



**FRESNO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

**Presiding:
Ruth Evans, Chair
Brian Domingos, Vice Chair**

Committee: Government Affairs Council
Chairperson: Ruth Evans
Vice-Chair: Brian Domingos
Meeting Date/Time: March 12, 2014
Meeting Place: Fresno Chamber of Commerce
Committee attendees: Nick Amendola, Bill Avakian, Brian Domingos, Ruth Evans, Larry Fortune, Jack Hall, Debbie Hunsaker, Ryan Jacobsen, Cam Maloy, Scott Miller, Lorraine Salazar, Victoria Salisch, Al Smith, John Taylor, Lydia Zabrycki
Committee absences: Walt Plachta, Austin Ewell and Victoria Salisch
Staff: Rachel Eslick

CALL TO ORDER

- Ms. Evans called the meeting to order at 12:08pm.
- **Approval of Minutes**
Debbie Hunsaker moved to approve the Feb. 12th meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Jack Hall. The motion passed unanimously

1. Assemblyman Henry T. Perea – AB 2686 Reliable Water Supply

Assemblyman Henry Perea presented on his version of the water bond. Currently there are about seven similar bills in the state dealing with revising the water bond for the November 2014 ballot. AB 2686 would reduce the bond from \$11 billion to \$9.25 billion dollars. The goal is to lower the dollar amount to make it more attractive to voters, while keeping funding for water storage projects and Delta sustainability a priority. The biggest difference between AB 2686 and Vidak and Cannella's bill, SB 927, is that AB 2686 keeps funds available for conservancy projects. There's a June 26th deadline to revise the water bond bill, and Perea expects to have meeting with other legislators to consolidate bills and come to an agreement on what goes on the ballot.

Ryan Jacobsen made a motion to support AB 2686 and Jack Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Supervisor Judy Case McNairy

The GAC invited Supervisor Case McNairy to talk about the county's most topical issues. She addressed the Medically Indigent Services Program contract and reassured the council that despite media reports, the county and CRMC will continue to pay for care of indigent patients. There's an upcoming hearing on the case. She also spoke about the progress the county has made regarding retirement and pension. Although 50% of the county's payroll currently goes toward pension costs, changes recently made will reduce that percentage overtime. Case McNairy is on the retirement association board.

3. Legislative Report

B. AB 1522 (Gonzalez) Paid Sick Days

Little discussion on this bill, which would allow any employee to start accruing sick days after working seven days on the job.

Ms. Hunsaker made a motion to oppose the bill and Mr. Jacobsen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A. S 2016 (Feinstein) California Emergency Drought Relief Act

Senator Dianne Feinstein's Legislative Director, John Watts, conference called into the meeting to explain S 2016. He said it provides flexibility to move water and funding for farmers to address drought damages. \$100 million dollars would be provided from the Department of Interior and \$200 million would come from the Department of Agriculture. Growers could use money for conservancy projects, pumps, etc. Watts says the Senator is sitting down with valley Congressman to hash out the differences in her bill versus theirs. The estimated timeline to have a bill passed in the Senate is mid-April.

Mr. Jacobsen made a motion to write a joint letter to Senator Feinstein and Congressmen Devin Nunes, David Valadao, Kevin McCarthy and Jim Costa, supporting all efforts to move forward, adding that it should address long term water solutions. Brian Domingos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. AB 1723 (Nazarian) Employee Wages

Limited discussion on this bill, which would expand the scope of people who could claim restitution for failure to pay minimum wage. Staff opposed the bill because there are already laws in place that address the issue and there's no proof that the current law isn't working.

Lorraine Salazar made a motion to oppose the bill and Larry Fortune seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. AB 2095 (Wagner) Employee Compensation: Itemized Wages

This bill would put employers and employees on equal footing regarding collecting attorney fees and costs if an employer is cleared of wrongdoing and the employee's complaint is found to be in bad faith. It would limit frivolous litigation regarding itemized wage statements for alleged technical violations that have not injured the employee.

Mr. Fortune made a motion to support the bill and Mr. Domingos seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

E. AB 2688 (Brown) Employment Violations Good Faith Defense

This bill would protect employers who are trying to act in accordance with the Department of Labor Standards and Enforcement. In regard to wages and working conditions, if an employer seeks written or verbal advice from DLSE and that advice is found to be wrong, the employer can not be punished by civil and criminal penalties, fines and interest.

Mr. Fortune made a motion to support the bill and Cam Maloy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

F. AB 1634 (Skinner) Occupational Health and Safety Violations

This bill would mandate an employer fix an alleged safety hazard or issue before Cal/OSHA determines anything is “broken.”

Mr. Fortune made a motion to support the bill and Scott Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

G. AB 1693 (Perea) Telephone Rates

This bill would require CPUC to respond to a rate change request from California Independent Telecommunications Companies (Sebastian, Sierra Telephone) within 330 days. If it doesn't the rate request would be automatically granted. Currently, it's taking up to two years for CPUC to respond to requests, which is hampering small phone companies that are waiting on an answer to do improvement projects. Mr. Jacobsen expressed concern that the GAC's support of this bill would give merit for government to increase CPUC staffing, but Ms. Maloy said it wouldn't.

Mr. Fortune made a motion to support the bill and Scott Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

H. AB 1717 (Perea) Prepaid Mobile Services

This bill is the same as AB 300, which the Chamber supported in April of 2013. It would require consumers pay a surcharge on prepaid mobile phones or phone cards for the 911 program. AB 300 was vetoed by Governor Brown because of concerns it would cost the state money. This time around, staff is working with the Governor's office to mitigate those concerns.

Mr. Domingos made a motion to support the bill and Mr. Fortune seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

I. SB 927 (Vidak, Cannella) Safe, Clean and Reliable Drinking Water Supply Act

Another one of the seven versions of the water bond. It reduces the bond from \$11 billion to \$9.17 billion, while maintaining \$3 billion for water storage projects and making money available to provide safe drinking water to disadvantaged communities.

Mr. Hall made a motion to support this bill and Mr. Fortune seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

J. HR 3964 (Valadao) Emergency Water Delivery Act

Tal Eslick, Chief of Staff for Congressman Valadao, presented this bill. It would amend the Central Valley Project Improvement Act to ensure that water dedicated to fish and wildlife purposes is replaced and provided to Central Valley Project water contractors by December 31, 2018, addressing long-term federal water regulation issues. He expressed encouragement that Feinstein is meeting with valley congressmen and says all members are dedicated to moving a bill forward. However, he made the distinction that Valadao's bill addresses solutions for the future, while Feinstein's bill throws money at the problem and that relief money goes away as soon as California is not considered to be in an emergency drought.

Mr. Domingos made a motion to support the bill in concept and write a letter to Senator Feinstein and valley Congressmen to encourage a conference committee meeting to provide long-term solutions. Mr. Fortune seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

K. HR 4019 (Costa) Drought Relief Act

Ian Lemay, District Director for Congressman Costa, presented this bill. He said it's the House compilation of the Senate bill.

The motion for HR 3964 includes action on this bill.

L. HR 4125, 4126, 4127 (Costa) Water Storage

Mr. Lemay presented these bills and said feasibility studies are being completed to determine whether the projects will move forward. This bill would provide money for water storage at Temperance Flat, San Luis Reservoir and Shasta Dam. Cost of construction would be paid for by the state water bond, federal dollars and water users.

Al Smith made a motion to support the bill and Mr. Fortune seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Ms. Evans informed the council that Mayor Ashley Swearingin will be the speaker at the next Eggs and Issues breakfast on Friday, April 4th.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:39pm.