

County Of Sonoma Agenda Item Summary Report

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date Held Until
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Agenda Item No: Agenda Item No:
_____ _____

Department: County Administrator's Office

4/5 Vote Not Required

Contact:
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Phone:
(707) 565-2190

Board Date:
11/3/2009

Deadline for Board Action:

AGENDA SHORT TITLE: Senate Bill 1619 - The Livable Communities Act of 2009.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION: The Board review S. 1619 and authorize the Chair to sign a letter of support on behalf of the Board.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT - None.

Explanation (if required): None.

Prior Board Action: There has been no prior action on this bill.

Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval: The Board could oppose or stay neutral on S. 1619.

Background: On August 6th, 2009, S. 1619 was introduced by Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut. S. 1619 would facilitate and improve the coordination of housing, community development, transportation, energy and environmental policy across policy areas which have been traditionally separated. The bill seeks to encourage regional planning across jurisdictions and provide for energy efficient housing options and transportation systems which help create sustainable communities. Further, S. 1619 would provide grant funding for local governments from FY 2010 to FY 2013 to support these efforts.

S. 1619 would establish in the executive branch of the federal government an independent Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities. This council would establish a grant funding program which would make comprehensive Planning Grants and Sustainability Challenge Grants to local governments working in partnership with other local governments or with a metropolitan or rural planning organization, a regional council or their respective states to support the development of sustainable communities.

S. 1619 proposes \$300 million in Planning Grants which would support:

- 1) Local projects to coordinate land use, transportation and infrastructure planning processes across jurisdictions;
- 2) Creation of regional partnerships for developing and implementing a comprehensive regional plan for sustainable development (i.e. Smart Growth efforts);
- 3) Conducting or updating housing, infrastructure, transportation, energy and environmental assessments to determine regional needs and promote sustainable development;
- 4) The development or updating of existing regional plans;
- 5) The implementation of local zoning or other code changes necessary to implement comprehensive regional plans which promote sustainable development.

Grants would require a 20% local match and for Sonoma County the maximum eligible funding would be \$1.5 million.

S. 1619 also proposes \$3.75 billion for Sustainability Challenge Grants which would:

- 1) Promote integrated transportation, housing, energy, and economic development activities carried out across policy and governmental jurisdictions;
- 2) Promote sustainable and location-efficient development (i.e. transit-oriented development or "Smart growth" efforts);
- 3) Implement projects identified in a comprehensive regional plan.

Challenge Grants would also require a 20% local match. The maximum Challenge Grant that Sonoma County could be eligible for would be \$35 million.

S. 1619 is currently in the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee and is expected to be reviewed in Committee later this fall. The National Associations of Counties has already taken a position of support.

REQUESTED ACTION:

The Board review S. 1619 and send a letter of support to Senator Dodd's office, with copies to Senators Boxers and Feinstein.

Attachments: Draft letter of support of S. 1619

On File With Clerk: Text of S. 1619