



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 1/27/2026

File #: 26-68

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Departmental

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Adoption of the 2026 Legislative Platform

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Provide input and direction to staff as desired regarding the proposed state and federal legislative platforms for 2026; and
2. Provide input and direction as desired on state and federal policy issues to receive priority advocacy services; and
3. Prioritize congressional and state direct funding requests; and
4. Adopt the proposed state and federal legislative platforms, incorporating any changes desired by the Board, as the final platforms for 2026; and
5. Direct the County Administrative Officer, or a designee thereof, to submit the final version of the legislative platform to appropriate state and federal officials, community-based associations and others, as appropriate; and
6. Authorize and direct the County Administrative Officer, and/or designees thereof to advocate as needed to support the County of Humboldt's legislative platforms, and resolutions adopted by the Board.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommended actions support the following areas of the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Plan:

Area of Focus: Core Services/Other

Strategic Plan Category: 9999 - Core Services/Other

DISCUSSION:

Each year, County of Humboldt departments review and recommend state and federal legislation that would improve and enhance financing, operation, and efficiency in service delivery. The County of Humboldt contracts with Shaw/Yoder/Antwih/Schmelzer/Lange ("SYASL") to provide state legislative advocacy on behalf of the County of Humboldt and to advise departments on legislative proposals. In late September, 2025, Karen Lange of SYASL met with a number of department

heads regarding particular state issues and also spoke to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors (“Board”) regarding the County of Humboldt’s legislative advocacy efforts during the 2024 session of the California Legislature. SYASL later reviewed the state portion of the 2026 Legislative Platform.

The County of Humboldt contracts with Paragon Government Relations (“Paragon”) for federal legislative advocacy services and to advise departments on legislative proposals. Joe Krahn, Hasan Sarsour and Tom Joseph of Paragon met with your Board and several department heads in October, 2025 to discuss federal issues impacting the County of Humboldt, and they have reviewed the federal portion of the 2026 Legislative Platform.

The state and federal legislative platforms being presented to the Board today are the result of four (4) months of collaborative work between departments, the County Administrative Office, partners, SYASL and Paragon. The legislative platforms take into consideration the Board’s Strategic Priority Framework. These legislative platforms are being submitted to your Board for review and modification as your Board finds appropriate.

The legislative platforms are organized by policy area, similar to those used by the California State Association of Counties to provide for easier tracking. Each support/oppose position is still backed by a document explaining the background. Items in red are proposed to be added or deleted.

Recommended actions:

In order to most effectively approach advocacy services, staff is seeking direction on identification of the primary legislative priorities based on relative importance to the Board and in consideration of the state and federal agendas. Identifying a primary list of state and federal priorities will allow the County of Humboldt, SYASL and Paragon to work more effectively with state legislators and members of Congress, as well as applicable agencies, and will ensure that the County of Humboldt’s effectiveness is not diluted.

Below the Board will find current year priorities along with recommendations for 2026 priorities:

Recommendation 2: Provide input on Proposed Legislative Priorities

- Allowing taxing of commercial timberland/sustainable emergency response on state highways;
- Ensuring the County of Humboldt can access funding for climate resiliency and sustainability;
- Ensuring Offshore Wind-related development timelines are retained;
- Protecting funding for housing;
- State funding to hire more eligibility workers; and
- Funding to support the County of Humboldt’s indigent health care programs.

Recommendation 3: Prioritize Congressional and State Directed Funding Requests

The County of Humboldt’s state and congressional representatives typically ask for direct spending requests, or earmarks, in the spring of each year. The requests are chosen by lawmakers and submitted to their respective governments and committees for inclusion into already established funding mechanisms. These requests must be prioritized by agencies submitting more than one (1) request, and the County of Humboldt has been advised to only submit the proposals that are best positioned for speedy execution.

This year the County of Humboldt has prepared four (4) directed funding requests, and staff are requesting that the Board prioritize them by order of preference. Below are staff’s recommendations:

Congressional funding requests:

1. Public Health Lab (Attachment 3);
2. Redwood Drive, Garberville Complete Streets (Attachment 4); and
3. Scenic Drive (Attachment 6).

State funding requests:

1. Capacity Building for Offshore Wind (Attachment 5);
2. Public Health Lab (Attachment 3);
3. Planning Historical Document Digitization (Attachment 7);
3. Redwood Drive, Garberville Complete Streets (Attachment 4); and
4. Scenic Drive (Attachment 6).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

All County of Humboldt funds

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate financial impact to approving the 2026 Legislative Platform. However, if one (1) or more of the direct funding requests are approved, the County of Humboldt would potentially receive amounts specified in the request forms.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Approving the 2026 Legislative Platform and identifying the issues that should receive priority advocacy services will allow staff to be more efficient when working with state and federal agencies and lawmakers on behalf of the County of Humboldt.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Humboldt County Growers' Association; Humboldt County Harbor District; Redwood Coast Energy Authority

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft legislative platform (Clean version)
2. Draft legislative platform (Red-lined version)
3. Budget Request - Public Health Lab
4. Budget Request - Redwood Drive/Garberville Complete Streets
5. Budget Request - Capacity Building for Offshore Wind
6. Budget Request - Scenic Drive
7. Budget Request - Planning Historical Document Digitization

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: None

File No.: None