

Your source for legislative and regulatory news impacting California's rural counties.

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### **Omnibus Spending Package Includes Funding for Federal PILT**

**SACRAMENTO, CA – December 18, 2015** –The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) announced today that Congress passed the Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Federal Spending Package), the federal spending package that supports a variety of government programs and services, including the Federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. Federal PILT funding mitigates the impact to county governments from the losses in property taxes due to nontaxable federal lands within government boundaries. RCRC and its member counties have strongly advocated for Federal PILT throughout the year, and applaud Congress for this 2016 reauthorization.

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## The Water Rundown

### Constitutional Amendment to Amend Proposition 218 Filed

A coalition including the Association of California Water Agencies, the California State Association of Counties, and the League of California Cities has filed a constitutional amendment that would create a new, optional funding method local agencies could use at their discretion to finance stormwater, flood control, and other water-related projects, and pursue conservation-based water rates or lifeline rates for low-income households.

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### Funds to Help Private Well Owners and Small Water Systems

This week, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted a resolution authorizing the allocations of \$5 million to help residents on private wells and small water systems who are facing water emergencies.

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## Federal Update

### Congress Adopts Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Spending Package

On Wednesday, December 16, 2016, Congress unveiled their Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which contains slightly more than \$1.15 trillion to support a variety of government programs and services. While the spending package does contain funding to support the Federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes program as we have been advocating for, it does not include key policy riders to address several issues that RCRC has worked on throughout the year. The House adopted the FY 16 Federal Omnibus spending package this morning in a 316-113 vote, followed by passage in the Senate with a 65-33 vote. White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest urged Congress to pass the spending measure earlier this week, signaling President Obama would likely approve of the measure when it reaches his desk.

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### Wildfire Budget Fix Stamped Out for Now

With Congress passing a \$1.15 trillion spending bill, many in western states are wondering how the United States Forest Service (USFS) budget fix was left out of the federal funding compromise. Supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (WDFDA) are certainly disappointed it was not included in the Omnibus spending bill that will keep the government funded through the end of the fiscal year.

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## Bulletin Board

Announcements regarding hearings, grants, and public comment notices of importance to California's rural counties.

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## Keeping Up

Announcements regarding key appointments, staffing, and leadership changes of importance to California's rural counties.

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## Regulatory Update

RCRC members are encouraged to submit comments on regulatory matters to state and federal regulatory bodies, and to provide a copy to RCRC's Government Affairs staff. Click "Read More" to access information related to the current status of regulations impacting California's rural counties.

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## California Drought

Impacts and Economic Assistance Opportunities

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