



**COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHTS
Friday, March 17, 2023**

ATTENDANCE

Members: Jacque Casillas (Chair); Holly Tillman (Vice Chair); Debbie Baker; Kimberly Calvin; Desrie Campbell; Cassandra Candini-Tilton; Ruben Chavez; David Claffey; Sara Cowell; Christine Engel; Eddie Flores; Peggy Flynn; Debra Garnes; Rachel Hernandez; Jay Ingram; Angela Ivey; Benjamin Jones; Eric Knight; Jenny Knisley; Karen Kong; Lydia Kou; James Kyriaco; Jessica Lobedan; Bridgette Moore; Rob Moore; Maria Nunez; Jason Nutt; Ian Ogelsby; Michael Ponce; Todd Rigby; David Shapiro; Michael Smith; Alysson Snow; Erica Stewart; Elizabeth Talbott; Holly Tillman; Rafael Trujillo; William Uphoff; Clint Weirick

Cal Cities Partners: Desiree Hauss; Brenda Narayan

Staff: Caroline Cirrincione, Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

I. Welcome and Introductions

President Ali Sajjad Taj, Council Member, Artesia, welcomed everyone to the second policy committee meeting of the year and thanked members for their service to all California cities. He explained that policy committees are vitally important and directly connected to Cal Cities' core mission of advocating for the common interests of cities.

President Taj then introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director and CEO. Ms. Coleman welcomed committee members and thanked them for their service to their cities and Cal Cities. She explained that the policy committee process is central to Cal Cities advocacy, ensuring it is member driven and represents the interests of cities across California. Ms. Coleman thanked committee members again for serving on the committees and wished them a great meeting.

Chair Casillas and Vice Chair Tillman welcomed committee members and introduced themselves.

II. Public Comment

Alysson Snow, Council Member, Lemon Grove, discussed remedies for fraudulent programs impacting seniors and suggested the Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs (PACE) Restitution Fund to help seniors stay in their homes.

III. General Briefing

Cal Cities staff provided a General Briefing of all policy areas, which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities, as detailed below. The Advocacy team's complete analysis of the [Governor's proposed budget for](#)

[2023-24](#) and the [2023 Advocacy Priorities](#) are available on the Cal Cities' website.

- **Community Services:** Securing ongoing funding to support cities' efforts to reduce homelessness continues to be a top priority for Cal Cities. This spring, the Legislature is hyper-focused on local "accountability" for state homelessness funding. Cal Cities is working diligently to ensure any new accountability measures do not limit local flexibility to address this critical issue. Cal Cities is also in strong support of Senator Eggman's [SB 43](#) and [SB 363](#), which would improve the state's behavioral health care system.
 - [Caroline Cirincione](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Environmental Quality:** Cal Cities continues to promote the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the natural environment, public health, and quality of life for all residents. Cal Cities is engaging with the author and affected stakeholders of [AB 1000 \(Reyes\)](#), which would require minimum setbacks and additional requirements for logistic centers, warehouses, and related infrastructure. Cal Cities is also working with our Coastal Cities Working Group on [SB 272 \(Laird\)](#).
 - [Nick Romo](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations:** Cal Cities is sponsoring two measures that aim to modernize the Brown Act: [AB 817 \(Pacheco\)](#) and [AB 557 \(Hart\)](#); and a measure that would reform council member pay: [SB 329 \(Dodds\)](#). Cal Cities is also opposing [SB 251 \(Newman\)](#), which would limit an elected officer from employment with another elected officer with the same constituencies.
 - [Johnnie Ping](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Housing, Community, and Economic Development:** Cal Cities continues to focus on our advocacy priority to increase the supply of and affordability of housing, while also maintaining local decision-making. Cal Cities opposes [SB 423 \(Wiener\)](#), which would expand SB 35 (Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) provisions and eliminate the January 1, 2026 sunset date.
 - [Jason Rhine](#), *Assistant Director, Legislative Affairs*
- **Public Safety:** As concerns about repeated retail theft continue to grow, Cal cities is sponsoring [AB 1708 \(Murtsuchi\)](#), which would increase accountability or repeat offenders and offer pathways for pre-plea diversion programming. During the February Board meeting, the Cal Cities Board of Directors approved a resolution to address the fentanyl overdose crisis in California. Cal Cities will support bills [AB 367 \(Mainschein\)](#) and [SB 44 \(Umberg\)](#), which would have great impacts on cities' ability to mitigate the fentanyl crisis.
 - [Elisa Arcidiacono](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Revenue and Taxation:** Cal Cities is committing to preserving existing local revenue streams and bolstering local fiscal sustainability. Cal Cities is sponsoring [AB 972 \(Maienschein\)](#), which would streamline the state grant application process for local governments so every community has the same opportunity to compete for funding. Cal Cities continues to strongly oppose the [California Business Roundtable ballot measure](#) that would restrict new or increased taxes and jeopardize local fiscal sustainability and is actively monitoring introduced legislation that would create new tax exemption programs that would reduce local tax revenues.

- [Ben Triffo](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Transportation, Communications, and Public Works:** Cal Cities is working with the Office of Broadband and digital Literacy within the California Department of Technology, to provide input towards the development of the State Digital Equity Plan to promote the Digital Equity Ecosystem Mapping tool for organizations throughout the state. Cal Cities is co-sponsoring [AB 400 \(Rubio\)](#) and [SB 706 \(Caballero\)](#). These measures are both related to the expanded use of design build and progressive design build delivery methods for public works projects.
 - [Damon Conklin](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*

IV. Update on Universal TK and State Preschool Funding

Sara Cortez, Senior Fiscal & Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), provided an overview and analysis of the Governor's budget proposals for transitional kindergarten (TK) and State Preschool programs.

She explained that the state has established a plan to gradually expand TK and, since FY 2021-22, has appropriated one-time funding for facilities, planning, and teachers. Ms. Cortez shared that the Governor's proposed January budget increases funding to implement TK expansion but delays funding planned for facilities. She explained the LAO believes that delaying this funding will not be a barrier to implementation as 75% of school districts report having adequate space to meet TK enrolment.

With regards to state preschool, Ms. Cortez explained that the Governor's proposed January budget increases funding for state preschools to, in part, serve more students with disabilities. She shared the LAO's comments that there are opportunities for savings and that the Legislature could reduce costs in State Preschool by \$196 million and maintain the program as it currently operates.

Following Ms. Cortez's presentation, committee members asked a number of questions regarding workforce, TK impacts on school districts, and family fee waivers.

V. Universal Prekindergarten Initiative Update

Stephen Propheter, Early Education Division, Division Director, California Department of Education, provided an update on the Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Initiative. He explained that the department is focused on transforming the education system to meet the needs of all children and set them up for success in learning and life.

Mr. Propheter explained UPK brings together TK and all existing state preschools and federal early education, private childcare, and expanded learning opportunities, including before and after school programs, into the same system. He then provided an update on Universal TK implementation, sharing that full implementation is expected between 2025-26, by which all children who turn four by September 1 will be eligible for universal TK.

Following Mr. Prophet's presentation, committee members asked several questions regarding workforce, partnering with local governments to support state preschool programs, and more.

VI. Legislative Agenda

[AB 963 \(Schiavo\)](#) The End of the Foster Care-to-Homelessness Pipeline Act.

Cal Cities staff presented AB 963 to the committee and gave a brief overview of the measure. Specifically, AB 963 would establish an unfunded loan guarantee program to provide security to qualified lenders financing the development and acquisition of housing for current and former foster youth ages 18 to 25. After this brief overview, committee members asked a number of clarifying questions. Ultimately, there was a motion and a second to support the bill. The motion to support passed 30-1.

[AB 1321 \(Bonta\)](#) California Coordinated Neighborhood and Community Services Grant Program.

Cal Cities staff presented AB 1321 to the committee and gave a brief overview of the measure. Specifically, AB 1321 would create a competitive grant program to implement a comprehensive, integrated continuum of cradle-to-career solutions at the neighborhood level. After this brief overview, committee members asked a number of clarifying questions. Ultimately, there was a motion and a second to support the bill. The motion to support passed 22-3-1.

VII. Homelessness Accountability Discussion

To facilitate this discussion, committee members were placed into small breakout rooms to discuss key questions related to accountability. These questions included:

1. What is the role of cities in addressing homelessness? How might those roles change in the future?
2. Should state homelessness funding be tied to benchmarks/targets established via a collaborative state-and-local process?
3. How can cities increase transparency/accountability to highlight all the great work cities are doing to address homelessness?

Following the breakout rooms, committee members reported to the group about their discussions. Members expressed an understanding of the need to pair funding and resources with reasonable accountability and transparency measures as long as the Legislature appropriates funding that matches the scale of this crisis and recognizes that successful program implementation and outcome reporting takes time.

VIII. Legislative Update

Cal Cities staff provided an update on the bills with positions in the community services portfolio. These measures included issues related to behavioral health, substance use, homelessness, outdoor access, and more. A list of Cal Cities position bills can be found [here](#).

IX. Committee Discussion and Feedback

At the end of the meeting, the committee had an open forum opportunity to share feedback about the flow of the meeting and how to ensure the best experience for everyone. Members provided positive feedback on the meeting flow, which will help to inform future meeting agendas.

X. Adjourn

Next Meeting: Friday, June 23, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Pomona (in-person)