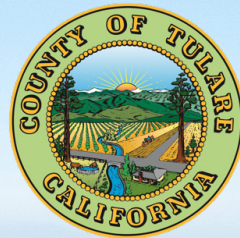


2025-2027

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

TULARE COUNTY



Supervisor Larry Micari



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TOP PRIORITIES

Water: The sustained availability of surface water and groundwater is crucial to the prosperity of Tulare County. Consequently, the County supports federal action that enhances access to surface water south of the delta, including expanded/restored infrastructure, and updated environmental studies and biological opinions from the Bureau of Reclamation. Reliable and secure water allocations bolster agricultural success, support job creation, build stable communities, and preserve essential infrastructure.

Infrastructure: Securing funding for new projects or the restoration of existing infrastructure is a top priority for the County. As one of the top three agricultural producing counties in the nation, the state of our infrastructure is of national significance. Our roads, bridges, highways, water conveyance systems, and broadband networks ensure the food nourishing this great nation and the world is grown, harvested, and transported safely and efficiently. Investing in critical infrastructure in Tulare County is an investment in national security.

Forest Management: With approximately 27% of Tulare County's land area covered in natural forests, active forest management is essential for the health and safety of the county and its residents. Forest health activities, such as prescribed burning, mechanical thinning, and logging, are crucial in reducing wildfire intensity and destruction. While current law permits these practices and practices like these under specific conditions, expedited permitting and expanded eligibility are necessary to ensure projects are conducted at a scale that maximizes public benefit. All forests, including federally protected ones, require proper management.



INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Local Match: Advocate for federal support to ensure local match funding is prioritized and critical rural infrastructure projects are sustained, particularly addressing highway trust fund shortfalls.

2. Definition of Rural: Ensure the definition of "rural" in federal infrastructure funding includes areas within Tulare County that, despite having metropolitan areas, should be classified as rural for funding eligibility.

3. Broadband: Support federal funding to expand broadband infrastructure in rural communities, ensuring high-speed internet access in underserved areas.

4. Farm to Market: Secure special funding for roads with high agricultural traffic to improve farm-to-market routes and support Tulare County's dairy industry.

5. Secure Rural Schools (SRS): Support reauthorization of the SRS program and the creation of an endowment fund to provide stable funding for rural services and education.

6. Subsidence: Advocate for legislation and continued appropriations to address subsidence along the Friant-Kern Canal, including planning and funding for necessary repairs to Tulare County bridges and canal infrastructure.

7. Dry Wells: Support additional funding for permanent solutions to water shortages by raising per-household funding limits for well construction to reflect current market rates and increasing maximum grantee awards to assist a larger portion of the affected population.

8. Workforce Investment: Support stable, long-term funding for workforce development programs and advocate for local control, streamlined administrative processes, and simplified budgeting.

9. Libraries: Support the reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and the E-Rate program to continue providing educational resources in libraries.



GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Discretionary Funding: Support continued discretionary funding for critical programs, ensuring the stability of services for Tulare County's communities and industries.

2. Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT): Advocate for long-term reauthorization and stable funding of the PILT program to offset revenue losses from federally managed lands in Tulare County.

3. State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP): Advocate for the protection and enhancement of SCAAP funding to alleviate local costs associated with incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens.

4. Trade: Support fair trade agreements that protect and promote Tulare County's agricultural exports while addressing labor and quality standards.

5. Cannabis/Marijuana Enforcement: Advocate for increased funding for local eradication measures and programs addressing illegal cannabis cultivation in Tulare County.



AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, & WATER

1. Environment and Natural Resources: Accelerate forest management efforts in Sequoia National Forest, including fuels removal, prescribed burning, and biomass reduction, while enhancing partnerships with the US Forest Service to protect Giant Sequoia Groves, improve infrastructure, and expand firefighting resources.

2. Water Storage: Support continued funding for the Success Reservoir Enlargement Project, and expedited permits for sand and silt removal and the maintenance of water storage and conveyance facilities to minimize water loss during dry years.



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

1. Criminal Justice Medical Care: Support legislation to expand Medicaid eligibility for justice-involved individuals and ease restrictions, ensuring counties can access federal funding for inmate healthcare.

3. Valley Fever: Support federal legislation and funding for Valley Fever vaccine development and public health strategies to address this growing health crisis.

2. Enhance Access to Food Benefits: Support changes to SNAP eligibility rules to ensure students enrolled at least half-time in education or training programs can access benefits, reducing barriers to food security.



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Approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors on January 14, 2025.

