

SUPPORT EFFORTS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES.

INCREASE EFFORTS RELATED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EFFECTIVE POLICING.

OPPOSE THE DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL OR IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY NON-CRITICAL OR EMERGENCY LEGISLATIVE OR REGULATORY EFFORTS THAT WOULD UNJUSTIFIABLY DIVERT COUNTY STAFF AWAY FROM THE CRITICAL WORK BEING DONE TO SERVE THE PUBLIC DURING THE PANDEMIC.



STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

AGRICULTURE

STATE REIMBURSEMENTS FOR CANNABIS-RELATED EXPENDITURES

Humboldt County has been disproportionately affected by the impacts of illegal cannabis cultivation. The Agricultural Commissioner's office has played a significant role in bringing the illicit-market industry into compliance with applicable Commissioner's Office programs. In fiscal year 2018-19, Humboldt County was denied more than \$130,000 in Unclaimed Gas Tax reimbursements as a result of the significant increase of time spent performing unreimbursable cannabis-related activities. California Counties performing state-mandated functions for the cannabis industry are unfairly being denied revenue critical for ensuring that state mandates are being enforced. Maintaining the status quo with regards to cannabis expenditures ensures that counties without large cannabis cultivation industries do not see a reduction in their gas tax allocations. Further, it incentivizes counties not to utilize the Agriculture Commissioner to oversee and regulate cannabis operations and instead approach the local regulation through a law-enforcement lens at the same time that the State is trying to destigmatize the industry and further it rewards those counties that have not legalized cultivation at all.

Humboldt County supports legislative changes or an agreement by responsible parties that cannabis-related expenditures are reportable expenses for the purpose of calculating Unclaimed Gas Tax reimbursements to County Agricultural Commissioners or cannabis expenditures will not count against Maintenance of Effort calculations.

RETAIN LOCAL CONTROL REGARDING CANNABIS

The proliferation of cannabis dispensaries and cultivation has created a variety of problems in many areas of the state. Local governments must be able to enact prohibitions or regulations in the face of threats posed by cannabis to the public's health, safety and general welfare. In addition, the cultivation of cannabis is often accompanied by land use and operational activities such as clearing of land, grading, road construction, water withdrawals from streams, pond installation, and application of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers.

Humboldt County supports legislation that allows individual local governments the discretion to either adopt new programs in full, to modify the program as they see fit, or to opt out of programs completely. The county also supports efforts to give clear guidance and resources to agencies responsible for enforcing laws associated with cannabis and cannabis cultivation. Finally, the county supports a requirement that state agencies coordinate with local governments in enforcement efforts and land use decisions around cannabis.

STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

GROWING LIMITS ON CANNABIS CULTIVATION SITES

Small cannabis cultivation operations make up a large majority of the cultivation sites in Humboldt County and around the state, which benefits both the environment and industry. These small sites have a lesser impact on the environment than larger grows, and due to the high number of small operators the local cannabis industry is protected against the failure of one or a few businesses. It is in the interest of the county and the rest of the state to ensure that small cultivators can remain competitive in the marketplace by limiting the size of cannabis farms to no larger than 1 acre. However, current law states that restrictions on grow sizes will be eliminated beginning in 2023.

Humboldt County supports legislation that limits the size of cannabis cultivation sites. In addition, Humboldt County supports legislation that allows small farmers to remain competitive in cannabis industry.

REVENUE FROM CANNABIS TAXES

The revenues raised from state cannabis taxes are dedicated to certain activities and agencies. Some of the revenues raised by the taxes will come back to local governments in the form of competitive grants. However, Humboldt County has traditionally been less competitive than larger governments at securing these types of grants due to our small population and other limiting factors. This presents a potential significant issue for Humboldt as there is more cannabis activity that happens locally than other more populated areas in the state. In addition, much of the revenues from cannabis taxes go toward enforcement and young adult intervention. Humboldt County has found that funding early prevention efforts, particularly for young children and parents, can have a greater effect at producing positive outcomes later in life.

The county supports legislation that uses revenue from cannabis taxes to help rural counties, and/or disburses revenue from cannabis taxes to local governments by formula. The county also supports state funding from cannabis taxes to go toward prevention, particularly for early childhood.

EXTEND PROVISIONAL CANNABIS LICENSING

Under current law, Provisional Cannabis Licenses will not be issued by the State beyond Dec. 31, 2021. Those who have not received their actual local permit and annual state license will not have a permitting pathway going into 2022. Humboldt County has roughly 600 cannabis cultivators operating under a county-issued interim permit and state-issued provisional license. Humboldt has increased staffing, to assist in the permit process, how however, to process 600 interim permits to completion and for cultivators to obtain state annual licensing within 1 year is extremely optimistic. The danger of closing the permitting pathway is to encourage people to enter back into the illicit market.

STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

The county supports legislation that extends the time for issuance of provisional state licenses.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP

States are required to develop regulations on hemp that include THC testing procedures, including inspections done at least annually; bookkeeping procedures to keep track of land approved for hemp cultivation and plans for “effective disposal” of hemp plants with too much THC. County Agricultural Commissioners have limited funding mechanisms and resources to carry out local responsibility or service for new mandates and/or programs. When statutory fees are insufficient to fund mandates or programs, county general funds are required to subsidize the difference.

Humboldt County opposes legislation creating local mandates or programs that do not provide 100% funding and resources for additional regulatory activities to be carried out by Agricultural Commissioners or Sealers. Humboldt County also opposes any legislative initiatives that impair or restrict local land use authority.

MARKETPLACE EQUITY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Weights and Measures Programs are important to businesses and consumers in California. Weights and Measures regulatory activities ensure that there is a “level playing field” for business and industries. Likewise, these programs are critical in providing protection for consumers and a method for making value comparisons by providing equity in the marketplace. The Division of Measurement Standards (DMS) within the California Department of Food and Agriculture is the lead agency for weights and measures. DMS has incurred significant general fund reductions that have diminished their ability to provide consumer protection.

The county supports legislation that improves consumer confidence in labeling, weighing and measuring. The county also supports funding for metrology, quantify control, package inspection, and funding that preserves and enhances resources for weights and measures programs at the state and local level.

STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM

State statutes and regulations on organic products protect consumers, and others in the food production chain by establishing standards under which fresh agricultural products/foods may be labeled and/or sold as “organic.” Today every person engaged in California organic production, processing or sale must register with the State Organic Program (SOP). Through this efficient and cost-effective program, a meaningful framework has been established that supports the integrity and enforcement of organic production in California.

The county supports legislation that strengthens the SOP and organic production.

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STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

USDA/CALIFORNIA COUNTY COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE SERVICES (WS) PROGRAM

Increased urbanization and suburbanization has led to a reduction and fragmentation of wildlife habitat. At the same time, wildlife populations continue to expand because of reduced hunting, changes in animal protection status, and the loss of various control mechanisms. Conflicts between people and wildlife are common necessitating professional services to mitigate conflict and reduce the potential for human health and safety impacts to residents. Funding for USDA's Wildlife Services program has traditionally been secured through cooperative agreements between federal, state, and county governmental agencies. Additionally, Wildlife Services contracts with California counties have been challenged based on their lack of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Humboldt County supports legislation or administrative rulemaking to allow farmers to take feral hogs without a depredation permit or hunting license when the hogs are damaging crops or agricultural infrastructure and supports wildlife management tools and/or methods that have proven effective. Humboldt County also supports collaborative efforts to fund and complete CEQA documentation for all Wildlife Services in California.

ALLOWING FOR SAFE AND REUSABLE COMPOST FROM MAMALLIAN CARCASES

In California there are only four rendering facilities permitted to dispose of and recycle animal carcasses. The geographic location of these companies (Sacramento, Modesto, Fresno and Long Beach) makes routine or emergency access to their services by northern California animal owners effectively mute. There is an urgent need for alternative, environmentally friendly carcass disposal avenues, including composting. Importantly 14 CCR 3.1 § 17855.2 (a) explicitly states that composting of untreated mammalian flesh is prohibited. With a state-wide increase in frequency of disasters, including heat waves, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters including wildfire and flooding, there are ample scenarios where rendering is simply not feasible geographically or at the scale needed to dispose of these carcasses safely. Relative to disposal of all animal carcasses including roadkill, pet, and commercial livestock mortalities, this is an issue for all Californians. Composting is permitted in every state in the Union, other than California. Decades of experience and a rich body of scientific research has demonstrated composting to be environmentally safe and economically feasible.

The county supports legislation that removes hurdles to composting and land application of mammalian flesh.

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CHILD SUPPORT

ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE TOOLS AND INFORMATION

Having the right tools for the job is important for any organization. For Local Child Support Agencies (LCSAs), this means keeping and bolstering SLMS (State Licensing Match System), securing digital court reporting procedures, and expanding interagency data sharing. SLMS' existence is contentious because it suspends licenses of those who fail to pay child support promptly, but directors of LCSAs argue that it is one of the most effective methods to ensure that obligated parents consistently pay child support on time. It is also vital to secure new tools like digital court reporting in order for obligated parents to more easily and affordably pursue the option of appeal. Therefore, the county would support any legislation that led to digitalized recordings being permitted in the court, or digitalized court reporting.

The county supports legislation that will lead to broader interagency data sharing. The county supports legislation that allows LCSA's to have appropriate tools for enforcement. The county supports efforts to digitize court records.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

LOCAL ENERGY AND RELIEF FROM POWER SHUTOFFS

The Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)-imposed Public Safety Power Shutoffs disproportionately affect Humboldt County due to the way the local grid is organized. Humboldt County receives its electricity via large, east-bound transmission lines that connect to power stations in another county. Therefore, when fire conditions are present in other areas, any shut off imposed by PG&E affects large swaths, or even the entirety of Humboldt County.

Humboldt County supports legislation and funding for increased ability to prepare for, and respond to, events related to electricity outages.

SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION

Global climate change is causing sea levels to rise due to thermal expansion of ocean water and the melting of glaciers and ice sheets. The Humboldt Bay region is vulnerable to flooding hazards, erosion, and loss and change of coastal ecosystems due to sea level rise. The risks associated with global sea level rise are compounded in the Humboldt Bay region by land subsidence associated with the Cascadia Subduction Zone. Extreme flood events from high tides, storm surge, and waves will become more frequent and the magnitude of these events is expected to become more severe. Developed communities, public infrastructure, agricultural lands, and natural habitats are at risk for adverse impacts. In many locations the railroad around Humboldt Bay has become critical coastal protection infrastructure for protecting inland areas from flooding. However, the railroad has

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significantly deteriorated over the last 20 years because the North Coast Railroad Authority has not had sufficient resources to perform regular maintenance and repair.

Local agencies around Humboldt Bay have been performing technical studies to better understand sea level rise vulnerability, updating Local Coastal Programs, and developing strategies for sea level rise adaptation. Incremental progress is being made but efforts toward sea level rise adaptation face significant challenges. Flooding is driven by natural processes which are dynamic and difficult to predict. The vulnerable lands around Humboldt Bay contain a variety of geomorphic settings and cross ownership and jurisdictional boundaries. Dialogue regarding basic sea level rise response approaches (i.e., protection, accommodation, ecosystem-based adaptation, retreat) remains at an early stage. Adaptation measures to increase flood resilience need to be considered at a landscape scale and require innovative designs. Projects with the potential to impact coastal resources are subject to significant regulatory constraints by the Coastal Act and other laws and regulations. Financial constraints will likely be a major barrier to action, but the risks of no-action are significant.

Humboldt County supports:

- Funding to counties and cities along the coast to develop sea level rise adaptation plans. The hydrographic area provides the optimal spatial framework to guide adaptation strategies for sea level rise planning around Humboldt Bay. The geomorphic and hydrologic processes that control the flow of water and sediment must be understood at the landscape scale in order to plan and design effective adaptation measures. Future scenarios and adaptation pathways should be developed based on best available science. Plans should identify multiple lines of defense including natural features and built structures. Adaptation measures may need to span multiple ownerships. In some cases, risk reduction in certain areas could be accomplished through flood accommodation in other areas. In other cases, plans should be developed for strategic relocation and an orderly transition to a new future land use because maintaining the current land use is unsustainable due to flood hazards. Funding should prioritize regional approaches that incentivize jurisdictions working together across common hydrographic areas to maximize the effectiveness of adaptation measures.
- Funding to counties and cities along the coast to implement sea level rise adaptation projects. Funding is needed to plan, design, test, implement, monitor, and adaptively manage projects. Funding should prioritize nature-based solutions, multi-objective projects, and actions that benefit public infrastructure and economically disadvantaged communities. Nature-based solutions work with natural processes and landforms to provide protection for both ecosystems and the built environment. Nature-based solutions, and hybrid measures that integrate

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nature with engineered structural approaches, may provide the optimal total benefits for coastal resilience and risk reduction.

- Funding to the North Coast Railroad Authority (or its successor agency) to maintain and repair its deteriorated and damaged assets along the Humboldt Bay shoreline to mitigate flood risks for Highway 101, the Humboldt Bay Trail, and inland areas. The feasibility of improving railroad infrastructure to serve a coastal protection function for sea level rise adaptation should be assessed.
- Revisions to laws and regulations that modernize the regulatory framework to encourage and support sea level rise adaptation projects. Flexibility is needed with wetland fill policies and other policies in order to enable nature-based strategies, beneficial reuse of sediment, and reasonable improvements to dikes and levees. Requirements for technical studies, mitigation, monitoring, and maintenance should not be overly burdensome to avoid these requirements being a deterrent for urgently needed action.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Humboldt County possesses significant sources of renewable energy, including on- and off-shore wind and biomass. However, there are many obstacles that prevent Humboldt from turning these resources into viable energy products that can be used by consumers and governments alike. The economic and environmental benefits to effectively tapping these resources are immense, and Humboldt County needs assistance at the state and federal levels to make its renewable energy resources available for use.

Humboldt County supports legislation that: encourages research and analysis of renewable energy projects; streamlines and eases environmental review processes on the North Coast; increases investment in critical infrastructure, including the Port of Humboldt Bay and the regional electric grid; allows stakeholder involvement; and supports the development of renewable energy.

INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT ZERO EMISSIONS GOALS

Governor Newsom’s executive order (EO) to phase out gas-powered cars will require investment in infrastructure to support reaching the greenhouse gas emissions goals outlined in the EO. Rural areas, in particular, must be targeted for projects such as charging stations and road improvements to make those goals a reality.

Humboldt County supports legislation that invests in the infrastructure needed in rural areas to reduce carbon emissions.

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING AND RHNA ALLOCATIONS

State law requires counties to identify sites in unincorporated areas for placement of low and very low-income housing. Rural areas are often characterized by inadequate roads and areas where utilities providing water, sewer and power are not available. Even where these utilities are available in counties, these locations are often significant distances from employment centers and areas where services needed for these income groups can be provided. Rural areas are also characterized by a lack of adequate public transportation making it difficult for people to commute to and from work without using a vehicle. This is inconsistent with the overall state objective to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by minimizing total miles traveled associated with new development. Rural counties should be given the flexibility to be able to partner with urban areas to meet Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) objectives. It is difficult for developers to obtain necessary financing for affordable housing under these circumstances, placing rural counties at a disadvantage when it comes to meeting RHNA objectives. This becomes increasingly problematic when there is increasing discussion tying funding availability to achieving RHNA allocations. [The state has created incentives to develop Regional Housing Trust Funds, but in Humboldt County these discussions fail when the discussion turns to how to address sharing RHNA success. An increased number of housing units could be produced if jurisdictions could collaborate in developing housing and sharing RHNA success outside of an individual jurisdiction.](#)

Humboldt County supports efforts that would increase affordable housing [partnering with cities and in areas near employment, services and public transit.](#) The county also supports regulatory exemptions for truly rural areas as a location for very low- and low-income housing. Humboldt County opposes the idea that RHNA goals should require provision of housing at a growth rate which exceeds the population growth rate, which is the case in Humboldt County.

Humboldt County supports legislation that gives rural counties flexibility in meeting RHNA allocations. In addition, the county supports legislation that provides rural counties with assistance for affordable housing, including new tools to incentivize developers to construct housing in the more rural areas. Humboldt County has only a handful of affordable housing developers willing to work in this area, even with the [county providing incentives to developers.](#) RHNA compliance is difficult on the production of homes when there are so few developers interested in developing housing in Humboldt County.

[Humboldt County supports administrative action and legislative proposals that would align the various state housing-related agencies and committees in order to ensure that housing funding is coordinated in a fashion that ensures applicants for state bond or grant funding or tax credits are awarded consistent with the county's state-approved housing element,](#)

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enjoys the support of the county and is fully entitled before attempting to apply for state funding. Lax state oversight of these key criteria has resulted in billions of wasted dollars funding housing projects that are not aligned with state policy or local housing priorities in a time when housing development is urgently needed.

BUILDING IN WILDLAND INTERFACE

Wildfires in California have become more frequent, intense and damaging to peoples' lives and property. Proper planning for development in the wildland interface can help protect communities and residents.

The county supports legislation that promotes planning for fire safety and environmental considerations regarding development in the wildland interface.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Communities prosper when ideas, programs, and activities aimed at improving the private sector are encouraged. Programs that support the private sector often lead to increased tax revenues, job growth, and increased community prosperity. However, jurisdictions are often limited in the types of tools and resources which they can employ for encouraging economic development activity in their own regions. Given the recent adverse economic impacts of COVID-19, it is essential to the economic recovery of communities that jurisdictions have access to a variety and diversity of economic policies and programs. Economic resilience must include considerations for renewable energy and preparedness. Counties can benefit by partnering with the state on these efforts.

THE COUNTY SUPPORTS:

- Legislation that maintains and strengthens tax increment financing tools for communities.
- The development and implementation of a statewide "proactive" California business retention strategy, led by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). The county supports partnerships with local economic development organizations.
- Planning, administration and supervision of comprehensive local systems of workforce training and employment.
- Additional workforce development programs throughout Humboldt County to expand opportunities to businesses and residents, including collaborations with small business development programs.
- Legislation that supports the private sector and the development of new or expanded businesses in communities.

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- [Legislation that positively impacts a jurisdiction’s ability to engage in and implement economic development programs and policies.](#)
- [Legislation that increases the competitive position of the State of California, its geographical areas, and its jurisdictions.](#)
- [Legislation that incorporates renewable energy and preparedness in economic development efforts.](#)

RURAL BROADBAND AND NET NEUTRALITY

Access to free and fair high-speed internet has become a cornerstone of our lives and economy. Unfortunately, rural areas like Humboldt County still lack adequate access to the quality of broadband service necessary to compete with the rest of the state. In addition, state and federal agencies and governments must protect access to broadband to ensure it is treated as a public resource and not sold off to the highest bidder.

Humboldt County supports legislation that provides resources to improve rural counties access to high-speed broadband. The county also supports legislation that protects access to broadband service.

EXPANDING USE FOR EXISTING BROADBAND AND UTILITY LINES

[Many broadband lines and public utility lines are at least in part funded with taxpayer dollars. However, telecommunications companies often limit access to those lines when individuals or other companies look to expand services, particularly in remote areas. There is a massive need, especially in rural communities, for additional broadband coverage and the need has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and additional demand for distance learning. These telecommunication and public utility lines should be available for use, even if it comes with restrictions such as not being able to make a profit for such access.](#)

The county supports legislation that would allow [access to already-laid telecommunications lines.](#)

RICHARDSON GROVE HWY 101 PROJECT

[The proposed Hwy 101 project in Richardson Grove is very controversial and has been in the courts for years. This project will be decided by the courts. The community is divided as to its economic value and potential environmental impacts. Hwy 299 from the east and Hwy 101 coming into the county from the north are both Surface Transportation Assistance Act-Truck accessible. These alternate routes provide ample access to and from the county for economic development. There are impacts from not having STAA access from the south just as there would be impacts from more STAA trucks coming through our county and along Broadway in Eureka. Increased STAA access would also reduce the demand for local trucking firms and local jobs.](#)

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The county is divided on whether to support this project or not so it takes no formal stand on the issue.

VACATION RENTALS AND TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTION

The rapid growth of the online home sharing economy poses many challenges to local communities and municipalities such as stress on housing, impacts to neighborhood in terms of noise, parking and character, and identifying vacation homes that are operating without the required permits and certificates. Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) generated by these homes can help alleviate some of these stressors. However, due to real concerns for their users' privacy and safety, most online sites do not post actual property addresses or full names and contact information for their users. Requiring online home sharing sites to collect and share information with local governments, as well as to collect Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) and allow for audits, will significantly improve tax compliance and remove the competitive advantage non-payers enjoy.

The county supports legislation and planning to mitigate the effects of short-term vacation rentals. The county also supports legislation that requires online vacation rental and home sharing sites to collect and share vacation rental information with California municipalities; collect TOT on behalf of California municipalities; and allow for the audit of their users.

CHILDCARE

Childcare is core to economic development. Rising costs of childcare, pre-COVID, have led to reductions in work by parents, putting pressure on the available workforce to meet economic demands. COVID has increased these pressures on a fragile childcare infrastructure. With one-third to one-half of Humboldt childcare programs closing since March 2020, increased investment in childcare is needed to bolster the system that enables families to work.

The county supports investment in childcare programs, childcare workforce development and childcare subsidies for essential workers.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

SEPARATING TRIAL COURT RETIREMENT SYSTEMS FROM COUNTY PERS

Existing Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) law requires that, in the case of a trial court within a county contracting with PERS for retirement benefits, the trial court and the county must participate under a joint contract with PERS. This results in pooled assets and liabilities, a single employer contribution rate, and a single benefit package. However, trial Courts and counties function independently across the state of California, and for over a decade the County of Humboldt has separated county functions from courts. In the current system courts provide for their own capital needs, develop and fund their own budgets,

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and maintain their own checking accounts. With capital and budget needs separated from the county, it is illogical for trial courts to be part of county PERS contracts.

The county supports legislation which would separate the courts PERS contracts for trial courts located within California counties.

MITIGATION OF IMPACTS FROM TRIBAL GAMING COMPACTS

Total grant funding made available to municipalities, government organizations, businesses and non-profits within Humboldt County is only 5 percent of the total funds available in the Tribal Casino Accounts, with the state receiving the remainder of the funds, or 95 percent. Five percent of these funds is insufficient to offset the social and environmental impacts of casinos. Since local communities do not receive any tax revenue from the Tribal Casinos, it is imperative that this grant revenue increase.

The County of Humboldt supports legislation which would increase funding to mitigate impacts from Tribal Gaming Compacts. Additionally, if the state renegotiates contracts with Native American tribes, the county supports legislation which would allow more county and local government involvement to address environmental, social, and planning concerns of the local community.

EXEMPTIONS FOR INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Assembly Bill 5 (Gonzalez), passed in 2019 codifies the decision in the Dynamex case and clarifies its applications to consider a person providing labor or services for remuneration is considered an employee rather than an independent contractor. [The voters recently approved an initiative that re-classified platform-based drivers as independent contracts – those same drivers were generally the focus of AB 5. Now, what’s left of AB 5 still covers professional foresters \(RPFs\) and licensed timber operators \(LTOs\). These professionals](#) should also be exempt from requirements of this law as they do infrequent work for varying periods of time, most frequently for family forest ownerships. RPFs and LTOs work for many clients at a time and it would be overly burdensome for them to have to become employees of hundreds of families, and would lead to poorer forest and land management.

The county supports legislation that allows commercial fishermen, registered professional foresters and licensed timber operators, and other professions that are essential for rural counties, to be considered independent contractors.

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT

California voters approved the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) to provide a dedicated funding stream for counties to expand and develop innovative and integrated mental health services. Humboldt County has a robust local stakeholder process to determine the most effective use of these local funds. Counties welcome efforts to increase transparency of how MHSA funds are spent that align with, or enhance, existing reporting structures. Proposals to bypass local direction of funds and impose statewide mandates for their use have recently gained traction. As funding erodes for all but the sickest, MHSA services must be maintained as intended and not diverted to backfill core programs.

The county supports local direction of Mental Health Services Act funds and opposes proposals to [impose statewide mandates on its use or to](#) divert funds to other uses [that are not reflective of local mental health needs.](#)

SUPPORT FOR HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS FUNDED BY THE TAXATION OF SWEETENED BEVERAGES

Sugar-sweetened beverages have been significantly associated with increased risk of obesity, diabetes, dental disease and heart disease. The 2018/19 state budget imposed a moratorium on locally-imposed grocery taxes, including sugar sweetened beverages. Legislation to impose a statewide tax or fee on sweetened beverages will aid in reducing the consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and generate revenue for health programs. Local health departments are in a prime position to administer programs that reduce childhood obesity, improve oral health and promote community health and should be the recipients of a significant portion of funds generated by a sweetened beverage tax.

The county supports legislation and efforts such as the California Wellness Trust to create health promotion programs, funded by the taxation of sweetened beverages.

SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO AND VAPING RESTRICTIONS

Each year, more than 35,000 Californians die due to tobacco-related illnesses. While tobacco use rates are declining, the use of electronic smoking devices, particularly among youth, has been on the rise. The safety of electronic smoking, or vaping, devices has not yet been demonstrated. [Efforts to regulate tobacco and](#) vaping products can assist in reducing the public health and economic impact of tobacco use. Local health department tobacco control capacity and infrastructure should be maintained and enhanced. [Revenue from new tobacco taxes should be distributed based on existing formulas to include ongoing funding for First 5.](#)

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The county supports legislation to reduce and prevent tobacco use and regulate electronic smoking devices.

HELPING FAMILIES MOVE OUT OF POVERTY

The Department of Health and Human Services' mission is to reduce poverty and connect people and communities to opportunities for health and wellness. Poverty negatively impacts families, leading to poor health and social outcomes. Strengthening anti-poverty programs like CalWORKs and subsidized childcare that support families on the path to economic success, will assist more people in becoming self-sufficient.

The county supports legislation that strengthens the CalWORKs program, subsidized childcare and employment opportunities.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER SUPPORT

Local Public Health Officers are facing incredible challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, and will face similar challenges during future public health crises. Their decisions affect entire communities for months and potentially years. Ensuring that these officials are supported by county leadership and community partners in making decisions in the best interest of local communities will be critical in preserving public health. Any change to Public Health Officers' responsibilities or duties must be done in consultation with counties.

The county supports including meaningful input from counties when considering legislative action related to Public Health Officers.

NATURAL RESOURCES

CALIFORNIA WATER RESILIENCE PORTFOLIO INITIATIVE

Executive Order N-10-19 (signed April 29, 2019) directed state agencies to form a Water Resilience Portfolio containing a suite of actions to ensure safe and dependable water supplies, flood protection and healthy waterways for the state's communities, economy and environment. Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale and should be adopted at the state level. Nearly 50 IRWM regional entities have been established across the state, including the North Coast Resource Partnership, of which Humboldt County has been an active member since 2004.

The county supports efforts by the state to adopt IRWM as the principal framework for implementing the Water Resilience Portfolio. The county supports funding for regional, multi-benefit planning and projects. The county supports working with the IRWWM and other stakeholders to address needs.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential to the stability of communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system, and the safe and effective delivery of policing services. In addition, it is vital that mental health and behavioral health resources are included with law enforcement, especially during times of critical incidents involving individuals experiencing mental health crises. Humboldt County will continue to support practices that promote effective crime reduction and will also support legislation that improves service delivery, oversight, transparency and law enforcement accountability.

The county supports legislation and budgetary efforts that increase effective service delivery, oversight, accountability, and transparency in law enforcement. In addition, Humboldt County supports additional funding for programs that reduce systemic racism and unconscious bias.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS, JUVENILE JUSTICE

After multiple realignments at the state level, generally counties are responsible for the custody and care of all youthful offenders adjudicated as of July 1, 2021. To carry out this responsibility, Humboldt County believes it is necessary for the state to provide adequate funding; local flexibility to develop responses and partnerships between counties to adequately serve youth, especially those with higher-level treatment needs; and appropriate oversight and accountability that is commensurate to the responsibility and liability being realigned. Additionally, oversight and accountability measures associated with the most complex youth cases that were last to be realigned should not disrupt the success counties have proven with existing juvenile programs and funding streams.

Funding should recognize the unique position, needs, and conditions of each county and include a growth factor so that future funding keeps pace with growing programmatic costs. To the extent the state does not provide adequate funding for counties to be successful with youthful offenders, responsibility for the care and custody of the most complex juvenile cases should return to the state.

Humboldt County supports evidence-based efforts to protect against unnecessary transfers of juvenile offenders to the adult system. However, these efforts should not reduce local flexibility or create unfunded costs for counties to build new, or retrofit existing, facilities.

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TRIBAL OFFICERS AS PEACE OFFICERS

Public Law 280 establishes that the Sheriff assumes jurisdiction in law enforcement matters over tribal lands. Tribal Councils have expressed the desire to have tribal officers assume this responsibility. Having tribal officers as the legally recognized law enforcement in tribal lands would be effective as it would serve as a form of community policing, which data shows reduces crime.

The county supports legislation that allows tribal officers to serve as peace officers recognized by POST.

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PUBLIC WORKS

CONTINUE SAFETY PRACTICES FOR EXPRESSWAY BETWEEN ARCATA AND EUREKA UNTIL IMPROVEMENTS ARE MADE

In 1995, Senate Bill 414 (Thompson) introduced 14 double fine zones across the state. The bill was set to expire on January 1, 2004, but several bills, including AB 1384 (Chesbro), have extended the double fine zone along the Highway 101 corridor between Eureka and Arcata through 2010. In 2013, the California Coastal Commission conditionally approved a project submitted by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), which would improve the State Highway 101 corridor and eliminate the need for a double fine zone. This project, while beneficial to Humboldt County citizens, may be years away from completion.

Due to current safety concerns, the County of Humboldt seeks to maintain increased safety enforcement through the segment of State Highway Route 101 between the Eureka Slough Bridge and the Gannon Slough Bridge.

SURVEYOR MONUMENT PRESERVATION

Government Code sections 27584 and 27585 authorize the Board of Supervisors to establish a survey monument preservation fund for retracement or re-monumentation surveys of major historical land division lines upon which later surveys are based. Pursuant to this code, and Humboldt County Ordinance No. 1835, a fund was established and user fees are collected by the County Recorder at the time of the recording of any grant deed *except those which convey lots created by a recorded tract map*, or lots conveyed to or from a government entity. Several County Surveyors have found that the exemption of subdivision lots from the collection of this fee has been confusing, and therefore the fee is not always properly collected.

The county supports legislation that would remove the exemption from the survey monument fee in Government Code Section 27585.

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HUMBOLDT BAY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to minimize the environmental and economic impacts associated with port congestion, California must begin planning to maximize multi-modal cargo handling capabilities. The transportation improvements included in the state funded Samoa Industrial Waterfront Transportation Access Plan would significantly increase multi-modal transportation infrastructure for Humboldt Bay. These improvements would improve Port of Humboldt Bay dock access and linkages to interstate routes for cargo handling. Funding for these infrastructure improvements are included in the Humboldt County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and programmed in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

The county supports state legislation to facilitate increased freight and cargo handling capacity at the Port of Humboldt Bay, including Samoa Industrial Waterfront Transportation Access Plan funding by the State of California and expedited environmental review by Humboldt County and the Coastal Commission.

LOCAL REHABILITATION PROJECT ELIGIBILITY FOR STIP FUNDING

Existing law generally provides for allocation of transportation funds pursuant to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process. The law also provides for 75 percent of funds available for transportation capital improvement projects to be made available for regional projects, and 25 percent for interregional projects. The law describes the types of projects that may be funded with the regional share of funds and includes local road projects as a category of eligible projects. Legislation that specifically states that local road rehabilitation projects are eligible for STIP funds is necessary to protect the ability of local agencies to prioritize the regional project share to the needs of the local agency.

The county supports legislation that would state that local road rehabilitation projects are eligible for State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds.

REDWOOD CREEK LEVEE REHABILITATION AND ESTUARY RESTORATION

Construction of the Redwood Creek levee system by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1966 to 1968 caused major impacts to the Redwood Creek estuary. These impacts are a limiting factor for recovery of salmon and other estuary-dependent fish species in the Redwood Creek watershed and adversely affect Redwood National Park. In addition, the levee system does not meet its intended flood protection level for the economically disadvantaged community of Orick because the project design did not account for sedimentation.

A large-scale, multi-objective water resources project is needed to achieve a sustainable solution for flood protection, ecosystem restoration, and endangered species recovery in lower Redwood Creek. The project is complicated by the needs for understanding dynamic ecosystem processes, accounting for climate change and sea level rise, respecting private

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STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

property rights, modifying a federal flood control project, and providing an acceptable level of flood protection for the community.

In particular, restoration of the Redwood Creek estuary would significantly advance salmon recovery and provide sustainable flood protection that alleviates backwater flooding of agricultural lands and County roads. Local private landowners, Redwood National Park, agencies, and other stakeholders agree that we need a process-based conceptual design that will improve agricultural function and advance listed salmon recovery through estuary restoration.

Estuary restoration would be competitive for federal, state and other funding due to the high potential for endangered species recovery. Upstream flood protection and ongoing maintenance could be addressed separately or comprehensively with estuary restoration, depending on the type of federal authority used, to modify the Redwood Creek federal flood control project.

The county supports legislation or administrative action to release Proposition 84 (Flood Control, Natural Resources and Parks Bond Act) or other state funding to be used for rehabilitation, repairs, and maintenance to the Redwood Creek levee system near Orick.

COMPLETE STREETS

The rate of bicyclist and pedestrian deaths is unacceptably high, both in Humboldt County and across the nation. The safety of non-vehicular road users is a particular challenge in rural areas, where many roads lack even the most basic facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians, and many state and federal highways serve as primary local thoroughfares and main streets.

The county supports legislation which provides additional funding for active transportation and transit facilities, and legislation which prioritizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities as part of road maintenance, repair and improvement projects funded by state and federal dollars. The county also supports updates to applicable state and federal guidelines, rules and regulations to provide more emphasis on non-vehicular facilities.

ACCOUNT FOR RURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN FOOD WASTE COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

In rural areas, the cost of setting up a food waste collection/processing facility can exceed the cost of disposing the materials with no significant benefit due to the low amount of materials and the high cost of collection and facility construction. One of the goals of these processing facilities is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but there may not be any substantial benefit in rural areas with low amounts of materials due to the travel required in collection.

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STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

The county supports legislation that eases food waste collection requirements on rural counties.

CALIFORNIA REDEMPTION VALUE RECYCLING

Humboldt County is unable to economically export recycling materials out of the county. As a result, the recycling programs with which county residents enjoy are subsidized by fees on solid waste. Due to a lack of facilities, residents cannot redeem the California Recycling Value (CRV) on goods and recyclers cannot dispose of materials. Residents are being charged for CRV with a promise they could redeem its value, and that is no longer possible. Statewide over 50% of CRV redemption centers have closed in the past 5 years due to increased cost of business (minimum wage & regulatory compliance), insufficient State Processing & Handling Fee payments, regulatory inflexibility, one-size fits all with no geographic allowances and low commodity market values which impact financial viability.

The county supports legislation that enables comprehensive reform of the CRV Redemption Program. Such reform should: include beverage manufactures as Extended Producer Responsibility; set standard deposit fee regardless of container size, and; incorporates provisions for communities that have curbside recycling programs to ensure equitable payments to recycling centers and material recovery facility sort lines. The county supports legislation that enables the development of North American markets for all recyclable materials.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

AGRICULTURE

INVASIVE WEED MANAGEMENT FUNDING

Invasive noxious or non-native weeds continue to proliferate on public and private lands throughout California, threatening the state's critical infrastructure, its biodiversity, and ecological integrity. Weed Management Areas (WMA's) have been formed around the state to bring together all stakeholders concerned about invasive weed control within their respective areas.

Humboldt County supports stable federal and state funding sources for Weed Management Areas and programs for the control of harmful non-native or invasive weed pests. Humboldt County prioritizes manual (non-chemical) methods of invasive weed control both for the community wide economic benefits derived through jobs created by this approach and as a reflection of the prevailing public concern over the use of pesticides.

INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM FUNDING

A number of significant invasive species are routinely introduced and detected in California that threaten agriculture and the environment. Continued funding of Pest Exclusion, Pest Detection Trapping and Survey Activities, Rapid Response, Pest Management and Eradication (if feasible), and Public Education Outreach Programs is critical for protecting California's resources.

Humboldt County supports protecting existing revenue sources, enhanced state and federal funding and full cost recovery for programs to prevent the introduction and potential spread of invasive pests. Humboldt supports local flexibility in expenditures and research on invasive species pathways.

FUNDING FOR CALIFORNIA FAIRS NETWORK

As a result of the stay-at-home order and response to Covid-19, more than 26 fairs, have canceled, postponed, or drastically altered their annual fair, and more fairs will be forced to make that decision in the coming weeks. Educational, entertainment and family events have also been canceled or postponed. The resulting financial hardship is not only felt by fairs, but also local businesses.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

AVIATION

STATE ASSISTANCE WITH RECRUITMENT OF AIR SERVICE

Humboldt County, like many rural communities throughout the state, struggles to recruit new air service for its airports. Small communities must have instruments like minimum revenue county guarantees and others in order to attract additional airlines to service their communities. The state can provide an important role in ensuring rural airports remain competitive in this recruitment process.

As state aeronautical funding grows the county supports the state developing a match program to pay for the local share of the Small Community Air Service Grant. The county also supports additional funding to recruit air service to rural airports.

INCREASE CALIFORNIA AID TO AIRPORTS PROGRAM (CAAP) FUNDING

The CAAP program, managed by the California Department of Transportation underneath the California Transportation Commission provides for direct subvention to General Aviation Airports of \$10,000 per year that is used for maintenance. The program also provides grants and loans for airport projects. The subvention amount has not been changed since the program started, while maintenance costs continue to rise.

The county supports legislation that increases funding for CAAP. Going forward, this funding should be tied to inflation.

CHILD SUPPORT

ALLOCATION FOR ADDITIONAL SHARED SERVICES

The North Coast Regional Department of Child Support Services (NCRDCSS) is truly a regional entity and processes claims for the intercept of worker's compensation benefits for 17 other counties. The department utilizes 4 full-time equivalent employees for this shared service, which has become incredibly valuable for other local child support agencies and their clients. However, adequate funding is lacking as the only "shared service" included in 2011 realignment was for call centers, and the regional assistance provided by NCRDCSS does not qualify. The state should build additional shared services into its funding calculations for realignment, or otherwise help fund these valuable services.

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The county supports legislation, at the state and/or federal levels, that requires banks to disperse child support levies to local child support agencies before assessing any fees.

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CLIMATE ADAPTATION

SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

California’s 4th Climate Assessment warns that the costs of climate change could climb beyond \$113 billion annually if action is not promptly taken. Unfortunately, while the county has identified numerous climate-induced challenges, the investment necessary to fund required resiliency efforts is far beyond available financial resources. Funding is needed to support efforts to reduce emissions, increase the pace and scale of forest health and wildfire resiliency activities, and support other action to increase climate adaptation. In response to the urgent need for action the state has enacted legislation, regulations, and executive orders that put the state on a course to achieve robust climate change adaptation measures. These efforts, as well as new legislation and regulatory refinements still under development, aim to improve forest health and fire resiliency, ensure water quality and security, increase carbon sequestration, and facilitate greenhouse gas reductions.

Humboldt supports investing funds from cap-and-trade and existing water bonds and other funding sources to support programs that improve climate resiliency. The county supports state investment in the collaborative process, via regional block grants or other funding, required to implement effective on-the-ground efforts of local governments and other organizations across the state.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GRANT FUNDING FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT

The county’s General Plan Housing Element includes designation of “Housing Opportunity Zones” to promote infill housing development. The county adopted an ordinance to relax

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

requirements in these zones. The county would also like to provide financial incentives for residential development in these areas.

The county strongly supports legislation that would provide grant funding from the California Department of Housing and Community Development for infill development incentives in Housing Opportunity Zones.

FUNDING FOR ASSISTANCE ON LOCAL COASTAL PLANS

Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) identify land uses and standards by which development will be evaluated within the Coastal Zone, and must be certified by the California Coastal Commission. The development and updates of LCPs are expensive endeavors as they involve a series of special studies, background analysis, public hearings and composition of the programs. Humboldt County's existing LCPs, most of which were adopted in the 1980s, were completed with financial assistance from various state and federal agencies. Recent required updates, however, including the requirement of planning for sea level rise and climate change, are imposing costs that are unsupportable by local jurisdictions.

The county supports additional funding to the Coastal Commission to help assist local jurisdictions creating and updating their LCPs.

FUNDING FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS

Assessments of renewable energy generation capacity in Humboldt County indicate the county could be a significant exporter of electricity generated from renewable sources. The development of these resources, including solar, wind, biomass and wave energy, will assist the county in reaching AB 32 carbon emission reduction targets and stimulate the county's economy.

The county supports legislation that would accelerate the development of renewable energy resources including price supports, grant funding and utility policy that facilitates export of renewable energy generated from the county. The county also supports incentives and policies to promote residential and commercial energy conservation, including Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing.

FUNDING FOR DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN STATE AND FEDERAL BUILDING CODES

The State of California has building code requirements beyond federal regulations, especially as it relates to the Americans with Disabilities Act and local jails. These requirements add significant time and expense to public projects and inhibit the county's ability to provide important services to the community.

Humboldt County supports funding and legislation to mediate the discrepancies between state and federal building requirements, particularly with respect to public projects.

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING FOR BROADBAND SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS

Humboldt County is served by a north-south fiber optic line from Ukiah to Eureka and will be served by an east-west line running from the Central Valley along the Highway 36 corridor. This infrastructure provides improved telecommunications service to developed areas of the county, but additional investment is necessary to make “last mile” and “middle mile” connections between developed areas and small outlying communities.

The county strongly supports legislation to provide funding or business incentives to assist companies in bringing broadband service to unserved and underserved areas.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

FULFILL THE PROVISIONS OF THE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES ACT RELATED TO FISH & GAME PROPERTY

According to State Fish & Game Code Section 1504, the state is committed to making payments in lieu of property taxes to local agencies in areas where state wildlife management areas affect local property tax collections. In Humboldt County, local agencies have not been paid since 2001. Although most of this funding would flow to special districts, a portion of these funds is directed to the county’s General Fund, Roads Fund, and Library.

The county supports legislative action that would fund the required payments.

RESTORATION OF PROPERTY TAX ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

In 1992, the State enacted the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF), which shifted property tax revenues from local governments to the state. Although counties assess property values, act as a hearing board for property tax appeals, and collect property tax payments, the state receives more than 65 percent of every property tax dollar collected in Humboldt County. After the state recognized it was in its own best interest to ensure that properties were being assessed to the greatest extent possible, it provided funding through the Property Tax Administration Program to support the Assessor’s Office and the rest of the property tax administration system. However, the program hasn’t been funded since FY 2004-05 when Humboldt County received \$210,806.

The county supports funding that re-establishes and restores funding for the state’s share of property tax administration costs.

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SEPARATING SUPERIOR COURT EXPENSES FROM COUNTIES

Two pieces of legislation, the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 and the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, transferred from counties to the state fiscal responsibility for court operations and trial court facilities. The Superior Court Law Enforcement Act of 2002 further delineated responsibility for court security services by county sheriffs to the courts. Despite these extensive acts and their transfer of responsibilities, Humboldt County continues to bear a significant burden for the costs of services provided to the local Superior Court.

The county supports legislation that removes fiscal responsibility from the county for the Grand Jury, security and facility maintenance.

FUNDING FOR NEWLY FORMED CITIES

AB 818 provides a city that incorporated after January 1, 2012, with property tax in lieu of vehicle license fees (VLF). AB 818 provides the same financing mechanism for future city incorporations that was approved by the Legislature in SB 130 (2017) for previously incorporated cities. For the past eight years, despite the state's population increasing by 2 million residents, no new cities have formed in California. A primary factor for this is the passage of SB 89 in 2011, which removed a financing mechanism that communities previously relied on to assist incorporation. To restore options for future city incorporation and the enhanced civic engagement and benefits to local services and quality of life that it can offer to residents, AB 818 applies the same financial fix for future incorporations that was provided in 2017 to four recently incorporated cities harmed by SB 89. AB 818 proposes that the Legislature provide the same financing solution that was provided in SB 130 for future city incorporations

The county supports allowing newly formed cities to receive a share of vehicle license fees.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has required an unprecedented response by local, state and federal public health systems. Humboldt County Public Health and its accredited laboratory provide critical testing, contact tracing and guidance for our community. While the state has taken unprecedented steps to address the pandemic, additional resources are needed to ensure adequate public health planning, workforce, medical supplies, access to laboratory testing services, and alternative care capacity to appropriately respond to any local, state, or global health emergency. Counties must also have state and federal support in growing and retaining a highly skilled public health workforce.

The county supports increased funding to support public health in addressing the evolving impacts of COVID-19 and community health emergencies.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

COVID-19 PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING AND FLEXIBILITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted local and state social services and behavioral health systems with an increasing need for supportive services. Sudden changes in business practices to meet public health guidelines has increased the complexity of providing services. Temporary regulatory flexibility has been granted in areas such as tele-health, in-person services and eligibility for safety net programs including CalFresh and Medi-Cal in order to meet the challenge. Investments in food, healthcare and housing security provide important supports for individuals and families enduring economic hardship caused by COVID-19. Increased funding and continuing regulatory flexibility will be required to maintain vital safety net services throughout this pandemic.

The county supports pandemic programmatic flexibility and legislation that protects and enhances income, health coverage, food security and housing stability.

PROTECTING REALIGNED LOCAL SERVICES

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impact on the economy have devastated local budgets at a time when the demand for supportive services has greatly increased. Legislation in 1991 and 2011 realigned responsibility for most Health and Human Services programs from the state to counties. As realignment revenues fall below base funding, the county's ability to maintain compliance with federal and state regulations and requirements may be at risk. The Budget Act of 2020 (SB 115) allocated funding to backfill lost revenue for realigned programs. Proposals to realign additional programs from the state to counties tend to occur in response to state budget deficits. At this difficult time, all realigned programs and services must have sufficient funding appropriated.

The county supports efforts to fully fund 1991 and 2011 realignment and opposes realigning additional health and human services programs at this time.

INVESTMENT IN HOUSING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Safe and stable housing is a foremost concern for low-income individuals and families and without it, a primary barrier to health and self-sufficiency. The state has made significant investments in housing over the past several years. However, the impact of COVID-19 on housing security and homelessness further stresses an inadequate system of supportive services. New, ongoing and flexible resources continue to be needed to expand housing case management, provide income supports such as subsidized rent, and eviction prevention services. Funding is needed for housing case management services across all populations for which counties have responsibility, including child welfare services, adult protective services, CalWORKs, transition age youth, foster youth and persons with serious mental illness.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

The county supports increased state investment in housing supportive services such as eviction prevention, rent support and county case management.

FUNDING TO PROTECT OLDER AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

As the number of older adults increases across California and the nation, renewed focus has been brought to their needs, including the state Master Plan on Aging process.

Counties are on the front lines of protecting vulnerable and older adults, although both the Adult Protective Services and Public Guardian programs have been historically underfunded and are struggling to meet the needs of the fastest increasing segment of the homeless population – older adults. Compounding this need is the disparate impact of COVID-19 on the elderly and those with underlying health conditions. The county Public Guardian office is under-resourced to care for an increasing number of clients requiring conservatorship. Efforts to change or expand conservatorships must be accompanied by corresponding funding to support new client placement options and the county Public Guardian office.

The county supports state investment in county Public Guardian and Adult Protective Services.

INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION

Local public health departments are mandated to provide a broad array of services to protect and improve the health and safety of communities. On the front lines of improving health equity and mitigating the impacts of climate change, public health works to improve the built environment, access to healthy food and clean water, and active transportation options. Investment in local public health prevention programs such as substance use disorder prevention, cannabis and tobacco prevention, oral health promotion, nurse home visiting programs, suicide and violence prevention, and sexually transmitted and communicable disease prevention protect the health of the county and its residents now and into the future.

The county supports increased public health prevention funding and legislation that protects community health.

RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS

Rural counties struggle to recruit and retain qualified health professionals. This is especially true in the medical and mental health fields. State incentives for building education pathways to health careers, training for trauma-informed agencies that support professionals in addressing secondary traumatic stress, lower career barriers for public health nurses and expanded opportunities for substance use disorder treatment professionals would improve local health outcomes and employment opportunities.

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

[The county supports legislative efforts to improve workforce opportunities in health careers.](#)

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

When compared to other California counties, Humboldt County struggles with the highest number of adults with four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) in their childhood history. ACES are strongly associated with long term negative health and life outcomes such as substance use disorder, mental illness, cancer, incarceration and unemployment. [While the state has made unprecedented steps to identify ACES with expanded access to screenings, resources are needed to support the development of local systems integration and address the long-term, generational impacts of these experiences.](#)

The county supports increased funding to prevent and address the impacts of ACES, including [care coordination, home-visiting programs, behavioral health services and trauma informed practices](#)

NATURAL RESOURCES

LONG-TERM FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCE AFFAIRS

Humboldt County is home to significant water resources that include the Eel, Klamath, Mad and Trinity Rivers; home to fish populations of salmon, groundfish and crab; and home to dense forests which include coastal Redwoods. These considerable natural resources were once abundant and contributed notably to the local economy.

Decisions and regulatory management of these natural resources often occur at the state and federal levels. These decisions have had cumulative impacts on water resources, fisheries and timber, and therefore on the community as well. State and federal decisions need to adequately account for local priorities, knowledge and needs in order to minimize adverse economic and social impacts, while appropriately managing and restoring these significant natural resources.

The county strongly supports legislation that provides stable funding for long-term engagement, administration and capacity development for natural resource affairs in the County of Humboldt.

WILLIAMSON ACT FUNDING RESTITUTION, RESTORATION THROUGH CAP AND TRADE

[The Land Conservation Act is one of the most effective tools in preventing the loss of farmland and open space, while also helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Act provides tax breaks to landowners who contract with a county to keep their land in agriculture or open space for a period of 10 years. To encourage county participation in the program, the State historically reimbursed counties a portion of the property tax revenue](#)

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

losses resulting from the lower assessments. The state discontinued the reimbursement in FY 2010-2011.

The county supports legislative or budget proposals to fund the Land Conservation Act subventions to counties.

INCENTIVES FOR WATER STORAGE

Home and business water storage systems have become critically important as California, especially heavily forested land, is experiencing more natural disasters such as wildfire and drought. It is important to incentivize more construction of these systems on existing construction so that property owners may be better equipped to survive these events. Any such incentives and evaluation must take in to account the effect that additional water storage may have on the environment, including water availability, vector impact, public health and invasive species.

The county supports legislation that incentivizes responsible water storage systems for existing construction.

PUBLIC SAFETY

STABLE FUNDING FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

Juvenile Justice funding is imperative to providing supervision and treatment services for high-risk youth in local communities. Treatment and confinement solutions are provided for a community's youth who are at highest risk to re-offend and hardest to place due to their co-occurring mental health disorders, thereby putting community safety in jeopardy.

The county supports legislation for continued and increased resources for juvenile justice programs in order to provide for stable and secure sources of funding.

FUNDING FOR INCREASED ENFORCEMENT OF ILLEGAL WATER DIVERSIONS

Illegal water diversions for use in cannabis cultivation continues to threaten the health of Humboldt County water bodies. All of the major rivers and creeks (and their tributaries) are fully appropriated all year long, so no water is available for new diversions during that period. While Humboldt County works with other appropriate agencies to ensure that cannabis cultivators go through the correct process when permitting their cannabis operations, there are not enough funds to prevent operators from illegally drawing on these precious natural resources.

The county supports legislation that would provide increased funding to support local enforcement regarding water-related issues.

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ASSISTANCE, FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS

The planning and coordination of response, recovery, and mitigation activities related to emergencies and disasters is vital for our community. This includes developing emergency operations plans, conducting trainings, and communicating with the community. Funding is required to provide financial assistance to local governments and private property owners to efficiently prepare for disasters and repair homes, businesses, infrastructure and the natural environment. Humboldt County does not have adequate facilities to conduct emergency operations. More frequently, Humboldt County is dealing with bigger, stronger wildfires that threaten lives and property and it is vital that staff from many agencies can come together in facilities that are suited to their needs in order to properly respond to emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic has crystallized this point as Humboldt had to lease space from educational institutions during two school years to operate its emergency operations center. Additional one-time funding should be allocated to small, rural counties to help them create these facilities.

The county supports additional funding for emergency planning, preparations, operations and recovery, including addressing the safety of residents and seniors and those with disabilities. The county supports additional funding for emergency response facilities.

COMMUNITY LEVEL WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND PROTECTION

According to the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, “loss of life and structures as a direct or proximate result of wildland fires is at an all-time high,” and “recent trends have shown an increase in the number of ignitions, area burned, and impacts to ecosystems.” The Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan determines that there are periods of high wildfire risk for every Humboldt County community, including coastal areas, when conditions are just right for a single fire ignition to have potentially devastating consequences. Weather and fire patterns, together with Humboldt County’s rugged topography and dense fuel loads, combine to create a generally high wildfire risk during dry parts of the year. Humboldt County depends on local fire and rescue services through volunteer firefighters, CAL FIRE and others to respond to wildfires. More resources and volunteers are needed to ensure the continuation of these services.

The county supports legislation, including and similar to AB 38, the Home Hardening bill. The county encourages the state to invest in efforts to prepare homes and infrastructure to withstand damage from wildfire, meet defensible space standards, design communities to mitigate the impacts of wildfire, prepare communities for successful evacuation, reduce wildfire ignitions, establish roadside shaded fuel breaks, and educate citizens about how to prepare their families, home, and communities for wildfire. The county supports legislation designed to support the survival and sustainability of local fire service organizations and agencies as well as the retention of volunteer firefighters.

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

ENHANCING EXISTING FIREBREAKS

California wildfires are occurring with more frequency and intensity each year. A common strategy to slow wildfire growth is to create firebreaks by clearing a stretch of land of vegetation. In many rural parts of Humboldt County, county roads serve as a natural firebreak. However, some of these roads have potentially flammable vegetation to the side of the road, and local funding struggles to even keep up with regular maintenance to ensure the roads are passable. However, the roads could serve as a more effective firebreak with extended vegetation clearing, helping to prevent the spread of wildfires. Additional funding would be needed as it is costly to purchase the equipment plus include the labor to run it.

The county supports additional funding for fire prevention efforts near roads, trails, transmission lines and other areas that could or do serve as already existing firebreaks.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COURT SECURITY

Humboldt County is mandated by the state to provide security for the county courthouse, including security services for courtrooms. The county receives an annual allocation from the state to provide these services, however, the allocation does not take in to account local court decisions to provide additional services such as additional courtrooms or extended hours. Humboldt County frequently needs to allow deputies to work overtime and incur additional costs beyond the annual allocation in order to meet its state mandate.

Humboldt County supports additional funding to counties for courthouse and trial court security.

PUBLIC WORKS

FUNDING FOR PREVENTATIVE ROAD MAINTENANCE

Local cities and the county do not have the necessary level of funding needed for preventative road maintenance. It is significantly more cost effective and energy efficient to preventatively maintain roadways versus entirely reconstructing a deteriorated roadway.

The county supports a set-aside in the Cap and Trade funding for preventative maintenance of road systems for all local governments.

ACCESS TO SELF-HELP FUNDING

Senate Bill 1 has provisions for additional funding to self-help counties, or counties that have passed local transportation taxes. The State Controller maintains a list of counties that have Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements for existing funding that could be

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

[used elsewhere but have gone instead to repair local roads. There are 34 counties with MOE requirements under SB 1. Counties on this list are in dire need of funding for roads.](#)

[The county supports legislation that allows all counties on the State Controller's MOE list to be eligible for the self-help component of SB 1.](#)

HUMBOLDT BAY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ports throughout the world are becoming congested; California ports are exceptionally impacted by the growth of international trade and are losing business to other regions. California's agricultural producers are experiencing significant increases in transportation costs as their products are increasingly delayed. In order to minimize the environmental and economic impacts associated with port congestion, California must begin planning to maximize multi-modal cargo handling capabilities. Humboldt Bay is underutilized and the only deep-water harbor in California without rail service to the national rail system.

[The county supports state legislation to facilitate increased multi-modal cargo handling capacity at the Port of Humboldt Bay, including Samoa Industrial Waterfront Transportation Access Plan funding by the State of California and expedited environmental review by Humboldt County and the Coastal Commission.](#)

FUNDING FOR CALIFORNIA FAIRS NETWORK

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

California's 4th Climate Assessment warns that the costs of climate change could climb beyond \$113 billion annually if action is not promptly taken. Unfortunately, while the county has identified numerous climate-induced challenges, the investment necessary to fund required resiliency efforts is far beyond available financial resources. Funding is needed to support efforts to reduce emissions, increase the pace and scale of forest health and wildfire resiliency activities, and support other action to increase climate adaptation. In response to the urgent need for action the state has enacted legislation, regulations, and executive orders that put the state on a course to achieve robust climate change adaptation measures. These efforts, as well as new legislation and regulatory refinements still under development, aim to improve forest health and fire resiliency, ensure water quality and security, increase carbon sequestration, and facilitate greenhouse gas reductions.

Humboldt supports investing funds from cap-and-trade and existing water bonds and other funding sources to support programs that improve climate resiliency. The county supports state investment in the collaborative process, via regional block grants or other funding, required to implement effective on-the-ground efforts of local governments and other organizations across the state.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GRANT FUNDING FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT

The county's General Plan Housing Element includes designation of "Housing Opportunity Zones" to promote infill housing development. The county adopted an ordinance to relax requirements in these zones. The county would also like to provide financial incentives for residential development in these areas.

The county strongly supports legislation that would provide grant funding from the California Department of Housing and Community Development for infill development incentives in Housing Opportunity Zones.

FUNDING FOR ASSISTANCE ON LOCAL COASTAL PLANS

Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) identify land uses and standards by which development will be evaluated within the Coastal Zone, and must be certified by the California Coastal Commission. The development and updates of LCPs are expensive endeavors as they involve a series of special studies, background analysis, public hearings and composition of the programs. Humboldt County's existing LCPs, most of which were adopted in the 1980s,

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

were completed with financial assistance from various state and federal agencies. Recent required updates, however, including the requirement of planning for sea level rise and climate change, are imposing costs that are unsupportable by local jurisdictions.

The county supports additional funding to the Coastal Commission to help assist local jurisdictions creating and updating their LCPs.

FUNDING FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS

Assessments of renewable energy generation capacity in Humboldt County indicate the county could be a significant exporter of electricity generated from renewable sources. The development of these resources, including solar, wind, biomass and wave energy, will assist the county in reaching AB 32 carbon emission reduction targets and stimulate the county's economy.

The county supports legislation that would accelerate the development of renewable energy resources including price supports, grant funding and utility policy that facilitates export of renewable energy generated from the county. The county also supports incentives and policies to promote residential and commercial energy conservation, including Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing.

FUNDING FOR DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN STATE AND FEDERAL BUILDING CODES

The State of California has building code requirements beyond federal regulations, especially as it relates to the Americans with Disabilities Act and local jails. These requirements add significant time and expense to public projects and inhibit the county's ability to provide important services to the community.

Humboldt County supports funding and legislation to mediate the discrepancies between state and federal building requirements, particularly with respect to public projects.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING FOR BROADBAND SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS

Humboldt County is served by a north-south fiber optic line from Ukiah to Eureka and will be served by an east-west line running from the Central Valley along the Highway 36 corridor. This infrastructure provides improved telecommunications service to developed areas of the county, but additional investment is necessary to make "last mile" and "middle mile" connections between developed areas and small outlying communities.

The county strongly supports legislation to provide funding or business incentives to assist companies in bringing broadband service to unserved and underserved areas.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

FULFILL THE PROVISIONS OF THE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES ACT RELATED TO FISH & GAME PROPERTY

According to State Fish & Game Code Section 1504, the state is committed to making payments in lieu of property taxes to local agencies in areas where state wildlife management areas affect local property tax collections. In Humboldt County, local agencies have not been paid since 2001. Although most of this funding would flow to special districts, a portion of these funds is directed to the county's General Fund, Roads Fund, and Library.

The county supports legislative action that would fund the required payments.

RESTORATION OF PROPERTY TAX ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

In 1992, the State enacted the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF), which shifted property tax revenues from local governments to the state. Although counties assess property values, act as a hearing board for property tax appeals, and collect property tax payments, the state receives more than 65 percent of every property tax dollar collected in Humboldt County. After the state recognized it was in its own best interest to ensure that properties were being assessed to the greatest extent possible, it provided funding through the Property Tax Administration Program to support the Assessor's Office and the rest of the property tax administration system. However, the program hasn't been funded since FY 2004-05 when Humboldt County received \$210,806.

The county supports funding that re-establishes and restores funding for the state's share of property tax administration costs.

SEPARATING SUPERIOR COURT EXPENSES FROM COUNTIES

Two pieces of legislation, the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 and the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, transferred from counties to the state fiscal responsibility for court operations and trial court facilities. The Superior Court Law Enforcement Act of 2002 further delineated responsibility for court security services by county sheriffs to the courts. Despite these extensive acts and their transfer of responsibilities, Humboldt County continues to bear a significant burden for the costs of services provided to the local Superior Court.

The county supports legislation that removes fiscal responsibility from the county for the Grand Jury, security and facility maintenance.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

FUNDING FOR NEWLY FORMED CITIES

AB 818 provides a city that incorporated after January 1, 2012, with property tax in lieu of vehicle license fees (VLF). AB 818 provides the same financing mechanism for future city incorporations that was approved by the Legislature in SB 130 (2017) for previously incorporated cities. For the past eight years, despite the state's population increasing by 2 million residents, no new cities have formed in California. A primary factor for this is the passage of SB 89 in 2011, which removed a financing mechanism that communities previously relied on to assist incorporation. To restore options for future city incorporation and the enhanced civic engagement and benefits to local services and quality of life that it can offer to residents, AB 818 applies the same financial fix for future incorporations that was provided in 2017 to four recently incorporated cities harmed by SB 89. AB 818 proposes that the Legislature provide the same financing solution that was provided in SB 130 for future city incorporations

The county supports allowing newly formed cities to receive a share of vehicle license fees.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has required an unprecedented response by local, state and federal public health systems. Humboldt County Public Health and its accredited laboratory provide critical testing, contact tracing and guidance for our community. While the state has taken unprecedented steps to address the pandemic, additional resources are needed to ensure adequate public health planning, workforce, medical supplies, access to laboratory testing services, and alternative care capacity to appropriately respond to any local, state, or global health emergency. Counties must also have state and federal support in growing and retaining a highly skilled public health workforce.

The county supports increased funding to support public health in addressing the evolving impacts of COVID-19 and community health emergencies.

COVID-19 PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING AND FLEXIBILITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted local and state social services and behavioral health systems with an increasing need for supportive services. Sudden changes in business practices to meet public health guidelines has increased the complexity of providing services. Temporary regulatory flexibility has been granted in areas such as tele-health, in-person services and eligibility for safety net programs including CalFresh and Medi-Cal in order to meet the challenge. Investments in food, healthcare and housing security provide important supports for individuals and families enduring economic hardship caused by COVID-19. Increased funding and continuing regulatory flexibility will be required to maintain vital safety net services throughout this pandemic.

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

[The county supports pandemic programmatic flexibility and legislation that protects and enhances income, health coverage, food security and housing stability.](#)

PROTECTING REALIGNED LOCAL SERVICES

[The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impact on the economy have devastated local budgets at a time when the demand for supportive services has greatly increased. Legislation in 1991 and 2011 realigned responsibility for most Health and Human Services programs from the state to counties. As realignment revenues fall below base funding, the county's ability to maintain compliance with federal and state regulations and requirements may be at risk. The Budget Act of 2020 \(SB 115\) allocated funding to backfill lost revenue for realigned programs. Proposals to realign additional programs from the state to counties tend to occur in response to state budget deficits. At this difficult time, all realigned programs and services must have sufficient funding appropriated.](#)

[The county supports efforts to fully fund 1991 and 2011 realignment and opposes realigning additional health and human services programs at this time.](#)

INVESTMENT IN HOUSING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

[Safe and stable housing is a foremost concern for low-income individuals and families and without it, a primary barrier to health and self-sufficiency. The state has made significant investments in housing over the past several years. However, the impact of COVID-19 on housing security and homelessness further stresses an inadequate system of supportive services. New, ongoing and flexible resources continue to be needed to expand housing case management, provide income supports such as subsidized rent, and eviction prevention services. Funding is needed for housing case management services across all populations for which counties have responsibility, including child welfare services, adult protective services, CalWORKs, transition age youth, foster youth and persons with serious mental illness.](#)

[The county supports increased state investment in housing supportive services such as eviction prevention, rent support and county case management.](#)

FUNDING TO PROTECT OLDER AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

[As the number of older adults increases across California and the nation, renewed focus has been brought to their needs, including the state Master Plan on Aging process. Counties are on the front lines of protecting vulnerable and older adults, although both the Adult Protective Services and Public Guardian programs have been historically underfunded and are struggling to meet the needs of the fastest increasing segment of the homeless population – older adults. Compounding this need is the disparate impact of COVID-19 on the elderly and those with underlying health conditions. The county Public Guardian office is under-resourced to care for an increasing number of clients requiring conservatorship. Efforts to change or expand conservatorships must be accompanied by](#)

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corresponding funding to support new client placement options and the county Public Guardian office.

The county supports state investment in county Public Guardian and Adult Protective Services.

INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION

Local public health departments are mandated to provide a broad array of services to protect and improve the health and safety of communities. On the front lines of improving health equity and mitigating the impacts of climate change, public health works to improve the built environment, access to healthy food and clean water, and active transportation options. Investment in local public health prevention programs such as substance use disorder prevention, cannabis and tobacco prevention, oral health promotion, nurse home visiting programs, suicide and violence prevention, and sexually transmitted and communicable disease prevention protect the health of the county and its residents now and into the future.

The county supports increased public health prevention funding and legislation that protects community health.

RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS

Rural counties struggle to recruit and retain qualified health professionals. This is especially true in the medical and mental health fields. State incentives for building education pathways to health careers, training for trauma-informed agencies that support professionals in addressing secondary traumatic stress, lower career barriers for public health nurses and expanded opportunities for substance use disorder treatment professionals would improve local health outcomes and employment opportunities.

The county supports legislative efforts to improve workforce opportunities in health careers.

NATURAL RESOURCES

LONG-TERM FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCE AFFAIRS

Humboldt County is home to significant water resources that include the Eel, Klamath, Mad and Trinity Rivers; home to fish populations of salmon, groundfish and crab; and home to dense forests which include coastal Redwoods. These considerable natural resources were once abundant and contributed notably to the local economy.

Decisions and regulatory management of these natural resources often occur at the state and federal levels. These decisions have had cumulative impacts on water resources,

STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

fisheries and timber, and therefore on the community as well. State and federal decisions need to adequately account for local priorities, knowledge and needs in order to minimize adverse economic and social impacts, while appropriately managing and restoring these significant natural resources.

The county strongly supports legislation that provides stable funding for long-term engagement, administration and capacity development for natural resource affairs in the County of Humboldt.

WILLIAMSON ACT FUNDING RESTITUTION, RESTORATION THROUGH CAP AND TRADE

The Land Conservation Act is one of the most effective tools in preventing the loss of farmland and open space, while also helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Act provides tax breaks to landowners who contract with a county to keep their land in agriculture or open space for a period of 10 years. To encourage county participation in the program, the State historically reimbursed counties a portion of the property tax revenue losses resulting from the lower assessments. The state discontinued the reimbursement in FY 2010-2011.

The county supports legislative or budget proposals to fund the Land Conservation Act subventions to counties.

INCENTIVES FOR WATER STORAGE

Home and business water storage systems have become critically important as California, especially heavily forested land, is experiencing more natural disasters such as wildfire and drought. It is important to incentivize more construction of these systems on existing construction so that property owners may be better equipped to survive these events. Any such incentives and evaluation must take in to account the effect that additional water storage may have on the environment, including water availability, vector impact, public health and invasive species.

The county supports legislation that incentivizes responsible water storage systems for existing construction.

PUBLIC SAFETY

STABLE FUNDING FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

Juvenile Justice funding is imperative to providing supervision and treatment services for high-risk youth in local communities. Treatment and confinement solutions are provided for a community's youth who are at highest risk to re-offend and hardest to place due to their co-occurring mental health disorders, thereby putting community safety in jeopardy.

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The county supports legislation for continued and increased resources for juvenile justice programs in order to provide for stable and secure sources of funding.

FUNDING FOR INCREASED ENFORCEMENT OF ILLEGAL WATER DIVERSIONS

Illegal water diversions for use in cannabis cultivation continues to threaten the health of Humboldt County water bodies. All of the major rivers and creeks (and their tributaries) are fully appropriated all year long, so no water is available for new diversions during that period. While Humboldt County works with other appropriate agencies to ensure that cannabis cultivators go through the correct process when permitting their cannabis operations, there are not enough funds to prevent operators from illegally drawing on these precious natural resources.

The county supports legislation that would provide increased funding to support local enforcement regarding water-related issues.

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ASSISTANCE, FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS

The planning and coordination of response, recovery, and mitigation activities related to emergencies and disasters is vital for our community. This includes developing emergency operations plans, conducting trainings, and communicating with the community. Funding is required to provide financial assistance to local governments and private property owners to efficiently prepare for disasters and repair homes, businesses, infrastructure and the natural environment. Humboldt County does not have adequate facilities to conduct emergency operations. More frequently, Humboldt County is dealing with bigger, stronger wildfires that threaten lives and property and it is vital that staff from many agencies can come together in facilities that are suited to their needs in order to properly respond to emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic has crystallized this point as Humboldt had to lease space from educational institutions during two school years to operate its emergency operations center. Additional one-time funding should be allocated to small, rural counties to help them create these facilities.

The county supports additional funding for emergency planning, preparations, operations and recovery, including addressing the safety of residents and seniors and those with disabilities. The county supports additional funding for emergency response facilities.

COMMUNITY LEVEL WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND PROTECTION

According to the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, “loss of life and structures as a direct or proximate result of wildland fires is at an all-time high,” and “recent trends have shown an increase in the number of ignitions, area burned, and impacts to ecosystems.” The Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan determines that there are periods of high wildfire risk for every Humboldt County community, including coastal areas, when conditions are just right for a single fire ignition to have potentially devastating

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STATE FUNDING PROPOSALS

consequences. Weather and fire patterns, together with Humboldt County's rugged topography and dense fuel loads, combine to create a generally high wildfire risk during dry parts of the year. Humboldt County depends on local fire and rescue services through volunteer firefighters, CAL FIRE and others to respond to wildfires. More resources and volunteers are needed to ensure the continuation of these services.

The county supports legislation, including and similar to AB 38, the Home Hardening bill. The county encourages the state to invest in efforts to prepare homes and infrastructure to withstand damage from wildfire, meet defensible space standards, design communities to mitigate the impacts of wildfire, prepare communities for successful evacuation, reduce wildfire ignitions, establish roadside shaded fuel breaks, and educate citizens about how to prepare their families, home, and communities for wildfire. The county supports legislation designed to support the survival and sustainability of local fire service organizations and agencies as well as the retention of volunteer firefighters.

ENHANCING EXISTING FIREBREAKS

California wildfires are occurring with more frequency and intensity each year. A common strategy to slow wildfire growth is to create firebreaks by clearing a stretch of land of vegetation. In many rural parts of Humboldt County, county roads serve as a natural firebreak. However, some of these roads have potentially flammable vegetation to the side of the road, and local funding struggles to even keep up with regular maintenance to ensure the roads are passable. However, the roads could serve as a more effective firebreak with extended vegetation clearing, helping to prevent the spread of wildfires. Additional funding would be needed as it is costly to purchase the equipment plus include the labor to run it.

The county supports additional funding for fire prevention efforts near roads, trails, transmission lines and other areas that could or do serve as already existing firebreaks.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COURT SECURITY

Humboldt County is mandated by the state to provide security for the county courthouse, including security services for courtrooms. The county receives an annual allocation from the state to provide these services, however, the allocation does not take in to account local court decisions to provide additional services such as additional courtrooms or extended hours. Humboldt County frequently needs to allow deputies to work overtime and incur additional costs beyond the annual allocation in order to meet its state mandate.

Humboldt County supports additional funding to counties for courthouse and trial court security.

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PUBLIC WORKS

FUNDING FOR PREVENTATIVE ROAD MAINTENANCE

Local cities and the county do not have the necessary level of funding needed for preventative road maintenance. It is significantly more cost effective and energy efficient to preventatively maintain roadways versus entirely reconstructing a deteriorated roadway.

The county supports a set-aside in the Cap and Trade funding for preventative maintenance of road systems for all local governments.

ACCESS TO SELF-HELP FUNDING

Senate Bill 1 has provisions for additional funding to self-help counties, or counties that have passed local transportation taxes. The State Controller maintains a list of counties that have Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements for existing funding that could be used elsewhere but have gone instead to repair local roads. There are 34 counties with MOE requirements under SB 1. Counties on this list are in dire need of funding for roads.

The county supports legislation that allows all counties on the State Controller's MOE list to be eligible for the self-help component of SB 1.

HUMBOLDT BAY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ports throughout the world are becoming congested; California ports are exceptionally impacted by the growth of international trade and are losing business to other regions. California's agricultural producers are experiencing significant increases in transportation costs as their products are increasingly delayed. In order to minimize the environmental and economic impacts associated with port congestion, California must begin planning to maximize multi-modal cargo handling capabilities. Humboldt Bay is underutilized and the only deep-water harbor in California without rail service to the national rail system.

The county supports state legislation to facilitate increased multi-modal cargo handling capacity at the Port of Humboldt Bay, including Samoa Industrial Waterfront Transportation Access Plan funding by the State of California and expedited environmental review by Humboldt County and the Coastal Commission.

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FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE GOALS

Humboldt County's primary, overarching federal legislative goals for 2021 include:

SUPPORT INCREASES IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR KEY COUNTY PROGRAMS.

SUPPORT AND ADVANCE LOCAL INTERESTS IN NATURAL RESOURCE DISCUSSIONS.

SUPPORT FOR PROTECTION FROM CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE.

SUPPORT INCREASING THE FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP IN COUNTY PROGRAMS.

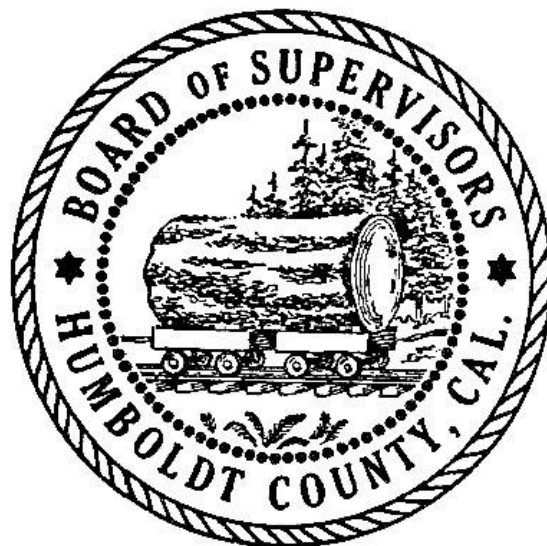
- Allowing cannabis regulations and decriminalizing cannabis at the federal level.
- Support funding for public infrastructure programs, including transportation, water, housing and homelessness programs.
- Support increased federal investments to boost capacity for local public health programs and initiatives.

SUPPORT RELIEF FROM FEDERAL MANDATES AND STATUTORY BARRIERS.

- Support broadening of allowable uses of Secure Rural Schools Act (Title III) funding.

SUPPORT FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS.

- Support for enhancing broadband service to the rural north coast of California.
- Preserve local control in technology considerations.



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

AGRICULTURE

ALLOWING CANNABIS REGULATIONS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Cannabis is currently listed as a Schedule 1 drug under the *Controlled Substances Act (CSA)*, which is reserved for drugs that have “no currently accepted medical use.” Consequences of this action have prevented state and local governments from being able to address clear and compelling public health and safety issues pertaining to the use, production and distribution of cannabis and products which contain cannabis. In addition, federal law prohibits federally insured banks from being able to knowingly accept money from cannabis transactions, forcing the industry into an underground economy conducive to crime.

The county supports legislation that allows cannabis to be regulated at the federal level, including removing cannabis from Schedule 1 of the CSA. The county takes the position that any change to the legal status of marijuana at the federal level must be accompanied by a thorough regulatory framework that delineates the clear roles and responsibilities of the jurisdictions involved.

Finally, the county supports the continuation of the Rohrabacher-Blumenauer amendment, which prohibits the Department of Justice from using federal resources to prosecute individuals or businesses that are acting in compliance with state medical marijuana laws. The county also supports efforts to expand these protections to state-legal recreational laws. In addition, the county supports federal legislation that would ensure greater access to banking for cannabis-related businesses and allow proper medical research on the effects of cannabis use.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS) INSPECTION AUTHORITY

Detector dogs routinely profile parcels containing fruit or plant material at terminal inspections. United States Postal Service packages in First Class, Priority or Express Mail profiled by detector dogs require a magistrate issued warrant or permission of sender or receiver to gain entry to the parcel for inspection purposes. Many parcels do not get inspected because required authorizations are not obtained. There is significant evidence that the postal pathway contributes to the introduction of exotic, invasive agricultural pests.

Humboldt County supports statutory and/or rulemaking efforts to facilitate inspector access to First Class, Priority or Express mail packages containing plant material profiled by detector dogs.

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FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

AVIATION

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR PILOT CANDIDATES TO RECEIVE CERTIFICATES

In 2013, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) finalized a rule that requires all commercial airline pilots to obtain at least 1,500 hours of flight time before receiving their Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) certificate. Notably, this new requirement is six times higher than the previous standard of 250 hours.

While the new 1,500-hour threshold was meant to increase flight safety, it has significantly contributed to a pilot shortage, one that is particularly felt by small regional airports like ACV. In fact, many airlines have already dropped commercial service to small airports like ACV because they cannot recruit enough pilots to meet these requirements. Meanwhile, those pilots who are qualified are typically reserved to fly routes serving larger airports. [Losing commercial air service to ACV would have a devastating impact on Humboldt County's local economy and would likely put additional strain on county roads as more citizens would be forced to take longer trips to get to the nearest airport.](#)

[The county supports legislation and/or regulatory action that would address the current and looming commercial pilot shortage. In particular, the county supports efforts to reduce the total number of hours pilots need to receive their ATP certificate, as well as alternate pathways for pilots to reach the 1,500 hour threshold.](#)

REMOVE CAP ON PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGE AND REDUCE LOCAL MATCHING REQUIREMENT

[Small airports, including the California Redwood Coast–Humboldt County Airport, rely on passenger facility charge \(PFC\) revenue to fund critically important infrastructure and safety initiatives, including the construction and repair of runways, taxiways, and other airfield projects. PFC revenues – combined with federal grant funding from other key sources, such as the Airport Improvement Program \(AIP\) – have allowed Humboldt County's Aviation Department to maintain and improve local aviation infrastructure while providing a large number of jobs in the community. Unfortunately, federal law does not allow airport operators to make adjustments in their PFCs, thus eroding their ability to fund aviation projects. Humboldt County supports legislative efforts that would remove the federal cap on PFCs in order to allow the County to collect sufficient revenue from airport users to better fund critically needed infrastructure and safety improvement projects.](#)

[Other recent changes to federal aviation law also hinder the ability of small airports to fund key projects, including provisions of the 2012 FAA reauthorization Act that require small airport operators to increase their local match. In Humboldt County, this requirement –](#)

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along with the aforementioned inability to adjust the PFC, has resulted in a reduction in the number of aviation projects performed.

Finally, Humboldt County supports the maximum level of funding for key aviation programs, including the AIP and the Small Community Air Services Development Program (SCASDP).

CHILD SUPPORT

SUPPORT FLEXIBILITY IN PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Local child support agencies (LCSAs) frequently assist obligated parents who have lost jobs, but these agencies are limited in terms of the services they provide due to outdated regulations. For example, due to current restrictions on Title IV-D cases, LCSAs cannot expend funds to support parents to get back to work, despite these agencies being named in the *Workforce Investment Opportunity Act* (WIOA) legislation. Allowing LCSAs to provide these tools can help persons paying support (PPSs) to keep paying child support. In addition, workforce development support in LCSAs is a tenet of the “no wrong door” approach to public service. Recipients of state or federal services must often go to many different offices to apply for different services, none of which communicate client information. Streamlining approaches to public service would increase the effectiveness of public programs, and serve children and families better.

Humboldt County supports legislation that would allow more flexibility to local child support agencies to serve clients. Changes in federal law could include, but are not limited to, requiring WIOA to prioritize child support program referrals of PPs to meet their employment and training needs and providing a federal financial match of child support incentive funds used for WIOA employment and training purposes. The county supports efforts to increase coordination across agencies to provide services including, but not limited to, workforce development or indirectly related services such as signing participants up for CalFresh or MediCal benefits. Local child support agencies (LCSAs) frequently assist obligated parents who have lost jobs, but these agencies are limited in terms of the services they provide due to outdated regulations

COURT AND PROGRAM EFFICIENCIES THROUGH MAXIMIZING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Child Support partners with the local courts in order to obtain child support orders. This partnering is often held back by the lack of technological interfaces between the two. Currently not all local courts have technology that enables electronic filing. Additionally, access to justice issues are created when there is no court reporter at hearings and hearing outcomes are not on record.

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Humboldt County supports a more effective child support program through the use of technological advancements that can streamline processes and create a more just outcome for families. This includes but is not limited to digital court reporting, video appearances by commissioners, and effective interfaces between county and court such as e-filing.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION

Global climate change is causing sea levels to rise due to thermal expansion of ocean water and the melting of glaciers and ice sheets. The Humboldt Bay region is vulnerable to flooding hazards, erosion, and loss and change of coastal ecosystems due to sea level rise. The risks associated with global sea level rise are compounded in the Humboldt Bay region by land subsidence associated with the Cascadia Subduction Zone. Extreme flood events from high tides, storm surge, and waves will become more frequent and the magnitude of these events is expected to become more severe. Developed communities, public infrastructure, agricultural lands, and natural habitats are at risk for adverse impacts. In many locations the railroad around Humboldt Bay has become critical coastal protection infrastructure for protecting inland areas from flooding. However, the railroad has significantly deteriorated over the last 20 years because the North Coast Railroad Authority has not had sufficient resources to perform regular maintenance and repair.

Local agencies around Humboldt Bay have been performing technical studies to better understand sea level rise vulnerability, updating Local Coastal Programs, and developing strategies for sea level rise adaptation. Incremental progress is being made but efforts toward sea level rise adaptation face significant challenges. Flooding is driven by natural processes which are dynamic and difficult to predict. The vulnerable lands around Humboldt Bay contain a variety of geomorphic settings and cross ownership and jurisdictional boundaries. Dialogue regarding basic sea level rise response approaches (i.e., protection, accommodation, ecosystem-based adaptation, retreat) remains at an early stage. Adaptation measures to increase flood resilience need to be considered at a landscape scale and require innovative designs. Projects with the potential to impact coastal resources are subject to significant regulatory constraints by the Coastal Act and other laws and regulations. Financial constraints will likely be a major barrier to action, but the risks of no-action are significant.

Humboldt County supports:

- Funding to counties and cities along the coast to develop sea level rise adaptation plans. The hydrographic area provides the optimal spatial framework to guide adaptation strategies for sea level rise planning around Humboldt Bay. The geomorphic and hydrologic processes that control the flow of water and sediment

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must be understood at the landscape scale in order to plan and design effective adaptation measures. Future scenarios and adaptation pathways should be developed based on best available science. Plans should identify multiple lines of defense including natural features and built structures. Adaptation measures may need to span multiple ownerships. In some cases, risk reduction in certain areas could be accomplished through flood accommodation in other areas. In other cases, plans should be developed for strategic relocation and an orderly transition to a new future land use because maintaining the current land use is unsustainable due to flood hazards. Funding should prioritize regional approaches that incentivize jurisdictions working together across common hydrographic areas to maximize the effectiveness of adaptation measures.

- Funding to counties and cities along the coast to implement sea level rise adaptation projects. Funding is needed to plan, design, test, implement, monitor, and adaptively manage projects. Funding should prioritize nature-based solutions, multi-objective projects, and actions that benefit public infrastructure and economically disadvantaged communities. Nature-based solutions work with natural processes and landforms to provide protection for both ecosystems and the built environment. Nature-based solutions, and hybrid measures that integrate nature with engineered structural approaches, may provide the optimal total benefits for coastal resilience and risk reduction.
- Funding to the North Coast Railroad Authority (or its successor agency) to maintain and repair its deteriorated and damaged assets along the Humboldt Bay shoreline to mitigate flood risks for Highway 101, the Humboldt Bay Trail, and inland areas. The feasibility of improving railroad infrastructure to serve a coastal protection function for sea level rise adaptation should be assessed.
- Revisions to laws and regulations that modernize the regulatory framework to encourage and support sea level rise adaptation projects. Flexibility is needed with wetland fill policies and other policies in order to enable nature-based strategies, beneficial reuse of sediment, and reasonable improvements to dikes and levees. Requirements for technical studies, mitigation, monitoring, and maintenance should not be overly burdensome to avoid these requirements being a deterrent for urgently needed action.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT REFORMS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is an important piece of legislation that helps ensure all Americans, regardless of ability, can access public and private services and

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facilities. However, there is a significant lack of funding for counties to comply with this expansive law. In addition, public agencies and businesses are frequently served with ADA lawsuits despite honest attempts to comply with the law, which eliminates the opportunity to an out-of-court settlement.

The county supports common-sense reforms to the ADA and additional funding that would help local agencies and businesses work toward compliance with the Act.

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BOOST BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY WHILE PRESERVING LOCAL ZONING AUTHORITY

The county supports the deployment and availability of emerging technologies, such as small cell 5G, to rural areas of the nation to ensure equitable economic and educational opportunities for all. By preserving the long-standing, existing local zoning authorities of counties and other local governments in the deployment process, Humboldt County can ensure that the public interest is being served by communications providers regardless of the delivery platform. County officials can also fulfill their responsibilities as trustees of public property and as protectors of public safety and welfare during this deployment process.

Humboldt County supports efforts to recognize counties as co-regulators, providers and partners in extending the benefits of advanced telecommunications and broadband technology — including improvements to county emergency preparedness and response systems — to all Americans. The county supports local decision-making and accountability, and opposes actions that would preempt or limit the zoning and siting authority of local governments.

The county supports legislative efforts that would nullify the Federal Communication Commission’s 2018 wireless infrastructure rule (*83 Fed Reg. 51867*). Among other things, the Commission’s rule preempts local government authority to regulate 5G deployments by restricting the timeframes for the review of small-cell applications and places limitations on the level of compensation that localities can receive from siting the technology.

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SUPPORT FOR CHILD CARE

Child care is key to economic recovery and development. For families to continue to work, fragile child care infrastructure must be bolstered. Any economic stimulus should include child care access, which is essential to helping Americans get back to work. In California, many families no longer qualify for Head Start due to low income eligibility standards and the rising minimum wage. Access to federal programs must match the conditions Humboldt families are experiencing.

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[The county supports economic stimulus measures to expand child care affordability and access and an increase in eligibility standards for Head Start so that more Humboldt families can access the program.](#)

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

SUPPORT PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (PACE) PROGRAMS

[The property assessed clean energy \(PACE\) model is an innovative mechanism for financing energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property.](#) However, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) – [as regulator for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac as well as the Federal Home Loan Banks](#) – continues to have concerns with California's first-lien PACE program. [While FHFA continues to seek feedback on honing its PACE policies,](#) there is some concern that a forthcoming proposed rule could disrupt the unique structure of the program and make it more difficult for homeowners to obtain affordable financing for energy efficiency upgrades.

[In an effort to address some of FHFA's concerns, the State of California has implemented a PACE Loss Reserve Fund to ensure that PACE assessments are paid off in the event of a mortgage default. The State has also significantly strengthened consumer protections, enhanced underwriting standards, and established a new regulatory framework for PACE financing in California.](#)

Humboldt County supports strong national consumer protection standards for the program [and believes](#) the aforementioned California laws should act as a template to establish federal standards. Humboldt County also supports the right to implement PACE programs and establish property assessment liens for energy conservation and renewable energy investments. Finally, the county supports legislation that would prevent Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and other federal residential and commercial mortgage lending regulators from adopting policies that contravene established state and local PACE laws

LOCAL AUTHORITY TO LEVY INTERNET SALES TAX

On June 21, 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the state of South Dakota in a landmark case involving the collection of sales taxes from online vendors. While a previous Supreme Court decision (*Quill Corp. v North Dakota*) held that online retailers were *not* required to collect sales taxes in states where they lack a physical presence, the 2018 decision overturned *Quill*.

In the wake of the Wayfair decision, a number of states – including California – have updated their laws for out-of-state Internet retailers. This has resulted in a patchwork of state laws that could make sales tax compliance more challenging for out-of-state businesses. As more and more states adopt economic nexus policies, Congress could look

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to consider legislation – like the *Marketplace Fairness Act* – that would create a national framework for online sales tax collection and remittance.

On the other hand, congressional opponents of the Wayfair decision have introduced legislation that would overturn the ruling. Humboldt County is opposed to any legislative or regulatory action that seeks to delay, limit, or even prohibit the collection/remittance of online sales taxes.

LIMIT CORPORATE AND UNION CONTRIBUTIONS IN ELECTIONS

The United States Supreme Court ruled that corporations and unions have the same political speech rights as individuals under the First Amendment. The court found no compelling government interest for prohibiting corporations and unions from using their funds to make election-related expenditures. Thus, it struck down a federal law banning this practice and also overruled two of its prior decisions. In 2016, California voters approved a proposition to have its elected officials do everything in their power to overturn the ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which allows corporations to use their funds to make election-related expenditures.

The county supports a Constitutional Amendment to reverse the ruling in *Citizens United*.

FUNDING FOR POSTAL SERVICE

With the USPS facing a major financial crisis due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more critical than ever that Congress ensure the viability of this indispensable institution. Humboldt County residents rely on the Postal Service for deliveries of prescription medications and other vital medical supplies, as well as mail-in ballots, the Census, stimulus checks, and other essential items. Many of our communities are a testament to the fact that the USPS truly serves the “last mile,” as FedEx, UPS, Amazon and other private carriers rely exclusively on the Postal Service to handle their respective package deliveries to many of our rural areas.

Although the USPS has weathered a series of difficult financial challenges in recent years, it is facing the prospect of complete financial collapse. According to the Postmaster General, USPS revenue losses stemming from the coronavirus pandemic are expected to total \$22 billion through the fall of 2021. Without support, the prospect of a significantly weakened or even financially insolvent Postal Service will persist, thus threatening their indispensable services.

The county supports legislation that provides USPS with additional funding and opposes efforts that would close postal service locations or limit their services.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM, LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR IMMIGRANT RESIDENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

The county supports legislative and budgetary efforts to enhance legal protections for undocumented immigrants, increase funding for legal services and deportation defense, and address unaccompanied children crossing the border, including increasing funds for immigration-related legal services, shelter and care. In addition, the county supports efforts at the federal level to provide comprehensive immigration reform, as well as establishing a clear path to citizenship, protecting the well-being of undocumented workers, supporting deferred action programs and related efforts to make immigration relief available. Finally, the county supports efforts to protect the health and welfare of children and children whose parents are detained or deported by Immigration and Customs enforcement (ICE) or Border Patrol.

PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDS

The State of California passed in 2017 its Sanctuary State bill (SB 54), which legalizes and standardizes statewide non-cooperation policies between state and local law enforcement agencies and federal immigration authorities.

Humboldt County opposes legislation and administrative rules that would require local law enforcement agencies to cooperate with federal immigration authorities. Further, the county supports legislation that protects current and future federal funding from such requirements.

STATE AND LOCAL TAX DEDUCTION

The State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction allows taxpayers to deduct state and local property, income and sales tax to reduce their federal liability. [The comprehensive tax reform law of 2017 continues](#) to allow taxpayers to deduct property taxes and income or sales taxes, but only up to a combined cap of \$10,000 (unlike previous law, which allowed federal taxpayers to deduct the entirety of their state and local property taxes, as well as their state income taxes or sales tax). While many of the individual tax provisions of the law expire at the end of 2025, the changes to the SALT deduction do not expire until 2028, when state and local taxes will once again become fully deductible.

Humboldt County utilizes the revenues from property, sales and income taxes to help finance infrastructure projects, law enforcement, emergency services, and many other services. Therefore, further restricting or eliminating the SALT deduction could limit local control of our tax systems, as well as constrain the policy options available to address local challenges and increased responsibilities due to the devolution of federal programs.

The county supports legislation that would fully restore the SALT deduction, and opposes any effort to further reduce or eliminate this tax benefit.

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PROTECTING TAX EXEMPT BONDS

Municipal bonds and private activity bonds (PAB) are critical financing tools used by state and local governments to finance public capital improvements and public infrastructure projects, which are essential for creating jobs, sustaining economic growth and improving the quality of life for Americans in every corner of this country. Because investors are not required to pay federal income tax on interest earned from most bonds issued by state and local governments, localities ultimately receive a lower interest rate on their borrowing than they would if their interest was taxable to investors.

The 2017 tax reform law fully preserves the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and PABs. However, it eliminated the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds, which counties use to refinance outstanding bonds to take advantage of better terms and rates. Humboldt County supports efforts to protect the municipal bond and PAB tax exemption, as well as legislation that would restore the exemption for advance refunding bonds.

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

SUPPORT ACCESS TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE

CalFresh is California's primary nutrition assistance program. It is of critical importance to the health, well-being and financial survival of low-income individuals, students, and families. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical importance of safety net food programs. Programmatic flexibilities and expanded food subsidies are needed, particularly during this unprecedented public health emergency. Proposals to reduce funding, block grant, further limit eligibility, or add new state mandates to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) would restrict access to this vital health benefit, increase poverty and worsen health outcomes.

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The county supports efforts to improve food security and augment federal investments in SNAP.

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SUPPORT FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

Childcare is essential to economic recovery and development. For families to continue to work, the fragile childcare infrastructure must be bolstered. In California, many families no longer qualify for the Head Start program due to its insufficient income eligibility standards and the rising minimum wage. Access to federally funded childcare programs must match the conditions Humboldt County families are experiencing. Legislation to broaden eligibility and access to high-quality, affordable childcare and early learning programs, and increase childcare workers' compensation and professional development opportunities, is needed.

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The county supports legislation that increases access to the Head Start program and to affordable, high-quality childcare and early learning programs.

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES REAUTHORIZATION

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program was last reauthorized in 2005 and has since been operating on a series of short-term extensions. TANF contains California’s block grant for CalWORKs and the CalWORKs work participation rules. Comprehensive program reauthorization should provide effective pathways to family economic success, including access to education, counseling, [childcare](#), job training and individualized services for those with barriers to employment.

The county supports increased federal investment in safety net programs, as well as flexibility for states and counties in meeting the federal work participation rates.

NATURAL RESOURCES

POTTER VALLEY PROJECT

The Potter Valley Project (PVP), currently owned by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), was constructed on the main stem of the Eel River upstream of Humboldt County in the early 20th century to generate hydroelectric power. Operation of the PVP serves as an inter-basin transfer of water from the Eel River basin to the Russian River basin, and the benefits of water diversions to the Russian River have come at the expense of substantial downstream impacts to the Eel River and its fisheries. In 2017, Congressman Jared Huffman convened the Potter Valley Project Ad Hoc Committee to work toward a Two-Basin Solution that protects fisheries and water supply in both the Eel and Russian River basins. In January 2019, PG&E announced that it would discontinue efforts toward relicensing the PVP. In June 2019, Humboldt County joined California Trout, Sonoma County Water Agency, and Mendocino Inland Water and Power Commission in the submission of a Notice of Intent to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ([FERC](#)) as a proxy for a future regional entity to file a new license application for the PVP. [In May, the Parties filed with FERC a Feasibility Study Report that identifies key elements necessary to implement the Two-Basin Solution.](#)

Humboldt County supports a collaborative approach to solving the regional issues and concerns associated with the PVP. Humboldt County supports legislation to create a new regional entity that is structured to fairly represent the interests of the affected counties and tribes.

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

[In 2020, California experienced its worst fire season in recorded history. While wildfires are a natural part of California’s landscape, the fire season is starting earlier and ending later each year. Climate change is considered a key driver of this trend. Warmer spring and summer temperatures, reduced snowpack, and earlier spring snowmelt create longer and](#)

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more intense dry seasons that increase moisture stress on vegetation and make forests more susceptible to severe wildfire.

Humboldt County supports strategic policy changes that balance fire prevention, habitat protection, and rural economic development. The County also supports legislation that would increase wildfire preparedness and post-fire response, including efforts to provide enhanced federal assistance to communities that have been impacted by wildfires.

PUBLIC WORKS

KLAMATH BASIN

In April of 2016, the U.S. Department of the Interior, PacifiCorp, and the states of California and Oregon adopted an amended version of the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSAs). The amended KHSAs set the parameters for the parties to pursue dam removal through the FERC relicensing process. Under the KHSAs amendment, dam owner PacifiCorp agreed to transfer its license to operate the dams to a newly created nonprofit called the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRRC). The new organization will manage the decommissioning process and assume liability for problems with the removal.

In September of 2016, the KRRRC filed two applications with FERC. The first application – a joint submission by the KRRRC and PacifiCorp – requested that federal regulators transfer PacifiCorp’s operating licenses to the KRRRC. The second application asked FERC to approve the decommissioning and removal of the Klamath dams beginning in the year 2020.

In July of 2020, FERC approved the license transfer, albeit on the condition that PacifiCorp remain a co-licensee along with the KRRRC. FERC’s decision, which left PacifiCorp open to assuming responsibility for unforeseen costs and potential liabilities associated with dam removal, called into question whether and how the decommissioning and dam removal process would commence.

On Nov. 17, 2020, PacifiCorp, the States of California and Oregon, the Karuk and Yurok Tribes, and the KRRRC signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) requesting that FERC remove PacifiCorp from the license for the Lower Klamath Project and, in turn, add California and Oregon (along with the KRRRC) as co-licensees for carrying out dam removal. The MOA also commits to doubling the available contingency funds held by the KRRRC and project contractors; in the event that any additional funding is needed for project completion, the agreement stipulates that California, Oregon, and PacifiCorp will share in those costs. Under the terms of the MOA, the parties agree to navigate the final regulatory approvals necessary to allow the project to begin in 2022. Dam removal is slated for 2023.

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Humboldt County supports the [November 2020 framework for dam removal and](#) supports [future](#) legislative [and](#) regulatory [efforts](#) that would benefit Klamath River fisheries, provide economic stability for affected agricultural interests, and improve the overall ecosystem health of the Klamath River basin.

WATER RESOURCES

[Water resources within Humboldt County are often oversubscribed and severely stressed due to, among other things, the ongoing impacts of climate change, drought, and the consistently high demand for water exports. Given the longstanding water supply challenges facing Humboldt County and the state of California, we support federal initiatives designed to help communities develop more resilient water infrastructure, expand the use of modern water management tools and technologies, and assist disadvantaged areas in meeting their water needs. Federal efforts should focus on helping regions better achieve water self-sufficiency through recycling, storage, desalination, and water-use efficiency measures.](#)

[Furthermore, in Humboldt County, commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries are dependent on anadromous fish produced on the Klamath-Trinity River system. These fisheries are an integral component of our local economy and are closely associated with the quality of life in California's North Coast communities. Due to low water conditions in recent years, Reclamation – in consultation with its state, local, and tribal partners – has released supplemental flows into the lower Klamath River to prevent large-scale fish die-offs. It should be noted that Humboldt County has a legal right to not less than 50,000 acre feet of water annually from the Trinity Reservoir for the beneficial use of Humboldt County and downstream users pursuant to a 1959 water contract between the county and the Bureau of Reclamation. Humboldt County continues to work in cooperation with Reclamation to determine the most beneficial use of the aforementioned water, whether it be to protect fish and wildlife or for consumptive use purposes.](#)

[Humboldt County opposes any congressional – or legal – effort designed to block access to water that legally belongs to the county. Likewise, the county opposes any water diversions from the Trinity River Division associated with operational changes to the Central Valley Project or State Water Project.](#)

LONG-TERM FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION BILL

The county supports efforts to enact a long-term reauthorization of the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*. A new surface transportation bill should provide increased funding for highway and transit programs and should prioritize resources to jurisdictions to allow for the proper maintenance of local transportation systems, including funds for reducing fatalities on rural roads.

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The county also supports maintaining a dedicated federal funding stream for local bridges. This funding is used for critical bridge repairs and replacements to ensure the safety of the traveling public. Additionally, the county supports efforts designed to further streamline the regulatory and project delivery processes as long as proposed actions would not result in degradation to the physical environment.

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FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

AGRICULTURE

INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM FUNDING

There are a number of significant invasive species being introduced and detected in California that threaten agriculture and the environment. Continued funding of Pest Exclusion, Pest Detection Trapping and Survey Activities, Rapid Response, Pest Management and Eradication, and Public Education Outreach Programs is critical in protecting California's resources.

Humboldt County supports protecting existing revenue sources, enhanced state and federal funding and full cost recovery for programs to prevent the introduction and potential spread of invasive pests. Humboldt supports local flexibility in expenditures and research on invasive species pathways.

USDA/CALIFORNIA COUNTY COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE SERVICES (WS) PROGRAM

Increased urbanization and suburbanization has led to a reduction and fragmentation of wildlife habitat. At the same time wildlife populations continue to expand because of reduced hunting, changes in animal protection status, and the loss of various control mechanisms. Conflicts between people and wildlife are all too frequent. Funding for USDA's WS program has traditionally been through a cooperative agreement between the federal, state and county governments. Since 2002 cooperative agreements have been between federal and county governments. California Counties that contract with WS have seen increased costs for WS program due to limited or no increase in funding to the California Wildlife Services Program. Additionally, California Counties have been challenged over their contracts with Wildlife Services based on their lack of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Humboldt County supports the current 50:50 cost ratio for each respective county and the federal government, and distributing enhanced funding according to need. Humboldt County supports the use of wildlife management tools and/or methods that have proven effective. Humboldt also supports collaborative efforts between CDFA and USDA to fund and complete CEQA documentation for all Wildlife Services activities in California.

AVIATION

HOMELAND SECURITY – FULL FUNDING OF SECURITY MANDATES FOR COMMERCIAL AIRPORTS

After the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created to provide for safe aviation travel in the United States. As an outcome,

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airports were required to increase security. [The Humboldt County Department of Aviation contracts with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office to provide the additional security required. DHS reimburses the county](#) on an hourly rate for the required service, but does not pay the full hourly rate of the mandated security and has been reducing the hourly rate of reimbursement annually.

The county supports funding to cover the costs of providing mandated security at the California Redwood Coast – Humboldt County Airport.

CHILD SUPPORT

SUPPORT EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT AGENCIES

Changes needed to update antiquated service delivery of the child support program will increase program costs. LCSAs in small rural counties are particularly challenged to provide the same level of services to communities that large urban counties receive when funding methodology is based on a staff to caseload ratio. In part, the economies of scale enjoyed by large counties do not exist in small counties and administrative program costs are not spread among as many cases/staff.

Humboldt County supports legislation that would provide small county LCSAs with funding to provide adequate and similar services [to citizens who receive such services](#) in medium and larger counties, [as is the case](#) with other human services agencies.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PROVIDE MAXIMUM CDBG FUNDING

[Funding provided through the Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) program facilitates affordable housing, service provision to low-income and vulnerable citizens, job creation, and efforts to support economic growth. At least 70 percent of the funds must be used on programs benefiting low- and moderate-income individuals. The CDBG has been targeted for cuts in recent budget cycles, which, if approved by Congress, would threaten the provision of key services at the local level.](#)

[The county supports the maximum level of funding for the CDBG program \(currently funded at \\$3.425 billion in fiscal year 2020\).](#) In addition, the county supports allowing permanent housing to be considered an eligible activity for the program. The county also opposes efforts to reduce funding and operational flexibility for the CDBG.

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RESTORE HOME PROGRAM FUNDING TO FISCAL YEAR 2009 LEVELS

The County of Humboldt relies on the Housing and Urban Development HOME Program funds to develop multi-family housing. Since 2009, funds at the federal level have been cut or have remained stagnant, which has resulted in a limited number of projects receiving funding in the State of California. [Affordable projects are not constructed and will not be constructed in Humboldt County without government program funding.](#)

[The county supports legislation that would return HOME funding to the fiscal year 2009 level \(\\$1.825 billion\). The program is currently funded at \\$1.35 billion.](#) In addition, the county supports efforts to re-establish a reliable and adequate source of affordable housing funds that can be used by formula in rural areas. The county also opposes efforts to reduce funding and operational flexibility for the program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING FOR BROADBAND SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS

Humboldt County is served by a north-south fiber optic line from Ukiah to Eureka and will be served by an east-west line running from the Central Valley along the Highway 36 corridor. This infrastructure provides improved telecommunications service to developed areas of the county, but additional investment is necessary to make “last mile” and “middle mile” connections between developed areas and small outlying communities.

The county strongly supports legislation to provide funding or business incentives to assist companies in bringing broadband service to unserved and underserved areas.

DEVELOP LEGISLATION, BOND GRANT GUIDELINES THAT INCLUDE BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION

Rural areas of Humboldt County include large unused vacant industrial sites, particularly former mill sites. Clean-up of these apparent toxic Brownfield sites is the single largest hindrance to redevelopment of these areas. These sites can cost tens of thousands into the millions of dollars depending upon the amount of toxins found. The county has received funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the past to assess the characterization and cleanup of Brownfield sites. The county’s goal is to receive additional funding to expand the program and provide greater incentives to property owners to cleanup and redevelop Brownfield properties.

The county strongly supports legislation and developing bond grant guidelines that include Brownfield Remediation funding.

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DREDGING HUMBOLDT BAY

The Port of Humboldt Bay is vital to maintaining and promoting diverse industry in our region. It is the only deep-water port between San Francisco and Coos Bay, and provides transportation opportunities for Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity and Mendocino [counties](#). The port is the primary mode of transportation for gasoline and diesel into the area, and has historically been an important transportation route for forest products. Humboldt Bay also serves as a “harbor of refuge” for disabled ships transiting the coast or vessels seeking shelter from storms.

The port has been active with export ships, but the activity level is threatened because the water at the bay entrance is not deep enough for vessels to travel due to storms that deposit sediment throughout the year. The [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers \(USACE\)](#) has deepened this channel to 44 feet in the past. However, the authorized depth, established through a cooperative agreement between [USACE](#) and the Port, is 48 feet. The channel is more likely to remain open throughout the year at this depth, but it cannot be maintained due to current appropriations levels to [the Corps](#).

The county is in favor of sufficient funding to [USACE](#) to maintain the mouth of the bay at the 48-foot depth and federal channels within the bay at 42-foot depth.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

[On Feb. 21, 2020, Humboldt County had its first positive case of COVID-19. This was the ninth positive case in the state and the first for any rural county in the country. Since February, the county has implemented stringent protocols, both for its employees and residents, to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to adhere to federal guidelines. These efforts have been costly and have placed a financial burden on the county and the community. CARES Act funding has been integral in the county’s ability to maintain current response levels and protocols, as well as Humboldt County’s ability to maintain low case rates. However, while Humboldt’s significant response started early, it has also been costly, and additional federal funding will be needed to ensure Humboldt County can continue to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.](#)

[Humboldt County supports direct federal funding to local governments, particularly rural agencies, for COVID-19 relief.](#)

LONG-TERM FUNDING SOLUTION FOR PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

The Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program [compensates](#) local jurisdictions for non-taxable Federal lands and payments may be used for any governmental purpose. In [2020](#),

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the PILT program provided \$514.7 million to more than 1,900 counties and other local governments nationwide.

The inability to collect local taxes on the extensive acreage of federal lands in Humboldt County poses a significant burden. A fully-funded PILT program helps to offset the loss of these important revenues and fulfills the federal government's obligation to local communities with large amounts of federal land. Humboldt County received over \$1.01 million in fiscal year 2020 for essential local services, including law enforcement operations.

The county strongly supports legislation that would provide long-term funding certainty for the PILT program. In absence of a long-term authorization, the county supports a one-year extension of mandatory PILT funding.

EASING RESTRICTIONS ON SPENDING FROM HARBOR MAINTENANCE TRUST FUND

Annual Harbor Maintenance Tax receipts have soared since the late 1990s, due in large part to the increase in trade since China joined the World Trade Organization. When combined with interest on balances, Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) proceeds have tripled in nominal terms since 1999. Actual spending from the trust fund, however – which is controlled by Congress via the annual appropriations process – has not kept up with tax receipts and has resulted in a large surplus of unspent dollars (projected to be roughly \$10 billion as of 2020).

Humboldt County supports legislation that eases restrictions on spending receipts from the HMTF, including legislation that would “unlock” unspent balances in the Fund. The county also supports legislative language championed by Representative Huffman that would increase the HMTF set-aside for “emerging harbors” (defined as ports handling less than one million tons of cargo annually).

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

SUPPORT FOR COVID-19 PANDEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has required an unprecedented response by local, state and federal public health systems. Humboldt County Public Health and its accredited laboratory provide critical testing, contact tracing and guidance for our community. While the country has taken unprecedented steps to address the pandemic, additional ongoing resources are needed to ensure adequate public health planning, workforce, medical and testing supplies, and alternative care capacity to appropriately respond to any local, state, or global health emergency. Reliable funding is critical to preparedness for a prompt, coordinated, and comprehensive response to new and re-emerging infectious diseases.

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Counties must also have state and federal support in growing and retaining a highly skilled public health workforce.

The county supports increased funding to support public health in addressing the evolving impacts of COVID-19 and building local public health capacity to combat and control communicable diseases.

PROTECT FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN MEDICAID

Counties are the health care provider of last resort for the state's indigent population under California [Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000](#). Currently, the Medicaid program provides health coverage for more than 54,000 low-income Humboldt County residents. Proposals to repeal the Medicaid expansion under the [Affordable Care Act](#) or to limit federal investment in the program via state block grants or fixed state allotments would further increase financial risk for counties. Proposals to expand the federal match, eligibility and benefits provide critical support to individuals, families and healthcare systems.

The county supports increased federal investment in the Medicaid program and opposes measures that would reduce access to this important safety net program.

SUPPORT FOR INVESTMENT IN LOW INCOME HOUSING

Safe and stable housing is a foremost concern for low-income individuals and families and without it, a primary barrier to health and self-sufficiency. The impacts of COVID-19 on housing security necessitate strong eviction prevention programs and rent support to alleviate an already stressed and inadequate system of supportive services for people experiencing poverty. The county operates limited permanent supportive housing programs that have proven effective in helping people receive treatment and lead productive lives. Increased investment in [subsidized housing and supportive services](#) is needed to expand [federal housing programs](#), homeless prevention programs, provide income supports – such as subsidized rent – and to generate additional housing units.

The county supports federal investment in [eviction prevention](#), [subsidized housing](#) and [supportive services](#).

NATURAL RESOURCES

LONG-TERM FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCE AFFAIRS

Humboldt County is located on California's Pacific North Coast and is home to significant water resources that include the Eel, Klamath, Mad and Trinity Rivers; home to fish populations of salmon, groundfish and crab; and, home to dense forests that include

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coastal Redwoods. These considerable natural resources were once in abundance to the community and contributed significantly to the local economy.

Decisions and regulatory management of these natural resources often occur at the state and federal levels. These decisions have had cumulative impacts on water resources, fisheries and timber, and on the community as well. State and federal decisions need to adequately account for local priorities, knowledge and needs in order to minimize adverse economic and social impacts, while appropriately managing and restoring these considerable natural resources, including ongoing federal management of national parks.

The county strongly supports legislation that provides stable funding for long-term engagement, administration and capacity development for natural resource affairs in the County of Humboldt. In addition, the county supports legislation that adequately funds operations of national parks such as the King Range and Six Rivers National Park, which form an essential component of Humboldt's tourism industry.

PUBLIC WORKS

REDWOOD CREEK MULTI-BENEFIT ESTUARY RESTORATION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

Construction of the Redwood Creek levee system by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1966 to 1968 caused major impacts to the Redwood Creek estuary. These impacts are a limiting factor for recovery of salmon and other estuary-dependent fish species in the Redwood Creek watershed and adversely affect Redwood National Park. In addition, the levee system does not meet its intended flood protection level for the economically disadvantaged community of Orick because the project design did not account for sedimentation.

A large-scale, multi-objective water resources project is needed to achieve a sustainable solution for flood protection, ecosystem restoration, and endangered species recovery in lower Redwood Creek. The project is complicated by the needs for understanding dynamic ecosystem processes, accounting for climate change and sea level rise, respecting private property rights, modifying a federal flood control project, and providing an acceptable level of flood protection for the community.

In particular, restoration of the Redwood Creek estuary would significantly advance salmon recovery and provide sustainable flood protection that alleviates backwater flooding of agricultural lands and County roads. Local private landowners, Redwood National Park, agencies, and other stakeholders agree that we need a process-based conceptual design that will improve agricultural function and advance listed salmon recovery through estuary restoration.

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Estuary restoration would be competitive for federal, state and other funding due to the high potential for endangered species recovery. Upstream flood protection and ongoing maintenance could be addressed separately or comprehensively with estuary restoration, depending on the type of federal authority used to modify the Redwood Creek federal flood control project.

The county supports legislation and administrative action to allocate federal Proposition 84 funds, or other federal funding to be used for planning, design, and construction for flood protection, ecosystem restoration and endangered species recovery in the Redwood Creek levee system near Orick.

REAUTHORIZATION OF SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

The 100-year plus partnership that was created between the federal government and rural communities in 1908 compensated counties affected by placement of timber into federal ownership. The partnership stipulated that 25 percent of the revenues derived from U.S. Forest Service activities (timber sales, mineral extraction and grazing fees, etc.) would be returned to the counties that housed these forests. These revenues supported schools and the maintenance of infrastructure, as well as the health of watersheds and ecosystems.

By 2000, these revenues dwindled – as policies and lawsuits restricted much of the economic activity that supported the payments. To ensure that the terms of the partnership were upheld, Congress passed the *Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act* (SRSCA). The program initially expired at the end of fiscal year 2011; however, Congress has provided short-term extensions every year since then.

Humboldt County supports a long-term funding solution for SRS, including alternate models that provide stable funding for counties. However, in the absence of a long-term agreement, the county supports a short-term program extension. As part of a long-term reauthorization bill, the county supports re-establishing active management of the nation's forests, promoting responsible timber production on Forest Service commercial timber land, and revising Title III of the Act to allow fire protection funds to be spent as flexibly as possible, as funds are currently limited to fire protection activities on federal lands, severely restricting fire departments from containing fires adjacent to federal land.

FUNDING FOR RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER PROJECTS

Humboldt County's small rural communities are in need of financial assistance to maintain or upgrade water supply and wastewater systems. Many systems are approaching the end of their useful life and require levels of capital investment that exceed rate-payers' ability to pay. In the worst cases, failing systems pose serious health risks, degrade water quality, prevent economic development and trigger regulatory violations and financial penalties.

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The county strongly supports legislation that maintains or increases federal funding for small community water and wastewater projects.

FUNDING FOR NUCLEAR STORAGE

It is well known that the federal government has been found by the courts to be in partial breach of the contractual obligation created by the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act to remove this material beginning in January 1998. Over the course of litigation in the intervening years, the U.S. Court of Claims has consistently ruled in favor of companies for expenditures they have incurred in the continuing storage of these materials. The Department of Energy (DOE) has previously estimated that the resulting impact on taxpayers could reach or exceed \$30.8 billion – assuming it is in a position to begin meeting its obligation through the use of a pilot consolidated storage facility in 2021. Any delay in this schedule will only increase the Department’s liabilities. These funds are paid out of a permanent appropriations account known as the Judgment Fund and they add to the federal deficit without benefit of budget or appropriations considerations.

Humboldt County supports increased funding for dealing with nuclear waste from shutdown reactors.

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