



MENDOCINO COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Executive Office (707) 463-4441

TO: MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA
FR: MENDOCINO COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Ukiah, California... June 26, 2017

***MENDOCINO COUNTY WARNS ASSEMBLY BILL 1250 WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY ERODE
COUNTY'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE LOCAL SERVICES FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE***

Assembly Bill (AB) 1250 would impose a defacto ban on the County's ability to contract with community based organizations, nonprofits and private local businesses to provide services.

The County of Mendocino sent a letter to the Legislature signaling its strong opposition to Assembly Bill 1250 (Jones-Sawyer). AB 1250, at its core, seeks to stop counties from contracting with community based organizations (CBOs), nonprofits, local businesses and other private providers of quality local services that counties and their residents rely on. Counties contract with organizations and businesses that have the expertise, capacity or the ability to deliver services more efficiently.

AB 1250 has passed the Assembly and will be heard in the Senate Governance and Finance Committee on July 5, 2015.

Mendocino County Supervisor Carre Brown stated, "The constraints contained within AB 1250 will jeopardize our ability to provide vital health care, social services, mental health and public safety services for our County's most vulnerable. Mendocino County routinely contracts with a variety of local service providers, particularly in offering critical services to those in the community that are the most underserved and underprivileged. We cannot afford to further handicap our community partners in a way that reduces local services to those that need it the most."

Proponents of the bill claim it won't limit contracting with non-government groups, but the clear intent of AB 1250 is to prohibit these private contracts. The bill imposes significant new restrictions and layers of bureaucracy designed to stop counties from contracting for local services.

For instance, the bill requires CBOs, nonprofits and local businesses to disclose personal information about its employees and officers, including salary and other private information. This not only raises significant privacy concerns, but it will chill private sector's willingness to enter into contracts with counties to provide services. It also

requires contractors to disclose extensive information on a monthly basis. These auditing and review requirements could create unnecessary gaps and delays in service delivery that can pose detrimental outcomes for the people benefiting from these programs.

By restricting counties' abilities to provide services in the most cost-effective manner, AB 1250 will also increase costs for taxpayers and reduce funding available for other local services. For many fundamental programs, it will not be a matter of who will provide the service, but if they can even be offered at all.

Board of Supervisors Chair John McCowen added, "The role of local government is to determine the most effective way to deliver critical services in our communities. We do not need another one-size fits all Sacramento mandate that dictates how we govern our county or that impedes our ability to deliver high-quality and cost-effective services to local residents."

ENCLOSED: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AB 1250 OPPOSITION LETTER

Released by: 
Carmel J. Angelo
Chief Executive Officer



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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June 22, 2017

Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 1250 (Jones-Sawyer). Counties: Contracts for personal services.
OPPOSE – As amended May 30, 2017**

Dear Senator McGuire:

On behalf of the County of Mendocino we are writing to strongly urge you to OPPOSE AB 1250 (Jones-Sawyer). AB 1250 is an attack on services for the most vulnerable in Mendocino County and rural counties throughout the State of California.

The bill would impose a defacto prohibition on Mendocino County's ability to contract with non-profit agencies that are the licensed experts and community based organizations who deliver vital services to our residents and your constituents. The restrictions AB 1250 places on contracting for county services will jeopardize health care, social services, mental health and public safety services across your District.

For example in Mendocino County we contract for a number of critical services that we either do not have the expertise or the internal staffing capabilities or resources to provide in the most effective manner for our communities. In rural counties we face tremendous difficulty recruiting qualified staff to serve our vulnerable populations. Due to persistently high vacancy rates, particularly in health and human services job classifications, the County has been forced to contract for certain services to maintain a minimum level of care to the community. For instance:

- Mendocino County has been unable to hire a Public Health Officer since early 2010 and has only been able to fulfill this mandated requirement with a contractor.
- Mendocino County has been unable to hire a Chief Psychiatrist since 2011, requiring the County to contract out mandated services.
- Mendocino County similarly has been unable to maintain minimum staffing levels of Public Health Nurses, and is working to maintain mandated services through contracted nurses.
- Mendocino County has contracted out the majority of mental health services for the past several years, for a total of over \$15.4 million per year. The Board pursued this option due to verified cost savings of millions of dollars a year, and the inability to recruit and retain

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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qualified county employees. New requirements subjecting contractors to Public Records Act requests would potentially endanger family identities with a loss of confidentiality. The resulting loss of services due to the new requirements would result in children not only being removed from their home, but their community.

- Mendocino County contracts for fire and emergency medical services dispatch services (\$650,000), and medical care in the County jail and juvenile hall facilities (over \$2.5 million).
- Mendocino County's privatization of solid waste services saved the County approximately \$600,000 per year.
- Over \$1.7 million is contracted to local senior centers, family resource centers, and other non-profit agencies that provide critical support services to underprivileged seniors and children in Mendocino County, particularly those in remote areas. Increased administrative demands would result in cuts to services endangering children and youth.
- Mendocino County contracts out a variety of other services ranging from emergency shelters for children with special needs, housing and services for emancipated foster children, telepsychiatry services to remote areas of the County, wraparound services for special needs children and youth, residential care for behavioral health clients, housing and services for adults with disabilities, and CalFresh outreach services for school age children, to name a few. These current contracts total over \$3 million in services, mainly by small local non-profit agencies. A diversion of resources to ensure compliance, particularly in rural and geographically isolated areas of the county, will reduce the support and early intervention of underprivileged children and youth, leaving individuals endangered and in potentially inhumane circumstances, and extend the recovery time of our population most in need of treatment.
- Mendocino County initiates over 750 contracts each fiscal year, with approximately 120 of those contracts being over \$100,000.

By restricting our county's ability to provide services in the most cost-effective manner, AB 1250 will also increase costs for taxpayers and reduce funding available for other local services. For many vital programs, **it will not be a matter of who will provide the service but if they can even be offered at all.**

While the bill's stated intent is not to pass on or increase costs to the jurisdiction, it clearly will have that impact. Increased staff time needed for contract review and analysis, implementation of auditing and reporting requirements, and contractors passing through their increased costs back to the County **is estimated to cost between \$250,000 and \$500,000 per year to Mendocino County.** This increase in costs is unnecessary and burdensome, particularly when the intent of the bill appears focused solely on rural and disadvantaged populations like Mendocino County.

As we understand the current proposal before the committee, California's cities have been excluded from most requirements of the bill, which make up 83% of the states population. In addition we understand that there are currently proposed amendments to also exclude charter counties from the bill's requirements. **With all of these proposed amendments, AB 1250 would exclude local governments with 92.2% percent of California's population and would simply target small rural disadvantaged communities.** Mendocino and our fellow rural counties face significant challenges with limited funding, resources and persistent staffing shortages. Rural counties are also faced with the unique and difficult task of delivering services to residents in remote areas. Nearly all of Mendocino County is a designated disadvantaged community, with a desperate need for enhanced health care, social services, mental health services and public safety services. In order to meet the needs of our county, we rely heavily on local contractors to supplement county staffing and services.

This bill will be a burden on California rural counties like Mendocino, Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Trinity, Yolo and Yuba. In Mendocino, not only do we rely heavily on contracted services, we have limited organizations available to us to support critical health and safety programs. The additional requirements set forth in AB 1250, would make it increasingly difficult for them to do business with the County. We don't have the population or close proximity to a large urban or suburban area to find large organizations that might be able to absorb the additional burden for auditing and reporting. AB 1250 jeopardizes Mendocino County's ability to provide critical services to residents. This bill hurts Mendocino County, rural counties, rural small businesses, rural non-profits and the most vulnerable populations in rural communities.

Please protect services for the most vulnerable populations. **Mendocino County strongly urges you to vote no on AB 1250.**

Sincerely,



Chair John McCowen, District 2



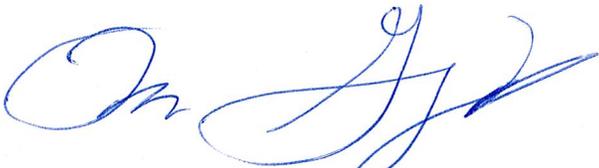
Vice Chair Dan Hamburg, District 5



Supervisor Carre Brown, District 1



Supervisor Georgeanne Croskey, District 3



Supervisor Dan Gjerde, District 4

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
Honorable Jim Wood, California State Assembly
Honorable Reggie Jones-Sawyer, California State Assembly
Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, California State Assembly
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California