



# 2025 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

**THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO'S POLICY PLATFORM**  
Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs

**SANDIEGOCOUNTY.GOV**

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# 2025 SPONSORSHIP PROPOSALS

## State Sponsorship Proposals

### DENTAL CARE ACCESS FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Improve access to dental care for vulnerable populations to obtain needed care and to address oral health and overall health disparities.

### CREATING A REGIONWIDE STREET HEALTH INITIATIVE

Seek a change in law to ensure Medi-Cal reimbursement is available for street medicine services in order to remove barriers to health for people experiencing homelessness.

## Federal Sponsorship Proposals

### MOBILE PHARMACY DEA REGISTRATION

Seek a change in law that would waive the requirement of a separate DEA registration for a mobile pharmacy and instead allow the mobile pharmacy to operate as an extension of a pharmacy license held by a county, city and county, or special hospital authority.

### HOME HARDENING TAX EXEMPTION

Seek a change in law that would exempt a qualified catastrophe mitigation payment under a state program for wildfire, wind, and earthquake mitigation measures from federal income tax, thereby making the state-funded portion of a home hardening grant tax-exempt at the federal level.

## State and Federal Sponsorship Proposal

### FISCAL STRATEGIES

Seek legislation needed to advance fiscal stability and funding options to protect essential services, fund strategic investments in key priorities, and preserve the County's strong financial standing and credit rating.

# 2025 PRIORITY ISSUES

The County of San Diego (County) will actively engage in legislation and related actions in the following areas at the State and federal level to ensure such legislation benefits County Operations and the clients, customers, and constituents we serve.

The County will actively pursue all available funding to lift up and invest in our communities to ensure the San Diego region receives its fair share of resources.

The County will oppose any legislative efforts that run counter to our stated priorities.

## Affordable Housing

The San Diego region needs more affordable housing. The demand for new affordable housing is greater than the number of units developed, and available housing is beyond the reach of many families to buy or rent. Reports continue to show that housing in San Diego County is among the most expensive in the nation, and economic conditions have significantly impacted those who are most in need of affordable housing solutions.

The County and cities in the region operate several programs to provide, preserve, and develop affordable housing. These programs offer rental assistance, affordable housing opportunities for renters, financial assistance for first-time homebuyers and veterans, resources for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness, and financing for the development of affordable housing.

The County will engage in efforts to increase the number of rental assistance vouchers available and enhance funding for rental assistance programs that support low-income and other vulnerable populations. The County will also work with local municipalities, community partners, the State, and the federal government to ensure legislation supports the creation of affordable housing in our region, in alignment with the goals and strategies of the County of San Diego Housing Blueprint. The County will also seek ways to partner with public entities and other sectors to facilitate more workforce housing, including in locations aligning with climate action and sustainability priorities. As the County works to increase the net housing supply in the region, it will support reforms that will allow for a fairer allocation of the State's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) credits. The County will also pursue opportunities for "community benefit" co-located services with affordable housing, such as child care, healthy food, and medical services. The County will support legislation that streamlines these processes and adequately funds administrative costs to deliver services.

## Behavioral Health



The County is guided by a broad vision of a behavioral health system characterized by upstream prevention and continuous care, rather than perpetual crisis. This system is rooted in a regionally distributed and coordinated model that is data-driven and culturally responsive. The County will support legislation that advances this framework for behavioral health services for children, youth, and adults and will leverage State funding opportunities (including those made available by Proposition 1) to achieve this vision.

There is a significant behavioral health worker shortage locally and nationally. Ranging from peer support specialists to psychiatrists, behavioral health workers serve some of our most vulnerable populations along the behavioral health continuum of care. To address this crisis, the County will support legislation that addresses behavioral health worker recruitment, training, and retention, including recruiting a diverse workforce that is culturally inclusive.

## **Climate Change and the Environment**

The County will work with regional partners to advance efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change in San Diego County, including achieving zero carbon emissions no later than 2045. These efforts include, but are not limited to, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, programs and policies that prioritize environmental justice and equity, support of local food systems and community resiliency, preservation of natural ecosystems, and promotion of sustainable agricultural practices for carbon sequestration. In addition, the County will advocate for legislation and funding that aligns with both state and federal 30x30 conservation efforts. The County will also focus on additional key areas:

### **WILDFIRES**

Due to the history of catastrophic wildfires in the region, the County continues to pursue opportunities for risk reduction by improving local policies and implementing innovative programs to help residents prepare for the next disaster. Wildfires are naturally occurring within the San Diego region and need to be managed as such. Climate change is making the wildfires in our region more destructive and more frequent, such that fire season is nearly year-round. The County employs a comprehensive approach to fire protection, which includes areas of focus such as fire suppression (expanding coverage and purchasing equipment), fire and building codes, defensible space, land use planning, and community engagement through education and outreach. The County will engage in legislation and administrative action that addresses habitat management and restoration; supports the removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees; reduces community wildfire risk and/or strengthens community resiliency following a major wildfire; adopts land use changes to avoid building in high wildfire-prone areas; promotes home hardening in vulnerable communities; and addresses post-fire

flood mitigation issues. The County will also support efforts to expand broadband infrastructure in high-risk wildfire areas to strengthen emergency response.

## **WATER QUALITY**

Under the Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program, the County Department of Environmental Health and Quality (DEHQ) performs beach water quality sampling for compliance with State health standards. When poor water quality or sewage impacts are identified, an advisory, warning, or water contact closure is issued, and the public is notified through a number of different outlets, including social media, a website, telephone hotline, press releases, and posted signs on affected beaches. Additionally, as an international border county, local beaches in the South Bay may also be impacted by cross-border sewage flows, making binational and regional coordination and responsiveness to potential beach water quality impacts essential for public health protection. Funding to support local beach water quality monitoring and information-sharing is beneficial for public health authorities in the border region. The County will seek all funding and infrastructure improvement opportunities—including state and federal resources—to improve river and beach water quality and keep communities safe. Additionally, the County will engage in legislation to support increased funding for beach water testing efforts, improved scientific methods for testing, and additional programs. The region also has an aging sewer and stormwater infrastructure system in need of more funding, particularly in the areas of drainage, source control, green infrastructure, and sewer restoration opportunities. The County will engage in legislation and pursue funding for stormwater capture and flood risk reduction, the repair and improvement of sewer and stormwater infrastructure, and the preservation and restoration of riparian habitat.

## **HABITAT**

There currently are more than 60 species in San Diego County listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by the state and federal governments, and there are more species of concern in San Diego than in any other county in the continental United States. The implementation of multi-species Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), as well as Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs), is critical to our conservation measures. The County will engage in legislation and pursue funding that protects habitats and species of concern across the region and increases the adoption of local native plants in public and private landscaping.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND PROTECTION**

Environmental justice is defined as the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with

respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Climate justice acknowledges that climate change can have differing social, economic, public health, and other adverse impacts on underserved populations. Historically, the effects of climate change, pollution, and other environmental issues have disproportionately impacted underserved communities, Tribal Nations, and communities of color. The County will support legislation and pursue funding for initiatives and efforts to support mitigation, adaptation, and resilience promotion measures to reduce the public health impacts of climate change (e.g., excessive heat, wildfire smoke/air quality, vector borne diseases). The County will engage in legislation and pursue funding that supports the County Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the County Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice (OSEJ) as they work to achieve zero carbon emissions and safeguard the health of the region's people and natural resources. The CAP Team and OSEJ continue to collaborate with all County departments, other agencies such as the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District, other jurisdictions, Tribal Nations, and community stakeholders to set measurable goals and shepherd sustainability solutions that support equitable and healthy communities. They seek to do this by reducing air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and exposure to toxic and hazardous waste, while also reducing disparities and expanding opportunities for traditionally underserved communities. The County will engage in legislation and pursue funding for efforts to mitigate and reverse the impacts of climate change on all communities, with an urgent focus on low-income communities and communities of color that bear some of the greatest effects of climate change, to ensure a healthy environment for all to live, learn, work, and play.

## **FOOD SYSTEMS**

A food system includes all processes and infrastructure in place to feed a population; from all the inputs that are necessary to grow food, to the management of wasted food, and everything in between: production, manufacturing and processing, storage and distribution, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related products. The County will support legislation and pursue funding for initiatives and efforts to support access to healthy, local, and affordable food, climate-smart and resilient agriculture, preservation of agricultural lands, nutrition security and education, and wasted food prevention and recovery to ensure a safe, equitable, and sustainable food system for the San Diego region.

## **Data Infrastructure**

Data is essential to shaping public policy that is equitable, impactful, and appropriate. The County of San Diego interfaces with many data portals to administer programs funded by



the state and federal governments. The County will advocate that data systems are modernized, interconnected, accurate, and responsive to community needs. The County will also support legislation that provides funding and capability to enhance our own data efforts. Additionally, the County will advocate for policies providing person-centered case management and support, supporting care coordination and data sharing, and for enabling more robust program evaluation, performance measurement, and operations-focused analytics. The County will work with the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the NACo Artificial Intelligence (AI) Exploratory Committee as they develop policy recommendations related to AI and cybersecurity. Furthermore, the County will advocate on legislation and/or other related actions that encourage AI innovation, but that also protect safety, security, and individual civil rights.

## **Early Care, Support, and Education**

Essential to the well-being of any community is adequate support for children and families. The County has fundamentally shifted the traditional approach to child protection by providing family strengthening and prevention services to families in a more holistic and integrated way. This involves keeping families together, holding the family's voice as the expert in how to best keep their children safe, and reducing unnecessary child protective actions, which have historically harmed and separated families. The County will pursue opportunities to support legislation that advances this safety and prevention framework and that addresses worker recruitment, training, and retention to serve these populations.

Research has shown that the prenatal period creates the foundation of a child's future healthy development. The rapid brain development that occurs in the first five years of life makes these the most formative years in a child's life. Prioritizing and improving the existing systems to support healthy development and overall well-being for all children throughout the County is crucial. The County, working locally with First 5 and with the state and federal governments, will advocate for and leverage available resources to support pregnant individuals and children from birth to five years of age.

Child care is vital to families, children, and employers, yet too many San Diegans cannot find or afford quality child care that meets their needs. To address this challenge, the County will support legislation prioritizing accessible child care for all families, in alignment with the County Child Care Blueprint. The County will pursue funding opportunities and legislation that support the child care provider workforce to be well-trained and fairly and competitively compensated for high-quality child care and education services. The County will pursue legislative action and funding opportunities that support the State's Rate and Quality Workgroup Report recommendations and the accompanying modeling of an alternative methodology rate structure. These recommendations include

changing the current reimbursement methodology, incorporating living wage floors, and continuously evaluating the rate-setting methodology to address equity and adjust for changing conditions and rising costs.

Additionally, the County will advocate for changes to local and state regulations and practices to improve existing child care facilities and develop new facilities.

## **Ensuring Safe Communities**

One of the most important roles of local government is ensuring the safety of the public. It is critical to keep all members of our community protected.

### **DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES**

The County will support legislation and efforts to ensure all-hazard preparation, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery to foster safe, strong, and capable communities. This includes, but is not limited to, support for funding to purchase and/or acquire firefighting helicopters and other related equipment and apparatus.

The County will engage in legislation and related actions at the state and federal level that will allow the County to adequately respond to future public health crises, including, but not limited to, resources and efforts to combat health misinformation that undermines an emergency response and poses a threat to public health. In addition, the County will also engage in legislation that bolsters public health infrastructure and workforce across all levels of government.

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

The County aims to advocate for policies that create a system that is equitable, fair, and just. It is vital not only that crime rates remain low but also that the community feels safe where they live, work, and play, which includes fostering trust with members of the law enforcement community.

The County will engage in legislation that protects the safety of those in our community, strengthens relations between communities and law enforcement, provides necessary resources to our justice partners to provide training and rehabilitative programming, and provides services and support to victims of crime, disasters, and emergencies.

The County will also support state and federal legislation that furthers reforms related to reducing gun violence, including background checks for firearm purchases, budgetary commitments to invest in the communities most impacted

by everyday gun violence, safe storage of firearms, safe and voluntary transfer of firearms, and/or new oversight and accountability measures for the gun industry.

The County will pursue state and federal resources to support the infrastructure needs of County detention facilities to ensure proper medical and mental health care can be advanced and rehabilitative programming can be further administered in accordance with the Sheriff's Department comprehensive service delivery model.

### **PROPOSITION 36**

Identify and pursue state funding to support law enforcement efforts and expand access to behavioral health and substance use treatment services under Proposition 36, including investments in treatment infrastructure, housing, case management, and re-entry supports. This should include resources for system partners, such as the Public Defender's Office, to ensure early legal representation, case management, and peer navigation to support sustained recovery and stability after exiting the justice system.

## **Equitable Access to Quality Health and Social Care**

Historic inequities within the healthcare system, including social and economic factors, have resulted in poorer health outcomes among Black, Indigenous, and people of color, including reduced life expectancy and increased risk for some chronic diseases and other morbidities. As a major source of healthcare coverage for over one million San Diego County residents, including low-income children, older adults, and people with disabilities, Medi-Cal can help advance equity goals and reduce disparities by increasing access to health and social care services, identifying new and innovative approaches to service delivery, and implementing changes to managed care, provider payments, and benefits. The County will support legislation that strengthens the local wellness delivery system and addresses social drivers of health to improve the health and well-being of children, older adults, justice-involved individuals, people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, and others receiving Medi-Cal benefits. The County will support legislation that improves access to recuperative care for all San Diegans. The County will also support legislation that enables the State to hold commercial health plans accountable for equity and parity, as well as reasonable reimbursement rates for behavioral health services and consistency across plans regarding care standards and expectations. In addition, the County will support legislation and administrative actions that would lead to increased Medicaid reimbursement rates for California to ensure that Medi-Cal recipients in San Diego County have access to a robust and adequately funded system of care, including, but not limited to, bringing down the cost of critical prescription medications, especially for those on Medicaid and Medicare.

## Equity and Justice

The legacy of systemic racism and racial inequities continues to negatively impact many communities in the San Diego region, and the County is committed to advocating for policy changes to address these historical wrongs. The County's work on equity and racial justice is ongoing and informs our work, both within the County organization and in the community at large.

### ACHIEVING EQUITY

The County will engage with legislation that dismantles barriers encountered by Black, Indigenous, people of color, women, LGBTQIA+ communities, people with intellectual and physical disabilities, immigrants and refugees, and other populations in all aspects of life, including, but not limited to, healthcare, education, criminal justice reform, housing, environmental justice, economic development, and wealth generation.

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Matters of economic justice and fairness remain at the core of an equitable society. Social safety net programs provide much-needed assistance for those who are struggling to make ends meet, yet the stigmatization around such programs often prevents those who would benefit from these programs from seeking this assistance.

### CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

The protection of civil rights remains the bedrock of a functioning democracy. The County will support and advocate for legislation to uphold civil rights protections.

## Homelessness

The County works collaboratively with service providers, the regional Continuum of Care, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness, and other jurisdictions, non-profits, and community partners to administer or deliver a range of health and social services to people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county. The County also provides housing linkages, street outreach, case management, care coordination, connection to primary care and behavioral health services, and emergency housing for people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The County takes the lead, where appropriate, to secure federal and State resources and works collaboratively with the non-profit community and participating jurisdictions in the completion of competitive grants from the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and state and federal agencies for funds that would assist people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

The County will advocate for legislation and funding that provides effective prevention, intervention, and access to affordable housing for people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, with the overarching goal that any homelessness in our region should be rare, brief, and non-recurring. This legislation should provide consistent and sustainable funding at a level commensurate with the need and be flexible enough to administer to meet the specific needs of our region.

## **Insurance Accessibility and Affordability**

The rising cost of insurance in all aspects of life is putting pressure on residents of the San Diego region and is increasingly limiting affordability of housing, business, and everyday needs. High insurance costs can make owning a home or operating a business out of reach for residents, and the uncertainty surrounding whether insurance will even be available causes undue stress and anxiety. The County will engage in legislative and administrative efforts to lower insurance costs and increase insurance coverage and availability for Californians.

## **Nutrition Security**

Data reports continue to show that one in four San Diegans, and one in three children, struggle with nutrition security, part of a concerning trend in the rise of food insecurity across the country. Many flexibilities enacted by Congress around nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic illustrated the positive impact these programs have when barriers to access are eliminated. As too many San Diego County residents struggle with nutrition security, recent changes to programs like SNAP to increase accessibility require additional outreach resources. Additionally, longstanding barriers to access for populations like older adults and college students should end. The County will support and advocate for legislation to provide more access to vital nutrition programs for San Diegans. The County will also support legislation to reduce barriers to lawful access to crucial social safety net programs and legislation that promotes increased security measures for EBT cards.

## **Older Adults**

There are approximately 710,500 San Diego County residents aged 60 and older, and by 2030, that number is expected to grow to approximately 850,000. San Diego County's over-85 population is projected to diversify and grow faster than any other age group. Thus, it is crucial that the needs of the region's older adults are considered as we plan for the future. The County has adopted an Aging Roadmap as the regional plan to ensure



that the region has programs and communities that equitably support the needs and leverage the contributions of all older adults in the San Diego region. The Aging Roadmap identifies specific goals and action steps in ten priority areas: Health and Community Support, Housing, Social Participation, Transportation, Dementia-Friendly, Caregiver Support, Safety, Preparedness and Response, the Silver Economy, and Medical and Social Services.

The County will pursue funding opportunities to support the vision of the Aging Roadmap and engage in legislation that promotes a robust system of support for the aging population in San Diego County. The County will advocate for a timely reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and ensure the continuation of vital programs for older adults.

## **Reproductive Healthcare**

In 2021, the Board of Supervisors declared the County a champion for reproductive freedom, yet individuals still face barriers to reproductive care access in the San Diego region. Meanwhile, active efforts are underway across the country to undermine the rights previously recognized under *Roe v. Wade*, with increasing efforts anticipated to further restrict access to necessary care. These initiatives have already had devastating impacts and will continue to disproportionately impact those populations that already face barriers to accessing medical care: communities of color, people with low incomes, immigrants, and young people.

The County will identify, prioritize, and advocate for sexual and reproductive health care funding, programs and services that increase access and protect individuals seeking to obtain and provide reproductive health services in the region. In addition, the County will support regulatory, budgetary, and legislative efforts that strengthen access to abortion medications such as misoprostol and mifepristone and support efforts to ensure access to reproductive health medications via mail delivery.

## **Tijuana River Valley**

The Tijuana River Valley in South San Diego County continues to suffer from one of the worst environmental disasters of our time. The combination of a rising population in the binational region and aging infrastructure, exacerbated by increased cross-border sewage and runoff flows and a lack of investment from both federal governments, has allowed the pollution crisis to get worse over time. The impact of the pollution is felt in a myriad of ways across the San Diego region, from the health and well-being of thousands of local residents to local businesses that rely on tourism at nearby beaches. The sewage crisis also has national security implications, as the pollution floods roads used by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on a regular basis, causing rapid deterioration of vehicles and other CBP equipment.

The Board of Supervisors declared the water pollution crisis a state of emergency in June 2023, and unhealthy levels of bacteria in beach water originating from the Tijuana River caused the closure of some South County beaches for over 1,000 consecutive days. The County has since advocated to the International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC), the White House, Congress, the Government of Mexico, and other federal agencies to increase its investment in solving this problem, underscoring the urgent community needs. In response, the White House announced support for our efforts, Congress appropriated millions of dollars for fixing the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP), and the Government of Mexico began construction of a more robust treatment plant that is scheduled to go to online in 2025.

Renewed attention from policymakers continues to make a positive impact on the crisis, but more must be done. The County will continue to support legislative efforts to bring more federal support to the IBWC in order to complete the remaining repairs needed for the SBIWTP. The County will advocate for more federal and state funds be directed to agencies like the Air Pollution Control District to increase available resources to monitor air quality in the region. The County will also support legislation that addresses the needed rehabilitation of the Tijuana River Valley watershed. The County will continue to meet with federal agencies to support the health and well-being of impacted residents and to discuss ways to repair the economic harm the ongoing crisis inflicts on our residents.

## Transportation

Improving the transportation network throughout the San Diego region while maintaining environmental quality is a high priority for the County. The County has seen an increased demand placed on the region's transportation system, which requires balancing the need for both road maintenance projects and transit infrastructure to alleviate traffic congestion, environmental impacts, and the degradation of existing roadways. Additionally, increasing zero and low carbon transportation options is an important component for the future of transportation and mobility in the region, as they improve fuel economy, lower fuel costs, and reduce emissions. The County will pursue funding opportunities and engage in legislation that provides the necessary resources for our region to maintain and/or improve its transportation network and reduce vehicle miles traveled, enhance resiliency, along with efforts to reduce emissions through green technology and increase multi-modal transportation opportunities in the unincorporated area.

## Veterans

San Diego County is home to one of the largest concentrations of military personnel in the nation, and it's estimated more than one-third of county residents are connected to the military in some fashion as active duty, veterans, or family members. The County

Office of Military and Veterans Affairs assists active-duty military, veterans, and their dependents and survivors to obtain the federal and state benefits that they are entitled to receive. It also supports the provision of services and supports to the families of active military members in San Diego County. The San Diego region is a diverse and dynamic border community with a history enriched by immigrants from many countries and backgrounds. The County will support legislation that fosters the return and naturalization of deported service members who served in our armed forces and military. The County values and honors the service and sacrifice of those who serve in our armed forces, and pursuant to these values, the County will engage in legislation to support our military and veteran community. This includes adequate funding for programs, appropriate benefits and services, and housing for active-duty military, veterans, including dependents of living and deceased veterans, and support for veterans with housing vouchers.

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In the absence of meaningful immigration reform, there will continue to be waves of migration to our region without adequate support for the asylum seekers, the border communities who welcome them, or the communities to which they are traveling for residence.

The Board of Supervisors approved a concept paper describing what is needed to provide a long-term solution to provide humanitarian support to those seeking asylum in our country. A permanent Migrant Transfer Site and Respite Shelter is needed in our region to serve as a one-stop-shop to assist with the needs of migrants, including onward travel to their sponsors. With a firm plan in hand, the County will advocate consistently at the state and federal level for funding, acquisition of a site, and ongoing staffing and services support. The plan also supports our regional partners to seek philanthropic matching funds for this effort as additional sources of funding.

# 2025 POLICY GUIDELINES

The inverse of the following statements is also true. The County will oppose any legislative efforts that run counter to our stated guiding principles and policy guidelines.

## Guiding Principles

- Work collaboratively with cities, the State, Tribal Nations, and binationally with the City of Tijuana, Baja California Norte, and the Country of Mexico.
- Protect the fiscal integrity of the County by stabilizing local government financing to increase funding to local agencies in an equitable manner.
- Ensure equity, transparency, and access for all residents.
- Provide a system of care that is operationally feasible for the County and benefits the residents of our region.
- Streamline eligibility processes for state and federal programs that will assist with timely processing and ensure benefits get to the clients who need them.
- Support an equitable allocation and distribution of state and federal funding that allows for flexibility, transparency, and the participation of all jurisdictions throughout California, including San Diego County.
- Ensure equitable access to goods or services focused on providing needed resources and programs to underserved communities and vulnerable populations.
- Support the reauthorization of federal bills that benefit the County, including, but not limited to, infrastructure, transportation, the Farm Bill (e.g., the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Older Americans Act, the Endangered Species Act, the expanded Child Tax Credit, and/or the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act of 2009.
- Pursue sustainable grant funding at the state and federal levels.
- Support a community-based approach to public safety.
- Support efforts to safeguard fundamental rights protected by state laws and the California Constitution.

## Policy Guidelines

### I. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Support legislation that allows local, state, or federal governments to streamline operations and business efficiency while retaining a skilled and supported workforce.
2. Support legislation that includes an equitable allocation and distribution of state and federal funding.
3. Support legislation and/or efforts that recognize the unique characteristics of border areas and the needs for related infrastructure such as ports and ports of entry, transportation related to goods movement, and air and water quality improvements related to cross-border pollution.
4. Support legislation and administrative actions that provide consistency between the California Code of Regulations and State statutes.
5. Support legislation that would eliminate financial and service level maintenance-of-effort requirements.
6. Support full funding of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program.
7. Support legislation that backfills counties' revenue losses and allows for flexibility of revenue backfills to County programs.
8. Support legislation that improves cross-system integration of funding sources and cross-sector collaboration.
9. Support legislation and administrative actions that create a statewide process for independent redistricting commissions, similar to the Independent Redistricting Commission for the County.
10. Support efforts to increase transparency in civilian oversight of law enforcement meetings and investigations. (For example: by permitting public case review discussion and allowing documents and information related to investigations of civilian complaints of misconduct, deaths, and other specified incidents under oversight entity jurisdiction to be made public)
11. Support efforts to ensure appropriate resources, authority, and flexibility are provided to operationalize the CARE Act framework.
12. Support legislation that clarifies for the purposes of conditionally releasing a Sexually Violent Predator (SVP), placement restrictions near a "public or private school" to include home school sites.
13. Support legislation that expands access to affordable insurance for all San Diegans. (For example: homeowners should be able to access and obtain affordable home insurance even if a homeowner lives in a high-risk wildfire area)



## **A. Equity**

1. Support legislation that would strengthen protections and remedies against employment discrimination.
2. Support legislation that would dismantle barriers encountered by Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, women, LGBTQIA+ communities, immigrants and refugees, people with physical and intellectual disabilities, and other populations.
3. Support legislation that would reduce inequities and promote inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities of all ages.
4. Support legislation that would promote equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive language accessibility.

## **B. Disaster**

1. Support legislation that would provide flexibility and/or increased funding to the San Diego region to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from all-hazard disasters and emergencies.
2. Support legislation that would provide financial assistance to individuals and community-based organizations for disaster recovery.
3. Support legislation that ensures continued funding for local jurisdictions for emergency planning, training, drills, mitigation, and response and recovery activities until all spent fuel is removed from the site of the decommissioned San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.
4. Support legislation that would remove and relocate outside of the San Diego region the spent nuclear fuel stored at the decommissioned San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

## **C. Economic and Workforce Development**

1. Support legislation that would increase access to wealth and/or improved living standards that promotes and sustains diversity, innovation, competition, and entrepreneurship.
2. Support legislation that facilitates the State's engagement with federal small business technical assistance grants.
3. Support legislation that would provide financial incentives and opportunities for filming in San Diego County.
4. Support state and federal legislation and funding to improve community-wide access to arts and culture.
5. Support legislation that bolsters innovation for green industries throughout the region and expands access for residents in San Diego County to green jobs with family-supporting wages.

6. Support legislation that expands federal funding and support for biomedical science, education, research infrastructure, commercialization, and entrepreneurship to advance San Diego's biomedical leadership and drive our regional innovation economy.

#### **D. Registrar of Voters**

1. Support legislation that promotes a fair, equitable, and engaged voting process.

#### **E. Broadband**

1. Support legislation and/or funding to improve broadband accessibility and affordability in San Diego County and throughout California, particularly in communities that are impacted by the digital divide.

#### **F. Employee and Labor Relations**

1. Support full cost recovery for salary, benefits, and administration for all employee relationships.
2. Support legislative and administrative actions that provide adequate training and safety measures to County employees who administer programs.

#### **G. Liability**

1. Engage in legislation that protects the County from liability.

#### **H. Local Public Meeting Procedure**

1. Support legislation or administrative action that would improve the Brown Act or would facilitate remote public access and participation in public meetings and the policy making process.

#### **I. Project Delivery Authority**

1. Support legislation that gives local governments and agencies greater flexibility to use alternative delivery methods for construction projects.

#### **J. Supporting Working Families**

1. Support legislation that promotes increasing living wage jobs with comprehensive benefits, including but not limited to, paid family leave.
2. Support legislation that protects the right of workers to organize.
3. Support legislation that provides strong workplace safety standards.

4. Support funding, legislation, or administrative action that facilitates and incentivizes the production of moderate to middle-income housing in the 80-120% AMI range.
5. Support legislation that increases access to quality, affordable early care and education and child care in the region.

#### **K. Immigrant Services**

1. Support legislation and/or efforts that provide federally funded immigration solutions and coordination that ensure safe and appropriate shelter and care for families and unaccompanied children and to minimize health risks to those entering and exiting federal custody.
2. Support legislation that would increase access to legal counsel for immigrants and refugees.

## **II. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

#### **A. Behavioral Health**

1. Support efforts that allow counties maximum flexibility under the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) and other related efforts by providing appropriate resources, infrastructure, and authority that are responsive to the data-informed needs of the region.
2. Support efforts to increase accessibility and funding for quality substance use and/or mental health services for children, youth, adults, older adults, and families.
3. Support legislation to expand Medi-Cal reimbursement for behavioral health services, including reimbursement for substance use care.
4. Support legislation to reduce regulations that restrict the provision of primary and stand-alone substance use disorder care within facilities licensed for mental health treatment.
5. Support legislation to provide Institutions for Mental Disease appropriate reimbursement rates.
6. Support legislation that promotes the integration of and parity between mental health, substance use disorder, and physical health care services, and the provision of care coordination services to support seamless care throughout a person's lifetime.
7. Support for legislation and/or efforts to create an appropriate level of service(s) for substance use disorders along the continuum of crisis to long-term management, especially focused on methamphetamine intoxication.
8. Support legislation that promotes a harm reduction approach to substance use disorder treatment and services.

9. Support legislation that includes, but is not limited to, provisions to improve behavioral health workforce licensing and credentialing, supervision and training, higher education, and pay parity.
10. Support legislation specifically related to children and youth mental health that promotes balanced and safe smartphone and social media use.

## **B. Child Care and Development**

1. Support measures that enhance the overall quality, affordability, capacity, accessibility, safety and pay equity of early care and education programs.

## **C. Children and Youth**

1. Support legislation that reduces the impact of trauma to children and their families by promoting primary prevention through nurturing relationships and environments, building up protective factors in families and communities, and creating equitable pathways to wellness.
2. Support legislation that increases and supports appropriate temporary shelter care, short- and long-term placements, services, and resource options for children, current foster youth, non-minor dependents, and former foster youth of or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
3. Support legislation that increases services and resources for caregivers of children, non-minor dependents, and current and former foster youth who are victims of or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

## **D. First 5 Commission**

1. Support legislation that is consistent with the principles of First 5 San Diego and furthers the support and improvement of the early care and education system and school readiness throughout the county.
2. Support legislation that increases funding for children ages birth to 5 years old and, more specifically, which includes First 5 commissions as eligible applicants or recipients of available funding.
3. Support legislation that enables more significant early intervention and comprehensive support for families and children, starting with pregnant individuals and birth.

## **E. Issues Affecting Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities**

1. Support efforts to increase resources and services available to vulnerable adults and the individuals who provide them with care.

2. Support legislation that promotes the sustainability of the In-Home Supportive Services Program through programmatic changes, workforce development, and appropriate cost sharing mechanisms between the State and counties.
3. Engage in efforts that would support programs to assist older adults to age where they choose, including rental subsidies, access to affordable housing, nutrition assistance, transportation access, housing retrofit, assisted living support, access to technology tools and training, and end of life care.
4. Engage in legislation that builds a care delivery system that provides effective, reliable, affordable, high-quality, and efficient services to older adult residents and adults who are living with a serious illness, disability, and/or functional impairment.
5. Support legislation or administrative actions and funding for a Memory Care Unit at the Veterans Home of California in Chula Vista.
6. Support for legislation and/or administrative actions that would adjust reimbursement rates in order to sustain operations and/or funding for Regional Centers and Community Care Facilities that serve persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
7. Support legislation that would prohibit the Department of Motor Vehicles from releasing, with minor exceptions, the addresses and personal information of County employees who perform investigations in their personal vehicles.

#### **F. Maternal Child Health**

1. Support legislation that would provide equitable funding in the Title V allocation to California.
2. Support legislation that would aid in the implementation of evidence-based care coordination practices and systems for the whole child within California Children's Services.
3. Support legislation that would maintain or enhance appropriation of State General Fund to Maternal Child Health programs.
4. Support legislation that addresses structural inequalities in perinatal care.

#### **G. Medi-Cal**

1. Engage in legislation and administrative actions that provides for a Medi-Cal Managed Care System that provides recipients in San Diego County the highest level of care in the least restrictive environment.
2. Engage in Medicaid Waiver applications and/or renewals that improve and build upon County programs and services.
3. Support efforts that expand presumptive authorization by Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans for recuperative care, and/or to make Recuperative Care a Medi-Cal benefit.



## **H. Health Access**

1. Support legislation that would expand access to, and provide adequate funding for, health coverage for the uninsured.
2. Support legislation that would simplify the administration of, application for, and enrollment and eligibility processes for health coverage programs.

## **I. Public Health**

1. Support legislation that would increase state and federal funding to support public health services, including recruitment, training, retention and workforce, surveillance, communicable disease control, and prevention activities, and local public health assessment and evaluation efforts.
2. Support legislation and administrative actions that restrict the sales of flavored tobacco products.
3. Support legislation that encourages the immunization of children, especially those within communities with low immunization rates.
4. Support legislation and administrative actions that allow for greater testing of children for lead exposure and lead-related illness.
5. Support legislation that would clarify recent regulations on laboratory developed tests (LDTs).

## **J. Edgemoor**

1. Engage in legislation that would provide funding and/or streamline regulations for Edgemoor.

## **K. 2-1-1 Services**

1. Support legislation that would provide funding to assist in ongoing operation of a 2-1-1 referral system.

## **L. Nutrition**

1. Support legislation and/or actions that expand access to affordable and nutritious food.
2. Support legislation that focuses on Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Fraud Mitigation to protect customers and prevent theft of EBT benefits.
3. Support legislation to reduce barriers to access for vital nutrition programs and expand eligibility requirements.

4. Support legislation and other efforts that incentivize and expand purchasing power for local produce, as well as efforts to make medically supportive food (i.e., produce prescriptions) a permanent covered benefit for Medi-Cal recipients.

#### **M. Homelessness**

1. Support legislation and administrative actions that would result in a sustainable, flexible, and consistent source of funding for homelessness programs.
2. Support legislation that would increase funding for programs providing services and support for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

#### **N. Housing**

1. Support legislation that increases administrative flexibilities and funding related to the production and preservation of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing.
2. Support legislation that streamlines or funds affordable and attainable housing development.
3. Support legislation that provides ongoing operating funding associated with necessary services at permanent supportive housing developments.
4. Support legislation that increases housing production; promotes equity, inclusion, and sustainability; preserves housing for vulnerable populations; prevents displacement of existing residents; provides safe living conditions; and protects tenants.

### **III. PLANNING AND LAND USE**

#### **A. General Plans and Land Use Planning**

1. Support efforts to simplify, streamline, and improve land use planning, activities, and matters including but not limited to housing, multimodal transportation, and sustainability.
2. Protect local control over land-use decisions and flexibility over resources when it makes sense to maintain unique characteristics for the community within the unincorporated area and does not limit housing options for the region. (For example: protecting local input into the siting of wireless cell towers)

#### **B. Cooperation with Tribal Governments**

1. Support legislation that recognizes Tribal sovereignty and encourages mutually respectful relationships between Tribal and local governments.

### **C. Regional Growth Management**

1. Support legislation and flexible funding that would ensure or promote socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable regional growth strategies and management.

## **IV. PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **A. Animal Services**

1. Engage in legislation that protects the general welfare and safety of animals.
2. Support legislation that would promote the spaying or neutering and/or microchip identification of animals.

### **B. Child Support Services**

1. Support legislation, budget, or administrative action to adequately fund child support services.
2. Support legislation that promotes flexibility, efficiency, equity, and modernization within the child support program while providing needed support to families.

### **C. Justice Programs**

1. Support legislation and/or efforts to reduce collateral consequences of criminal convictions upon individuals and families, especially in underserved communities and communities of color.
2. Support legislation that would provide sufficient and sustainable funding from the state and federal governments to expand and maintain offender diversion and reentry collaborative programming, including behavioral health treatment services, service navigation, care coordination, and housing support for justice-involved individuals with substance use, mental health or co-occurring disorders reentering California communities.
3. Support funding for programs that divert individuals from the criminal justice system.
4. Support efforts to decriminalize behavioral health.
5. Engage in legislation that provides resources and/or support to victims of crime.
6. Engage in legislation that expands programs for the justice-impacted population to attend higher education for traditional bachelor's degrees and adult education programs leading to sustainable employment.

#### **D. Gun Violence Prevention**

1. Support legislation that furthers violence prevention including background checks for firearm purchases, budgetary commitments to invest in the communities most impacted by everyday gun violence, and/or new oversight and accountability measures for the gun industry.

#### **E. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

1. Support legislation and administrative actions to provide funding and policies to improve and/or increase access to EMS/trauma specialty care systems and other services provided by emergency department facilities and EMS responders.
2. Support legislation that would expand the scope of community paramedicine by broadening the scope of care that paramedics can provide to include immunizations, sample collections, staffing at Emergency Departments and Skilled Nursing Facilities and/or other efforts that would reduce the impacts of low-acuity calls on the 911 system while ensuring a patient-centered focus.
3. Support legislation that provides for an equitable reimbursement rate for emergency ambulance transportation for public and private health insurers.

### **V. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

#### **A. Agricultural Services and Resilience**

1. Local Agriculture
  - a. Support legislation that creates programmatic or funding opportunities to support local agricultural operations.
2. Pest, Disease, and Weed Management
  - a. Support continued or increased funding for pest, disease, and weed management, including regulatory pest exclusion, detection, quarantine compliance and eradication activities, outreach, and research to mitigate the economic and environmental risks related to invasive agricultural pests.
  - b. Support legislation that would simplify, streamline, and improve pest management, including improved coordination between federal, state, and local programs.
3. Pesticide Regulation
  - a. Support continued or increased funding for pesticide regulatory activities, including permitting, outreach, compliance assessment, and enforcement.

- b. Support efforts to improve, simplify and streamline pesticide regulation activities.
  - c. Oppose changes to state laws that would restrict California Department of Pesticide Regulation's and County Agricultural Commissioners' authority to regulate pesticides.
- 4. Agricultural Standards
  - a. Support continued or increased funding for regulatory activities related to agricultural standards programs that protect consumers and promote equity and quality in the marketplace.
  - b. Support efforts to improve, simplify and streamline regulatory activities related to agricultural standards programs that protect consumers and promote equity and quality in the marketplace.
- 5. Bees
  - a. Support legislation and increased funding for regulatory and other activities related to the protection of bees and the beekeeping industry.
- 6. Weights and Measures
  - a. Support legislation and funding for regulatory and other activities related to verifying the accuracy of weighing and measuring devices and prices charged to consumers to support consumer protection and fair business competition.

## **B. Energy**

- 1. Support efforts to achieve 100% renewable energy and a rapid transition of fuels toward electric and other low-carbon fuel sources.

## **C. Environmental Health and Justice**

- 1. Support legislation and funding that would improve, streamline, and simplify waste management, including but not limited to hazardous, medical, and universal waste, to ensure proper training and handling, disaster and emergency readiness, and the protection of natural resources and the public.
- 2. Support efforts to improve, streamline, and simplify the California Retail Food Code and related food safety laws to protect the public, provide flexibility to food facilities without compromising public health, and ensure effective regulation at the state and local levels.
- 3. Support legislative efforts for greater transparency around the community impacts of third-party food delivery platforms.
- 4. Support legislation and/or funding that would improve, streamline, or simplify regulations for environmental health programs and protect the health and safety of the public and natural resources.



5. Support legislation that would improve the County's ability to limit re-occupancy of a residence that has been determined to have been used for Methamphetamine or Fentanyl laboratory activity until such time as the property owner has performed the necessary clean-up and mitigation for hazardous chemicals.
6. Support legislation that would provide full cost recovery for local radiation health protection programs conducted under contract to assist the State.
7. Support legislation that provides funding for environmental reporting information systems and funding for the information exchange requirements or modifications that require local data systems to be modified to connect and transmit information to the State's data systems.
8. Support state and federal funding and efforts to address and eliminate untreated sewage, trash, and sediment that originates from across the U.S.- Mexico border.
9. Support legislation that would provide funding for surveillance, control, or outreach to limit the spread of the invasive Aedes mosquitoes which are capable of transmitting diseases, such as Zika, dengue and chikungunya.
10. Support legislation that directs increased State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment testing of fish for the presence of contaminants in coastal and inland waterbodies and/or provides funding for local public notification when fish consumption is not safe.
11. Support legislation that bolsters stronger Tribal partnerships to ensure a mindful approach to fostering cross-governmental relationships and a mutual awareness on matters and opportunities for the health and well-being, quality of life, and sustainability of indigenous communities throughout the County.

#### **D. Historical and Cultural Preservation**

1. Support legislation and funding for the preservation of historical and cultural resources.

#### **E. Land and Water Conservation Fund**

1. Support continued or increased funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, including increases to the state and local share of funding.

#### **F. Offshore Oil Drilling – Outer Continental Shelf**

1. Oppose offshore oil drilling and/or efforts that would allow offshore drilling off the coast of California.
2. Support legislation and/or administrative action that provides for petroleum-based monitoring of offshore oil drilling.

## **G. Parks and Recreation**

1. Support legislation and funding that would promote and protect outdoor recreation, including but not limited to the development and maintenance of parks and trails, construction of recreational facilities, implementation of recreation programming, outdoor education programs, and the preservation and restoration of natural resources.
2. Engage in legislation to ensure funding streams for parks and recreation associated with the development of housing are protected.
3. Support legislation that would expand the list of advisory panels established by the San Diego River Conservancy to administer the San Diego Rivers Watershed Consortium Program to include those watersheds not previously included.
4. Seek state and federal grant funding for the San Diego River Park trail completion.

## **H. Water Availability and Resources**

1. Support legislation and funding that would improve affordability, availability and reliability of water, potable reuse, and/or protect water resources in the region and throughout California.
2. Support legislation and funding for drought mitigation and response that would ensure flexible and effective implementation at the local level, if applicable.
3. Support legislation and funding that protects and restores groundwater quality and quantity and streamlines approval of groundwater recharge and stormwater capture projects.

## **I. Watershed Planning and Water Quality Management**

1. Support legislation that would provide funding for drainage improvement, flood control and hazard mitigation projects, green stormwater infrastructure, climate resiliency, and related programs to protect life and property from the impacts of flooding.
2. Support legislation and funding for stormwater infrastructure projects, creek or stream restoration projects, stormwater monitoring projects, stormwater education and community programs, and stormwater infrastructure operation and maintenance activities.
3. Engage in legislation and administrative actions that ensure water quality is protected, and that federal, state, and local regulations, requirements, and policies are aligned.

## **J. Wildlife Preservation – Habitat Protection**

1. Support legislation and funding for preservation, conservation, and restoration efforts, including but not limited to habitat conservation planning, land management, monitoring, and maintenance activities, that protect biological and wildlife resources.
2. Support efforts to work with the Bureau of Land Management to acquire lands for the County that are currently under lease.

## **VI. TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

### **A. Airports**

1. Support legislation and funding for airport and aviation programs that promote safe, secure, and efficient airport operations, capital improvements, air traffic control, planning and development, and compliance with existing federal regulations.

### **B. Regional Wastewater System Improvements**

1. Support legislation and funding to improve, streamline, and simplify local wastewater systems, programs, projects, and related wastewater management activities.

### **C. Solid Waste**

1. Support legislation and funding to improve, streamline, and simplify solid waste planning, disposal, diversion, and recycling activities.

### **D. Transportation**

1. Support legislation to improve, streamline, and simplify local transportation planning, projects, and related activities, such as maintenance, rehabilitation, and new construction.
2. Support legislation that provides flexible, sufficient, and equitable state or federal transportation funding, without affecting funding sources of other County projects, and/or protects existing state, federal, and local transportation funding.
3. Support State-led efforts to prevent suicides on the Coronado bridge, as well as measures to address issues of speeding, debris, guardrails, and wrong-way accidents.
4. Oppose legislation that would impose a per vehicle mile traveled Road User Charge, or any other per mile charge.

5. Support legislation and funding that promotes zero-emission alternatives for the County fleet.



**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

1600 Pacific Highway  
San Diego, CA 92101

**[SANDIEGOCOUNTY.GOV](http://SANDIEGOCOUNTY.GOV)**