

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

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FEMA's Disaster Deductible Concept

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to consider states making a predetermined financial commitment (deductible) prior to receiving disaster financial assistance under the Public Assistance Program. Currently, the Stafford Act requires the federal share of assistance to be not less than 75 percent of the eligible cost of damaged facilities, and that is after a state has exceeded its calculated cost threshold. FEMA's concept is to have states make a predetermined financial commitment, which could be offset with credits based on investment in resilience and disaster mitigation, prior to receiving any financial assistance. FEMA anticipates that the concept would incentivize mitigation strategies and investments in resilience, reducing the costs of future disaster events for both states and the federal government.

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House Passes Short-Term FAA Extension

Earlier this week, the House adopted a short-term extension to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) programs through July 15, 2016. The two and a half month extension will presumably provide additional time for the House and Senate to reach an agreement for a long-term reauthorization of the FAA. Despite the additional time, House and Senate FAA authorization proposals have stark differences in their approach, with the House measure containing a controversial proposal that would privatize the nation's air traffic control system. Included in both the Chamber's proposals are extensions to three critical rural county programs, including the Airport Improvement Program, the Small Community Air Service Development Program, and the Essential Air Service program.

State Transportation Improvement Program Funding Cuts

On Wednesday, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) provided local transportation agencies the opportunity to present their proposals to address the significant decline in State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding. The STIP is the State's Five-Year plan for State and regional highway, intercity rail, and transit improvements. As a result of dwindling gas tax receipts, the CTC recently reported the need to cut approximately \$754 million in transportation projects, with further reductions a possibility later this year. The Transportation Conference Committee remains in session, although efforts to reach an agreement over new transportation revenues and reforms have stalled. Governor Jerry Brown, Senator Jim Beall (D-San Jose) and Assembly Member Jim Frazier (D-Oakley) have all introduced proposals that would raise significant new monies for the state and local transportation system. RCRC continues to support a solution to the transportation funding crisis and efforts through the California Fix Our Roads Coalition.

White House Hosts Water Summit

Tuesday's White House water summit had a California theme, with several state water districts and officials represented among the few hundred people who gathered in Washington to talk about how the United States should use water.

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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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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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