



**California Special  
Districts Association**

*Districts Stronger Together*

April 28, 2020

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 on Budget Process, Oversight, And Program Evaluation  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Role of Special Districts in Economic Activity – Request for Revenue Relief from COVID-19 Impacts**

Dear Assembly Member Ting:

On behalf of over 1,000 special districts and affiliates, the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) thanks you for your leadership and thoughtful consideration of the budgetary impacts resulting from COVID-19 response and the impending revenue issues state and local governments collectively face. We appreciated the hearing held by the Committee yesterday to evaluate economic impacts and the comments made by committee members acknowledging the marked effect the pandemic has had and will continue to have on local governments.

CSDA respectfully requests the State extend revenue relief to local governments who have not been able to access federal stimulus funds to mitigate COVID-19 impacts and for special districts to be explicitly included in those determinations.

California's independent special districts are on the front lines of COVID-19 response ensuring the delivery of critical local services that impact the quality of life in their community such as health care delivery, first response, mosquito abatement and vector control, recreation and parks, and cultural and community centers and operating vital infrastructure such as roads, water, waste management, harbors and ports, airports, transit services, levees, and electricity, among others.

As the State addresses the unmet needs and service gaps we may be facing in communities across California, in addition to appropriately seeking answers to the vital needs of small businesses, non-profits, and schools it is imperative State leaders simultaneously consider the essential role of local government as an economic driver.

Special districts are indispensable to the process of economic development both as an employer and by providing a stable environment for commerce and life to flourish through operating the critical physical infrastructure and services that is not only necessary to protect the public's health and safety but is a prerequisite for economic activity.

In an early April survey, most respondents indicated they anticipate drawing down reserves and cutting staff and/or service levels to meet the budget problems created by COVID-19. The consequences of local government revenue shortfalls and reduced staffing and service levels on the lives and livelihoods of communities must be a consideration in the overall context of these discussions.

Additionally, we appreciated Assembly Member Wood's comment concerning the Personal Protective Equipment shortage and the crisis that represents for non-emergency healthcare employers. We ask that as the State procures additional supply or pools resources and can prioritize outside of the healthcare setting that special districts be included in distributions of supplies in State response actions – many of the services provided by special districts leave staff vulnerable and worker safety is a top concern.

CSDA respectfully requests the Committee consider actions to provide immediate and long-term relief to special districts in the ongoing efforts to confront this pandemic so they may continue to provide the stable environment necessary for business and community life to thrive.

1112 I Street, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Toll-free: 877.924.2732  
t: 916.442.7887  
f: 916.442.7889  
csda.net

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If you have questions or would like to further discuss any of the material in this letter or other matters relating to special districts, I welcome the opportunity to assist your efforts in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 505-4978 or [alysas@cdda.net](mailto:alysas@cdda.net).

Sincerely,



Alyssa Silhi,  
Legislative Representative

CC: The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California  
The Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Marie Waldron, Assembly Republican Leader  
The Honorable Toni Atkins, President pro Tempore, California State Senate  
The Honorable Shannon Grove, Senate Republican Leader  
The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
Members and Staff of Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 on Budget Process, Oversight, And Program Evaluation  
Keely Bosler, Director of the California Department of Finance  
Mark Ghilarducci, Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services