

To: East Contra Costa Fire Protection District
From: Townsend Public Affairs, Inc.
Date: May 5, 2022
Subject: Legislative Report for ECCFPD – April 2022

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AND OUTLOOK

The month of April saw amendments to hundreds of bills, numerous budgetary developments, and the Legislature working to consider and pass bills with identified fiscal impacts through the policy committee process prior to the Joint Rules deadline. Below is an overview of notable legislative happenings from the month of April.

State Budget

[Legislative Analyst's Office \(LAO\) Revises State Revenue Projections Ahead of May Revise](#) – On April 20th, the LAO revised its [update](#) on the state's "big three" tax revenue projections, which are comprised of personal income, sales, and corporation taxes. The revision reports that the State will significantly exceed the Governor's Budget revenue assumption from January of \$185 billion in 2021-22, predicting somewhere between \$33 billion and \$39 billion in unanticipated revenue. These projections, coupled with the operating surplus funds, **could end up being as high as \$68 billion in additional revenue.**

Despite this massive revenue growth, the LAO cautions that the implications of unanticipated revenues for the state's budget are not straightforward, and that the state should anticipate significant spending constraints due to the requirements of the [State Appropriations Limit \(SAL\)](#). Having reached the Proposition 4 (1979) SAL, each additional dollar of revenue must be allocated consistent with SAL requirements, generally making them unavailable to fund baseline expenditures. In addition, the state must allocate its statutorily dedicated percentages of funds toward education, reserve, and debt payments, consistent with provisions pursuant to Propositions 98 (1988) and 2 (2014). The LAO estimates that for every dollar of tax revenue above the SAL, the state faces approximately \$1.60 in constitutional funding obligations. This is expected to materialize into major budget issues during the 2025-26 fiscal year, if not met with SAL reform or other resilience-enhancing actions.

[Senate Releases Budget Priorities](#) – Last month, Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins and Senate Budget & Fiscal Committee Chair Nancy Skinner announced the second phase of the Senate's budget priorities, which will be incorporated into a legislative budget vehicle to begin the reconciliation process between the Governor's vision for the budget and the Legislature's vision. Highlights from the updated plan include the following:



- **Climate** - \$18 billion package to build off of the Governor's January budget which proposes significant investments in climate adaptation, electrical vehicles, abandoned oil well clean up, clean energy projects and building decarbonization. This package includes \$6.6 billion, over five years, for wildfire. Specifically, the proposal contains:
 - \$1.5 billion for fuel reduction
 - \$675 million for regional conservancies
 - \$220 million (ongoing) to expand staffing ratios to 3.0 for all engines
 - \$95 million for biomass accumulation
 - \$35 million for workforce development and training

- **Housing:** \$2.7 billion for affordable housing and home ownership, including \$1 billion for the California Dream for All program, a new revolving fund for first-time homebuyers to partner with the state and purchase homes with little or no down payment and reduce mortgage costs by more than 20 percent.

- **Homelessness:** \$3 billion, over three years, to build on last year's historic \$12 billion two-year investment, which would include additional funding for Project Homekey, local funding, and encampment resolutions.

- **Mental Health:** Expand investments in school-based mental health services, accelerate implementation of behavioral health treatment beds, and provide funding for financial incentives to encourage people to enter the behavioral health workforce.

More information on the Senate's budget priorities is available [here](#).

Update on Gas Price Relief Proposals

Multiple proposals have been put forward in the past two months aimed at offsetting the cost of soaring gas prices, which included issuing hard-cash rebates to Californians, foregoing the gas tax, and combinations of both – all by utilizing budget surplus dollars. The push for gas price relief began in January, when Governor Newsom announced he would be issuing a “gas tax holiday,” to forego the gas tax increase authorized by SB 1 (Beall, 2017) that funds critical transportation infrastructure projects. California's gas tax is 51.1 cents per gallon, the second highest in the nation. It is scheduled to increase slightly for inflation on July 1st. Governor Newsom initially proposed pausing the increase for one year. Legislative leaders emerged in opposition to the Governor's proposal to issue a gas tax holiday, citing concerns with the loss of funds dedicated toward transportation infrastructure projects and the political feasibility of reinstating the tax after the “holiday” period.

In addition to the Governor's proposed pause on the gas tax, the Administration also developed a plan to offer \$400 debit cards to every CA vehicle owner, to be distributed via DMV records to ensure every driver receives some relief, even those who don't earn enough to pay taxes. Additionally, the proposal includes funds to subsidize three months of free public transit throughout the state. Ultimately, the Governor's proposal reflects a push to offer rebates to both lower income and middle-class individuals – a group, he says, was largely excluded from rebates



issued throughout the course of the pandemic. This proposal currently has implementing trailer bill language, which will need to be considered and passed by the Legislature to go into effect.

In response to the Governor’s proposal to push forward a package of rebates and a pause on the gas tax, Legislators created two additional proposals to issue rebates. Legislative leaders Assembly Speaker Rendon and Senate pro Tem Atkins propose issuing \$200 rebates per taxpayer and dependents in households earning less than \$250,000 annually. This proposal has not yet been incorporated into a legislative vehicle, but it is likely to be included in budget negotiations with the Administration after the release of the May Revise.

A democratic caucus effort led by Assembly Member Petrie-Norris proposes issuing \$400 rebates to all taxpayers, regardless of car ownership status. The proposal materialized into Assembly Bill 1616, which failed to move through the legislative process pursuant to the fiscal bill referral deadline on April 29th. The specific vehicle for the proposal is not moving forward, it is possible that the proposal could also make its way into broader budget negotiations.

As for the pause on the gas tax, the Administration advises that the window to implement has passed. In order to stop the gas tax’s inflation adjustment from taking effect on July 1st, lawmakers would have needed need to pass legislation by May 1st as an early-action budget item, according to the Administration. The May 1st timeline represents the minimum 60-day lead time for such a measure to be administratively implemented.

In total, four proposals emerged to help offset high gas prices:

1. Governor Newsom proposed foregoing gas tax and issuing \$400 rebates to car owners, plus free transit throughout the state for 3 months.
2. Senate and Assembly Leaders proposed \$200 rebates to taxpayers/dependents in households earning less than \$250,000.
3. AB 1616 would issue \$400 rebates to all taxpayers, regardless of car ownership status, no gas tax holiday.
4. Republicans proposed foregoing gas tax for 6 months, no rebates

	Gas Tax Impact	Rebates	Total Projected Cost
Governor's Rebate Plan	Foregoes this year’s scheduled gas tax increase, backfills with surplus	\$400 to each vehicle owner, plus free public transit for 3 months	\$11 billion
Legislative Leadership Rebate Plan	Does not affect the gas tax	\$200 to taxpayers and dependents in households earning less than \$250,000	\$6.8 billion
Democratic Caucus Rebate Plan	Does not affect the gas tax	\$400 to each tax-paying Californian	\$9 billion



Republican Legislator Gas Tax Plan	Suspends the full gas tax for six months	None	\$4.04 billion
---	--	------	----------------

Cal/OSHA Readopts COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard

On April 21st, the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (Cal/OSHA) voted 6-1 to readopt the COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS). The readopted ETS makes several changes to the current ETS and will become effective May 6th. Changes include:

- Eliminates the requirement that face coverings pass the "light test" (i.e. does not let light pass through when held up to a light source).
- Further authorizes the use of self-administered and self-read results to meet return to work requirements.
- Adds a new term, "returned case," which means an individual who returns to work after testing positive for COVID-19 and did not develop any COVID-19 symptoms after a return.
- Specifies that employers are not required to make COVID-19 testing available to returned cases.

PRIORITY LEGISLATION

The legislative deadlines to introduce legislation in the new session was February 18th. The Assembly and Senate combined to introduce over two thousand bills for consideration in 2022. Over the coming weeks, the two Houses will hold numerous policy committee hearings to consider these new proposals.

Below are the upcoming relevant dates for the Legislature:

May 6th – Last day for policy committees to consider house of origin non-fiscal bills

May 20th – Last day for fiscal committees to consider house of origin bills

May 27th – Last day for bills to pass out of their house of origin

Below are bills that have been introduced that may be of interest to the District:

AB 1770 (Rodriguez) Ambulance patient offload time.

Current law requires the Emergency Medical Services Authority to develop, using input from stakeholders and after approval by the Commission on Emergency Medical Services, and adopt a statewide standard methodology for the calculation and reporting by a local emergency medical services (EMS) agency of ambulance patient offload time (APOT). Current law defines APOT as the interval between the arrival of an ambulance patient at an emergency department and the time that the patient is transferred to an emergency department gurney, bed, chair, or other acceptable location and the emergency department assumes responsibility for care of the patient. Current law requires the authority to report twice per year to the commission the APOT by local EMS agency jurisdiction and by each facility in that jurisdiction. This bill would instead require the



authority to report the APOT data to the commission every 6 months. ***This bill was approved by the Assembly Emergency Management Committee (7-0) on April 4th. The measure was referred to the Assembly Health Committee, but not considered. The measure is now inactive for the remainder of the session.***

AB 2186 (Grayson) Housing Cost Reduction Incentive Program

This bill would establish the Housing Cost Reduction Incentive Program, to be administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development, for the purpose of reimbursing cities, counties, and cities and counties for development impact fee reductions provided to qualified housing development and for the reasonable interest costs associated with impact fee deferrals. Upon appropriation, the bill would require the department to provide grants to applicants in an amount equal to 50% of the amount of development impact fee reduced for a qualified housing development and grants to applicants in an amount equal to the accrued interest on a deferred development impact fee. This bill would require the department to administer these grants by issuing a Notice of Funding Availability before December 31 of the year that the program receives funding and accepting grant applications after the subsequent year. The bill would require a public entity that receives grant funds under the program to use those funds solely for those purposes for which the development impact fee that was reduced or deferred would have been used. ***This bill was approved by the Assembly Local Government Committee (8-0) on April 27th. The measure has been referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.***

AB 2377 (Muratsuchi) Deputy Director of Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation

Current law establishes within the Office of the State Fire Marshal a Deputy Director of Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation who is responsible for fire preparedness and mitigation missions of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Current law requires the deputy director to be responsible for specified programs and activities, including implementation of fire safety standards. This bill would expand the deputy director's responsibilities to include, among other things, prioritizing acres for fire and fuels treatment and executing those treatments. ***This bill was approved by the Assembly Natural Resources Committee (11-0) on April 18th. The measure has been referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.***

SB 896 (Dodd) Wildfires: defensible space: grant programs: local governments.

This bill requires the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection when reviewing applications for the local assistance grant program, to award a 5 percent scoring bonus to any local government entity qualified to perform defensible space assessments in very high and high fire severity zones for using the common platform to report that information. ***This bill was approved by the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on March 8th. The measure is currently on the Senate Floor awaiting consideration.***

SB 1062 (McGuire) Fixing the Firefighter Shortage Act of 2022

This bill would require the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to increase its existing firefighter fuel crews. The bill would require the department, on or before January 1, 2024, to provide to the Legislature a long-term staffing plan to meet the new era of wildfire firefighting. ***This bill was approved by the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee (9-0) on April 5th. The measure is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee on the Suspense File.***



SCA 8 (Nielsen) Wildfires: funding

The California Constitution establishes the California Fire Response Fund and requires the Controller to transfer from the General Fund to the California Fire Response Fund a specified amount. The California Constitution requires moneys in the California Response Fund to be appropriated by the Legislature in each fiscal year exclusively for specified fire prevention purposes. The California Constitution establishes the Special District Fire Response Fund as a subaccount in the California Fire Response Fund, to be appropriated to special districts that provide fire protection services. This measure would, contingent upon voter approval of an additional specified proposition at a statewide general election, revise and recast the California Fire Response Fund and the Special District Fire Response Fund, by among other things, requiring the Treasurer to annually transfer an amount equal to 1% of specified state revenues from the General Fund to the California Fire Response Fund. ***This bill was approved by the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee (5-0) on April 5th. The measure is currently in the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments awaiting consideration.***

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AND OUTLOOK

While March featured massive progress on the federal appropriations front with the passage of the \$1.5 trillion government spending bill, the month of April saw fewer updates, which can partially be attributed to the two-week Spring Recess Congress took from April 8th through April 25th. Despite this, April saw several developments related to spending program updates and the 2023 appropriations process.

Looking Ahead: Congressional Priorities, Midterms Looming Ahead

Following the spring recess in April and with the midterm elections quickly approaching, members of congress are feeling the pressure to deliver key priorities in the coming weeks. These priorities include:

- Additional funding for COVID-19 relief,
- Providing relief for Ukraine as they combat Russian aggression,
- Enacting legislation to enhance competition with China and support domestic chip manufacturing,
- Confirming President Biden's picks for federal agencies and courts.

The Senate will vote on the nominees for the Federal Reserve and Federal Trade Commission, making up some of the over 100 nominations awaiting action.

House and Senate Appropriations Committee Leaders from both sides of the aisle met last month to determine potential top-line numbers for fiscal 2023 domestic and defense spending. Disagreements over top-line funding levels led to a nearly six-month delay in finalizing FY22 funding legislation. Top members of the appropriations committees hope to work out these differences earlier in the process. Congressional Democrats will want to push for final funding bills prior to the midterm elections, but Republicans, eyeing gains in the elections, have no incentive to enact appropriations bills before November.



Both sides of the aisle are aiming to reach a conference agreement on H.R. 4521, the America COMPETES Act, to boost domestic manufacturing, specifically the semiconductor industry. The House voted earlier in April and the Senate voted in late April to go to a formal conference on the bill. Some senators expressed hope that an agreement would be reached before the Fourth of July, but committee leaders expressed skepticism at that timeline, saying it would more likely take until August to reach an agreement between the two chambers.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) wants to continue the discussion of the new COVID legislation, H.R. 4373, to boost pandemic preparedness. Schumer also wants to revive the social spending budget plan, after H.R. 5376, the Build Back Better Act, was stalled in the evenly split Senate over the winter.

President Biden is also asking Congress for supplemental funding to help Ukraine, which is strongly supported by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Republicans in general.

Lawmakers from both parties are expecting long evening sessions to work out these priorities. McConnell has required Schumer file cloture in order to head off potential filibuster threats on even non-controversial measures as he says Republicans are taking a more assertive stance on nominees, particularly for the judiciary.

Even when there is agreement, conflicting schedules, medical issues, and travel trouble have postponed the agenda. As long as Democrats are united, they will be able to discharge nominees from committee, limit debate, and confirm them, although these all take time and the possible need for an assist from Vice President Kamala Harris.

COVID-19 Supplemental Appropriations Package

Negotiations continued last month on a bipartisan \$10 billion COVID-19 supplemental appropriations package. The bipartisan bill, championed by Senators Alex Padilla (D-CA) and John Cornyn (R-TX), provides additional ARPA Fiscal Recovery Fund expenditure flexibility to local governments. Despite the legislation's bipartisan support, congressional leaders have been trying to break a weeks-long stalemate centered around the Biden administration's repeal of Title 42, which prevented any unauthorized travel into the U.S. and effectively blocked migrants from making claims of asylum at the border. The order is set to expire May 23. GOP lawmakers and some Democrats are demanding consideration of an amendment to the COVID spending bill that would require the Biden administration to keep the order in place.

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund

Last month, the Treasury published a set of answers to [frequently asked questions](#) (FAQ) related to the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, which was authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and provided billions in flexible COVID relief funds to California local governments. The FAQs, which are designed to help recipients understand and apply the final rule, addresses many of the questions received by the Department since the rule was released on January 6, 2022. The FAQs are also designed to assist local governments in submitting their ARPA Project and Expenditure reports, which were due to the Treasury by April 30th. The



Department has also released a [Project and Expenditure Report User Guide](#) that provides local governments with a step-by-step tutorial on the reporting portal.

Federal Judge Halts Mask Mandate for Transportation, DOJ Appeals

Last month, a Florida federal judge struck down a federal mandate requiring mask use on public transportation and at transportation hubs. At the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) recommendation, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on April 13 extended the requirement for mask use for 15 days through May 3 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. But due to the court ruling, TSA released a statement on April 18 that "effective immediately," the agency would no longer enforce it; TSA noted that "CDC continues to recommend that people wear masks in indoor public transportation settings at this time." Following the Court order, the U.S. Department of Justice announced it would appeal the decision in a statement, however, it is unclear if transit organizations will reinstate the mask mandate after having it repealed.

DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

TPA works to further the mission of the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District in Sacramento and Washington DC. In addition to providing feedback on the priorities of the State and Federal government, the District has its own priorities that we continue to advance.

Legislative Priority 1 – Chapter 13 EMS System Modifications

California operates on a two-tiered emergency medical services (EMS) system. EMSA is the lead agency and centralized resource to oversee emergency and disaster medical services. The California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) is charged with providing leadership in developing and implementing local EMS systems throughout California, and in setting standards for the training and scope of practice of various levels of EMS personnel. California has 33 local EMS systems that provide EMS for California's 58 counties.

Local EMS agencies are responsible for planning, implementing, and managing local trauma care systems, including assessing needs, developing the system design, designating trauma care centers, collecting trauma care data, and providing quality assurance.

In late 2019, EMSA issued proposed Chapter 13 regulations that would have aimed to define the standards, policies, and procedures for all local EMS systems. Additionally, the proposed regulations would have clarified and made specific criteria for determining whether a city or fire district that has contracted for, or provided prehospital EMS as of June 1, 1980, has consistently provided that service without any reduction in the level of service since that time. The regulations would have also made specific criteria for the determining when an exclusive operating area may be created without a competitive process and the process to be used when awarding an exclusive operating area via a competitive process.

The EMSA proposed regulations garnered opposition from numerous entities. Additionally, CFCA's legal counsel requested that EMSA withdraw the proposed Chapter 13 regulations for failure to comply with certain substantive and procedural requirements for rulemaking under the



Administrative Procedures Act. Ultimately, in August 2020, EMSA gave notice that it decided not to proceed with the rule making action related to Chapter 13.

On February 2nd, Assembly Member Rodriguez, the Chair of the Emergency Management Committee, introduced AB 1770 which would increase the reporting frequency of APOT data to the state. AB 1770 received positive consideration by the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management and has since been referred to the Assembly Committee on Health. The bill was scheduled to be considered in the committee on April 26th, but was pulled from consideration by the author. As such, the bill is now ineligible for additional consideration during the current legislative session.

Legislative Priority 2 – Mitigation Fee Act

Under existing law, the Mitigation Fee Act authorizes local agencies to impose fees to offset the impacts of new development in the form of new services and/or facilities required. The Mitigation Fee Act also imposes a variety of administrative requirements on the fees collected. No voter approval is required to impose impact fees. The same does not apply to a District board, who is prohibited from charging a fee on new construction or development.

In 2020, numerous bills were introduced that attempted to modify the Act in ways that would have resulted in a decreased ability for public agencies to collect impact fees. The aim of these legislative efforts has been to reduce the overall cost of housing in California and provide more opportunities for home ownership or for people to be able to afford to rent housing near employment centers. However, once the coronavirus pandemic hit, and there was concern about declining revenues for local governments, the Legislature did not consider many significant bills in 2021 related to the Mitigation Fee Act.

In February, Assembly Member Grayson introduced AB 2186, which attempts to reduce the overall cost of housing by reducing the cost associated with mitigation fees, but in a manner that would not be harmful to local agencies. The Assembly Member's bill would call on the Department of Housing and Community Development to reimburse local agencies 50% for any reduction or elimination of mitigation fees that they provide to qualified rental housing developments. While this measure does propose to provide state funding to offset the loss of impact fees, the bill would only backfill half of the impact fee reduction. The District has worked closely with CSDA, and other impacted entities, to share concerns related to AB 2186. As a result, the bill has been recently amended to clarify that impact fees directed to independent special districts can only be reduced if the special district agrees, as well as to clarify that any funding received through the proposed grant program must be directed to the entities and accounts that would have otherwise received funding through the impact fees that were reduced.

In addition to AB 2186, another impact fee related bill that is being closely monitored in AB 2063 (Berman). This measure would prohibit the charging of impact fees on a housing development's density bonus units. Currently, cities and counties are prohibited from collecting impact fees on a housing development's affordable housing units, and when combined with this proposal, could result in local governments only being able to charge a fraction of the impact fees that would otherwise be necessary to support a specific housing development. AB 2063 has been approved by the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee and the Assembly Local



Government Committee. The measure is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee awaiting consideration.

Legislative Priority 3 – Professional Services

Under existing law, the Public Contract Code provides that contracts over \$25,000 must be awarded to the lowest bidder. In addition to be a low threshold, Section 20812 is inconsistent with the requirements for many public agencies, and inconsistent with other laws pertaining to Professional and Special Services.

This session legislation was introduced last year by Assembly Member Gallagher, AB 577, which would establish a \$50,000 threshold amount for county drainage districts, levee districts, and reclamation districts for the requirement to award to the lowest bidder. AB 577 was referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee for consideration, but was not set for hearing by the committee, and as such, the measure is now a two-year bill.

Legislative Priority 4 – Parcel Tax

Currently, a parcel tax requires a two-thirds vote to pass and must be applied to all parcels equally. This means that a residential property, a commercial property, and an undeveloped property would have to be assessed the same amount for fire service even though they place different levels of demand for service on the Fire District.

On December 7th, Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry reintroduced ACA 1 which would create an exception to the 1% limit that would authorize a city, county, or special district to levy an ad valorem tax to fund the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or replacement of public infrastructure, affordable housing, or permanent supportive housing, if the proposed tax measure is approved by 55% of voters. For purposes of the bill, “public infrastructure” includes public safety buildings or facilities, equipment related to fire suppression, emergency response equipment, or interoperable communications equipment for direct and exclusive use by fire, emergency response, police, or sheriff personnel.

Last year, ACA 1 was supported by a coalition of individual public agencies and associations, including: California Special Districts Association, League of California Cities, California State Association of Counties, East Bay MUD, and East Bay Parks. The measure also received significant support from labor, including from California Professional Firefighters.

ACA 1 has been referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee, which is chaired by the bill’s author, Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry. Since constitutional amendments are not subject to the same legislative timelines as regular bills, so the measure may still be considered by the Assembly Local Government Committee despite being past the deadline for policy committees to consider bills in their House of Origin. Last session, ACA 1 was approved by the committee on a 5-2 vote.

Legislative Priority 5 – Proposition 218

Proposition 218 restrict local governments’ ability to impose assessments and property-related fees, as well as requires elections to approve many local government revenue raising methods.



Over time, the responsibilities expected of local fire districts have grown, however, their share of local tax revenue has not grown to meet the increased demand.

Every few years, efforts have failed to modify the State Constitution to reduce the vote threshold for parcel tax measures to 55%. That included an effort earlier in the 2019-20 legislative session, ACA 1 (Aguiar-Curry). While that measure was unsuccessful, the Legislature was able to approve a measure, ACA 11 (Mullin), for the November ballot, which appear on the ballot as Proposition 19. Proposition 19 was approved at the November 2020 General Election and allows homeowners who are over 55, disabled, or victims of wildfire or natural disaster to transfer their primary residence's property tax base value to a replacement residence of any value, anywhere in the state. An individual could use these rules up to three times in their lifetime. The measure would also limit the ability of new homeowners who inherit properties to keep their parents' or grandparents' low property tax payments. The measure would allocate most resulting state revenue to fire protection services and reimbursement to local governments for taxation-related changes.

In addition to any efforts to legislatively modify the Prop 218 voter thresholds, there is also a counter initiative effort underway that would impact the ability for local governments to raise revenue for government services. The proposed initiative, the Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act, would limit the ability of the state and local governments to enact, modify, or expand taxes, assessments, fees, and property-related charges.

In February, the Attorney General issued [title and summary](#) for the California Business Round Table-sponsored "Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act," which allowed the initiative proponents to begin signature gathering. Proponents must submit 997,139 valid signatures in order to qualify for the November 2022 ballot. The Secretary of State's recommended date to turn in signatures is April 29, 2022. As of March 16th, the proponents had reported collecting 25% of the signatures required to place the measure on the ballot.

The Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act would amend the California Constitution to restrict the ability of the state, local governments, other local agencies, and the electorate to approve or collect taxes, fees, and other revenues. It would require voter approval of all state taxes, would further restrict local fee authority by limiting it to the "minimum amount necessary" to provide government services, and would require voter approval for local measures such as franchise fees. Its provisions would make it easier to challenge local revenue measures by increasing the burden of proof on local agencies while disallowing an agency's characterization of a measure from being considered in court.

Initiative opponents comprise a [coalition](#) of organizations including the League of California Cities, California Professional Firefighters, AFSCME, SEIU, and the California Alliance for Jobs.

Legislative Priority 6 – Building a Coalition

TPA continues to work with the California Special Districts Association in efforts to further strengthen the relationship between CSDA and the District, as well as to ensure alignment on issues of importance to fire districts. TPA has worked with CSDA and the District to advocate for the District to be represented on the CSDA Legislative Committee. The District has been in close coordination with CSDA, and their legislative representatives, and has been working to establish



a regularly occurring meeting with the District and FDAC/CalChiefs so that all organizations can be updated on priority items. These meetings will allow for additional collaboration and focus on items of mutual importance, as well as ensure that all organizations are aware of the full complement of efforts that each is undertaking on behalf of its membership.

