

Los Osos Community Services District

Legislative Advocacy Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to guide Los Osos Community Services District's (District) Board of Directors and staff in considering legislative or regulatory proposals that are likely to have an impact on District, and to allow for a timely response to important legislative issues. Although the expenditure of public funds for the purpose of supporting or opposing a ballot measure or candidate is prohibited, the expenditure of public funds is allowed to advocate for or against proposed legislation or regulatory actions which will affect the public agency expending the funds.

The purpose for identifying Legislative Advocacy Procedures is to provide clear direction to District staff with regard to monitoring and acting upon bills during state and federal legislative sessions. Adherence to Legislative Advocacy Procedures will ensure that legislative inquiries and responses will be administered consistently with "one voice" as to the identified Advocacy Priorities adopted by the Board of Directors. The Legislative Advocacy Procedures and Advocacy Priorities will provide the Board President, District General Manager, or other designee, discretion to advocate in District best interests in a manner consistent with the goals and priorities adopted by the Board of Directors. This policy is intended to be manageable, consistent, and tailored to the specific needs and culture of the District.

2. Policy Goals

- Advocate the District legislative interests at the State, County, and Federal levels.
- Inform and provide information to the Board of Directors and district staff on the legislative process and key issues and legislation that could have a potential impact on the district.
- Serve as an active participant with other local governments, the California Special Districts Association, and local government associations on legislative and regulatory issues that are important to the district and the region.
- Seek grant and funding assistance for District projects, services, and programs to enhance services for the community.

3. Policy Principles

The Board of Directors recognizes the need to protect District interests and local control, and to identify various avenues to implement its strategic and long-term goals. It is the policy of District to proactively monitor and advocate for legislation as directed by the Advocacy Priorities and by the specific direction of the Board of Directors.

This policy provides the Board President, the General Manager, or other designee, the flexibility to adopt positions on legislation in a timely manner, while allowing the Board of Directors to set Advocacy Priorities to provide policy guidance. The Board of Directors, annually (typically the first meeting of the calendar year), shall establish various Advocacy Priorities and, so long as the position fits within the Advocacy Priorities, staff is authorized to take a position without board approval.

Whenever an applicable Advocacy Priority does not exist pertaining to legislation affecting the District, the matter shall be brought before the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled board meeting for formal direction from the Board of Directors.

Generally, the District will not address matters that are not pertinent to the district's local government services, such as social issues or international relations issues.

4. Legislative Advocacy Procedures

It is the policy of District to proactively monitor and advocate for legislation as directed by the Advocacy Priorities and by the specific direction of the Board of Directors. This process involves interaction with local, state, and federal government entities both in regard to specific items of legislation and to promote positive intergovernmental relationships. Accordingly, involvement and participation in regional, state, and national organizations is encouraged and supported by the District.

Monitoring legislation is a shared function of the Board of Directors and General Manager or designated staff. The Legislative Advocacy Procedures are the process by which staff will track and respond to legislative issues in a timely and consistent manner. The General Manager, or other designee, will act on legislation utilizing the following procedures:

The General Manager or other designee shall review requests that the District take a position on legislative issues to determine if the legislation aligns with the District's current approved Advocacy Priorities.

- 1) The General Manager or other designee shall review requests that the District take a position on legislative issues to determine if the legislation aligns with the District's current approved Advocacy Priorities.
- 2) The General Manager or other designee will conduct a review of positions and analysis completed by the California Special Districts Association and other local government associations when formulating positions.
- 3) If the matter aligns with the approved priorities, District response shall be supplied in the form of a letter to the legislative body reviewing the bill or measure. Advocacy methods utilized on behalf of the district, including but not limited to letters, phone calls, emails, and prepared forms, will be communicated through the General Manager or designee. The General Manager or designee shall advise staff to administer the form of advocacy, typically via letters signed by the President or General Manager, on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- 4) All draft legislative position letters initiated by the General Manager or designee shall state whether the district is requesting "support", "support if amended", "oppose", or "oppose unless amended" action on the issue, and shall include adequate justification for the recommended action.
 - Support – legislation in this area advances the district's goals and priorities.
 - Oppose – legislation in this area could potentially harm, negatively impact or undo positive momentum for the district, or does not advance the district's goals and priorities.
- 5) The General Manager may also provide a letter of concern or interest regarding a

legislative issue without taking a formal position on a piece of legislation. Letters of concern or interest are to be administered through the General Manager or designee.

- 6) When a letter is sent to a state or federal legislative body, the appropriate federal or state legislators representing the District shall be included as a copy or “cc” on the letter. If applicable, the appropriate contacts at the California Special Districts Association and other local government associations will be included as a cc on legislative letters.
- 7) A position may be adopted by the General Manager or designee if any of the following criteria is met:
 - The position is consistent with the adopted Advocacy Priorities;
 - The position is consistent with that of organizations to which the district is a member, such as the California Special Districts Association; or
 - The position is approved by the Board of Directors.
- 8) All legislative positions adopted via a process outside of a regularly scheduled Board Meeting shall be communicated to the Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting. When appropriate, the General Manager or other designee will submit a report (either written or verbal) summarizing activity on legislative measures to the Board of Director.

5. General Subjects of Advocacy Priorities

The general subjects that the advocacy priorities may include but not limited to are:

- Revenue, Finances and Taxation
- Governance and Accountability
- Human Resources and Personnel
- Infrastructure, Innovation and Investment