

MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 30, 2008

TO: MCAG GOVERNING BOARD

FROM: CANDICE STEELMAN, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

RE: ONE VOICE STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY PLATFORMS

BACKGROUND

The One Voice delegates have traditionally carried earmark requests to legislators and agencies in Washington, D.C. and a mix of funding and policy requests to State agencies and legislators. During the course of this year's program, One Voice participants requested that State and Federal policy platforms be established. The lists of needs compiled during the first two One Voice meetings was then divided up into appropriate policy and earmarks requests.

DISCUSSION

Attached are the drafts of the State and Federal policy platforms. On Dec. 12, 2008, One Voice attendees ranked their priorities. The results were as follows:

State Priorities

1. Economic Development: Adopt a San Joaquin Valley prevailing wage
2. Water: Pass a comprehensive water plan that addresses supply, quality, conveyance, and storage
3. Transportation: Lower requirement for self-help measures to 55%
4. Healthcare: Support a County Organized Health System (COHS)
5. Education: Pass legislation to put Career Technical Education on equal footing with other forms of education, thus receiving equal opportunities for funding

Federal Priorities

1. Water: Support legislation to establish a comprehensive water plan for the San Joaquin Valley that addresses supply, quality, conveyance, and storage
2. Transportation 1: Fund right-of-way purchase for Phase II of the Campus Parkway
3. Transportation 2: Fund right-of-way purchase for Phase I of the Los Banos bypass
4. Healthcare: Pass legislation to make Merced County a medical needs region for enhanced reimbursement
5. Education: Fund the Engineering Academy model program

After discussing the priorities with MCAG's state and federal lobbyists and with legislative staff, MCAG staff recommends some changes. At the federal level, there are only three earmarks and

they should appear first. The Healthcare request, while not an earmark, is a defined program. Water is a top concern, but as the request stands, it is too ambiguous. Unfortunately, knowledgeable water advisors only attended the first One Voice meeting, which was not enough to help guide discussion towards a project. Therefore, staff concurs with the state priority list and recommends this arrangement of the federal priorities:

1. Transportation: Los Banos bypass. Continue to keep this project as the top priority. Consistency is important. Legislators question when priorities, which have not been fully funded, change.
2. Transportation: Campus Parkway
3. Education: Engineering Academy
4. Healthcare: Medical needs region
5. Water: Comprehensive water plan for the San Joaquin Valley

REQUESTED ACTION

That the MCAG Governing Board approve the following:

- a. One Voice 2009 state and federal policy platforms
- b. One Voice 2009 state and federal priorities, with staff's recommendation

Attachments: One Voice 2009 State Policy Platform
One Voice 2009 Federal Policy Platform