

a METRO  CHAMBER production

# 2022 EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES



CA  
**CAP** — TO — **CAP**  
DC  
PRESENTED BY SUTTER HEALTH



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES 2022

In the Greater Sacramento Region, the strength of our business community is reflected in the strength of our advocacy efforts. For five decades, the Sacramento Metro Chamber has recognized that our business community, representing six counties and twenty-two cities, is stronger, together.

To maximize our collective impact, the Metro Chamber launched the annual Capitol-to-Capitol Program (Cap-to-Cap), taking business leaders, policy experts and elected officials to Washington, DC to propose policies that will benefit the

business community, drive economic growth, and improve the quality of life for California’s Capital Region. For years, our Cap-to-Cap program has been recognized as the largest regional chamber delegation that advocates nationally each year.

From April 30–May 4, the 2022 Cap-to-Cap delegation, represented through twelve policy teams, will collectively advocate on the most pressing policy needs in the region. Below, you will find summaries of those policies that will benefit our region for generations to come.

## CAP-TO-CAP PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

**Kierstan DeLong**

Edelman

2020–2022 Program Co-Chair

**Brian King, Ed.D**

Los Rios Community College District

2020–2022 Program Co-Chair

**Meghan Phillips**

Honey

2023 Program Chair

**Andrea Clark**

Downey Brand, LLP

2024 Program Chair

**Amanda Blackwood**

Sacramento Metro Chamber

President & CEO

**Bob Swanson**

Boutin Jones

Sacramento Metro Chamber Board Chair

## CAP-TO-CAP TEAMS

**Air Quality**

**Economic Development**

**Health Care**

**Transportation**

**Civic Amenities**

**Flood Protection**

**Land Use & Natural Resources**

**Water Resources**

**Community Resources**

**Food & Agriculture**

**Public Safety**

**Workforce & Education**

# 4-POINT BUSINESS PROMISE

For 127 years, the Sacramento Metro Chamber has planned for long term success – not for our chamber, but for business and the Greater Sacramento Region. Recognizing that economic growth depends on a Connected Region, Ready Workforce, Vibrant Community and Strong Business, the Metro Chamber Board of Directors adopted the 4-Point Business Promise, which strategically positions our region, and our businesses for long term success.

Every action and strategy executed by the Metro Chamber aligns with the 4-Point Business Promise. This is our guiding compass for ensuring that business, along with our region’s leaders, recognize the value in supporting business through strategic advocacy, partnerships, and flawless execution. Our promise to the Greater Sacramento Region is to align strategy and policy for the continued success of our region and for business.



metrochamber  
**4point**  
business promise

## **strongbusiness**

Provide regionwide technical assistance and direct advocacy to start, stabilize, and grow small, mid-sized and large business.

## **connectedregion**

Build authentic relationships, advance pro-business policy, and provide the platform for the community to engage through a variety of remote and in-person events.

## **readyworkforce**

Strengthen local talent recruitment and retention through data and research, direct advocacy and Metro Chamber Foundation strategic initiatives and programs.

## **vibrantcommunity**

Act as the leading voice in representing the business impacts of homelessness to improve public safety and spur economic vitality in the region.

# 2022 PRIORITY ISSUES

As the Sacramento Region’s leading advocate for business and economic prosperity, the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce has identified three critical focus areas for 2022 that center around infrastructure investment, forest health and wildfire mitigation, and COVID-19 recovery. These themes reflect a resilient regional economy, where after a public health pandemic, and devastating wildfires exacerbated by drought, the business community has come together to demonstrate robust economic growth amid recovery.

## **Infrastructure Investment**

The Sacramento Metro Chamber continues to advocate for federal investments in our transportation systems, water resources, flood protection infrastructure, and inclusive broadband access.

### **REQUESTED ACTIONS**

- Support the investment of federal funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into infrastructure projects within the Sacramento Region.
- Secure additional investments in critical water resource projects to ensure a sustainable water supply for the Sacramento Region that will provide benefits to all Californians.
- Identify additional support for flood protection projects in the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP). The SRFCP consists of approximately 980 miles of levees, in addition to overflow weirs, pumping plants, and bypass channels that

protect more than 2.3 million people within 50 communities, one million acres of land, and nearly \$38 billion worth of infrastructure.

- Continue to invest in broadband technologies and deploy to historically underserved communities. These investments will ensure that all communities have critical access to digital technologies, and new investments in broadband and high-speed network communications, will power cutting-edge industries of the future.
- Using federal funding streams to invest in the Sacramento Region’s system of roads, bridges, goods movement, public transit, human service transportation, intercity passenger rail, port, and aviation networks to protect past investments and advance future transportation innovations to address the demand for safe, efficient transportation.
- Continue investments in green fuel initiatives, including electrification, to modernize America’s fleets, reduce our dependence on oil, and improve air quality.

## Forest Health and Wildfire Mitigation

California's forests offer benefits to the water supply, ecosystem health, and carbon sequestration. Historical management practices of California's forests have contributed to explosive tinder during wildfires, an unfortunate annual occurrence that threatens California's headwaters and communities. To eliminate further destruction, threats of drought, and insect infestation, we desire to help the State and Federal government successfully implement the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2020 between the Federal Government and Governor Newsom. The following three principles are cornerstones to successful implementation:

- Mitigate wildfires through pre-fire work therefore reducing the long-term cost of catastrophic fire to the ecosystem, communities, and watersheds.
- In partnership with local government entities in California, identify the most pressing pre-fire treatment needs to protect communities and watersheds.
- Implement pre-fire stewardship projects at the local level as an established and efficient model for success throughout California.

## COVID-19 Response and Recovery

COVID-19 will have a long-lasting impact across the Sacramento region involving our health systems, educational institutions, commercial corridors, and small businesses.

Key objectives for COVID-19 Response and Recovery include:

- Acknowledge the role of our health care systems in addressing the pandemic and provide continued support as they navigate ongoing challenges resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Provide funding and additional resources for retraining and workforce development in light of recruitment and retention challenges in the workforce.
- Acknowledge the impacts to our educational institutions and provide resources to ensure student safety, mental well-being, and overall public health.

Over the last thirty years, the Capital Region’s public-private partners have collaborated to achieve significant strides towards cleaner air. However, the region still has not achieved state and federal health-based air quality standards. To meet these standards, federal investments in voluntary incentive programs, innovative and clean modes of transportation, forest resilience, biomass, rural broadband infrastructure, and continuing Environmental Protection Agency grants for state and local air agencies are required for cleaner air, creation of jobs, and driving economic growth.

## Wildfire and Forest Management

Decades of fire suppression, warmer average temperatures, extended drought, and inadequate vegetation management have contributed to more severe, and destructive fires. Climate change modeling predicts an acceleration of this trend. The federal government’s policies, programs, and funding need to support sustainable forest management at all stages to prevent the dislocation of thousands of people, strained state and federal resources, increased air pollution, impacted water supplies, and the entire offsetting of the state’s significant progress in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- We urge Congress and our federal agency partners to ensure that the U.S. Forest Service meets its commitment to treat 500,000 acres per year of its lands in California, meaningfully enabling 20-year Master Stewardship Agreements, expand the use of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between federal agencies and non-federal partners, improve the targeting and implementation of prescribed burns, streamline NEPA/CEQA approvals, and increase the use of biomass. We also support the development of “Clean Air Centers,” helping to deploy new monitoring technologies to key areas and enhancing eligibility for FEMA funding under a federal emergency declaration.
- We encourage post-fire recovery by enabling air districts and other local agencies to recoup extraordinary expenses associated with fires, streamlining the EPA’s use of “exceptional event” declarations, and incentivizing the use of biomass and other wood removal technologies to treat impacted areas.

## Mobility and Electrification

Transportation sector emissions are now the largest source of air and climate pollution in the Greater Sacramento Region. Exposure to hazardous vehicle emissions results in an elevated risk several times above the state average. The rise of zero-emission electric vehicles, automation, connectivity, and alternative mobility options allows reversing current trends. We seek support in securing bold and necessary investments in future-ready transportation systems that lower emissions, improve public health, and ensure equitable access to new mobility options.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Urge Congress and our federal agency partners to advance multimodal mobility through new funding programs, invest in the shift to clean transportation, and support innovative projects of regional significance like the California Mobility Center.
- Encourage continued support and adequate funding for grant and incentive programs, longer-term incentive programs to aid regional transportation-related emission reductions, to continue innovative voluntary measures for reducing pollution be funded, and other incentive-based funding solutions.

As the Sacramento Region emerges from pandemic induced social isolation and temporary closure of venues, contributing to the decline of large-scale events, a growing desire to experience arts, culture, and music is in high demand. To meet the growing demand to re-experience regional amenities, the Capital Region will highlight the relationship between live music, venues, and economic vitality.

## Business Nexus

As the Sacramento Region emerges from two years of Pandemic-related shutdowns and operational limitations that have slowed city events, residents and businesses alike are looking for ways to re-invigorate public spaces – and live music venues are at the top of that list. **This year, our team theme is “Live Music is LIFE!”** Join the Civic Amenities team as we explore the myriad ways live music creates and supports a region’s economic vitality, acts as a cultural compass, feeds placemaking, and contributes to a thriving sense of community. We will meet with the top venue owners and live music organizers in D.C. to learn how they are re-emerging from the pandemic, addressing business challenges, and navigating the new live music landscape. We will also explore how the official city of [‘Go-Go’](#) is making its live music scene go, developing and re-purposing facilities to support its vibrant music community.

## Background

### Growing and Nurturing a Vibrant Music Scene

The Civic Amenities team will meet with those that promote, organize, and market live music, including key players behind The Anthem and Howard Theatre. Since their opening, The Anthem has hosted a who’s who of live music fame; in 2018 it opened the Marquee Bar overlooking the waterfront at The Wharf, a comprehensive redevelopment of the Southwest Waterfront area. The historic Howard Theatre first opened in 1910 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Billed as the “Theatre of the People,” it was the first major theater built for African Americans in the U.S. The theater was restored to its former glory in 2010 and reopened in 2012. Our hosts in DC will share how they navigate through promotional, security, permitting, and other issues to uncover and nurture new and established musical artists. Representatives from the Downtown D.C. Business Improvement District are expected to join us and give valuable insights that will have direct application to a region ripe with venues to host live music. We will also meet with Donna Westmoreland, COO of I.M.P, the company that owns and operates the 9:30 Club, the Anthem and, Merriweather Post Pavilion, and Chip Ellis, developer, and owner of the Howard Theatre.

## Space is the Place

How much space does live music take? Sometimes live music looks like a stadium tour and other times it can be as small as one square of sidewalk. We will explore all the potential options by meeting with those that develop and repurpose facilities for expanded or new uses, to support and build vibrant musical civic amenities. During the tour, developers behind The Wharf will provide a peek into Union Stage, a new 7,500 square foot, 450-capacity music venue and events space along the waterfront. We’ll round out our space tour at the District’s new Entertainment and Sports Arena, a 4,200-seat multi-purpose concert and events facility, located on the St. Elizabeth’s East Campus and home to the Washington Mystics of the WNBA.

## The People Who Keep the Music Playing

The Civic Amenities Team will host an insightful panel discussion featuring an impressive group of movers and shakers from D.C. and Sacramento’s music and local government communities. You will hear viewpoints from live music promoters, business sponsors, D.C.’s events bureau, and governmental liaisons who are working to bolster financial and venue support for local and touring acts. The panel will discuss the regional force of live music, the facilities that make them fly, and the lasting economic and cultural impact venues have on our community.

It is in everyone’s best interest to end homelessness. The personal struggle for the individual or family in housing crisis, the larger community – businesses, neighborhoods, local government, and community organizations – feel the impact of limited shelter, resources, including providing access to critical health services.

In Sacramento, homelessness increased 19% between 2017 and 2019, and the ongoing pandemic places additional pressure on the entire region that without funding, will severely limit the community’s response to ending homelessness.

## Increase Funding and Flexibility to Fight Homelessness

Additional resources will be utilized to increase flexible housing assistance and develop homeless response systems to successfully plan and respond to an increasingly complex environment. In an era of extreme weather events, economic uncertainty, decreased housing affordability, and health disparity, accessibility for all federal funding is needed for communities to respond and adapt in efforts to end homelessness.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Support increase in funding for Homeless Assistance Grants to address the needs as renewal costs and inflation have eroded the impact of the program.
- Expand Continuum of Care (CoC) resources including Planning Grants funding to enable critical homeless response system-level improvements.
- Provide a separate funding competition like CoC Planning Grants for Coordinated Entry System operations, so that communities do not have to choose between direct services and ensuring the success this HUD mandated program.
- Expand flexibility and service funding like provisions in the Emergency Housing Voucher program to Housing Choice Vouchers and Housing Assistance Grants Program.
- Standardize flexibility across rental assistance programs to ensure Continuum of Care programs are equally competitive to other new programs and Housing Choice Vouchers

## Ending Homelessness – Housing Strategies

Home values in California have increased significantly over the past decade, bringing the affordability index for a median income family to below 50%. The median home prices are now at pre-financial crisis levels. Nearly 70% of very low-income families pay more than 50% of their monthly income in rent. Sacramento County is facing a 53,000 - unit shortfall, placing

low-income families at greatest risk of finding affordable housing, and therefore limiting the potential to recruit workforce to the region.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

Support affordable housing development and homeless service programs that help end homelessness for individuals and families every day. Given the growing population of homeless communities in California, any decrease or elimination of funding for critical programs intended to address homelessness will result in increasing the homeless population.

- \$90 billion to expand rental assistance, including \$75 billion for hundreds of thousands of new Housing Choice Vouchers.
- \$80 billion to public housing preservation, creation, energy and water efficiency, climate resiliency improvements, and the removal of health and safety hazards, including
  - \$37 billion for the National Housing Trust Fund;
  - \$35 billion for the HOME Program;
  - \$10 billion for the Capital Magnet Fund; and
  - \$2.75 billion for competitive grants to local governments and public housing authorities to address affordable housing needs and facilitate community development and revitalization.
- \$8.5 billion for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.
- \$7.5 billion for the creation of a Community Restoration and Revitalization Fund to provide competitive grants for projects that create civic infrastructure, create affordable and accessible housing, prevent displacement, remediate blight and create jobs.
- \$4.5 billion to establish the Unlocking Possibilities program to provide grants to improve housing and urban development strategies, streamline regulatory requirements, reform zoning codes, create fair housing, and improve livability.
- \$1 billion for fair housing activities and investigations.



- \$250 million to support state and local agencies that administer fair housing laws.
- \$10 billion for a First Generation Down-payment Fund to advance first generation home ownership

- \$500 million to establish the LIFT HOME Fund to offer mortgages to eligible home-buyers.
- \$100 million for a small-dollar mortgage demonstration program

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

connectedregion

Access to robust digital technologies contributes to the economic prosperity of the Greater Sacramento Region. Digital divides that currently exist in the region limit the acceleration of business growth in high-wage industries. Significant progress towards broadband deployment and full integration of digital inclusion has been made possible with the Greater Sacramento Region's Prosperity Strategy, however additional funding will ensure the rapid deployment of necessary technologies and serve as a model for innovation throughout the nation.

### Greater Sacramento Region Prosperity Strategy Initiatives

In 2020, community leaders adopted the Greater Sacramento Region Prosperity Strategy (Prosperity Strategy), which serves as the region's five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Funded and approved by the U. S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Prosperity Strategy has an inclusive economic development framework managed by a robust partnership of community organizations. EDA's investment ensures economic recovery, resilience, and supports several cluster-based initiatives that drive workforce development, infrastructure, broadband, digital skills, and the innovation ecosystem.

#### REQUESTED ACTIONS

Support Prosperity Strategy Initiatives, building upon existing EDA investments, to catalyze inclusive and equitable economic recovery, and accelerate business growth and job creation in high-wage industries, including manufacturing and resilient supply chains across all industry clusters.

- The **Plant@California** (Food and Agriculture) is a public-private partnership bringing together world-class industries in agriculture, food, health, technology, and biomanufacturing with university and innovation partners to slingshot innovations and inventions into widespread commercialization.
- **Aggie Square** (Life Sciences) is a 25-acre innovation zone located adjacent to a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This planned innovation hub will be home to research programs, private industry partners, classrooms, lab facilities, student housing, and public-facing programs that engage local communities and entrepreneurs.

- **The California Mobility Center (CMC)** (Future Mobility), established as an innovation hub for the global development of transportation technology, clean energy, and decarbonization, is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation recognized as tax-exempt under IRS 501(c) (3). The CMC is a public-private business partnership that provides qualifying, future mobility start-ups from around the world with a faster path to commercializing their products, services, and technologies in the California market and beyond.

### Broadband Infrastructure and Digital Inclusion

Greater Sacramento Regional leaders have documented the disproportionate impacts of the Digital Divide across all areas of the region affecting both unserved rural and urban households, agricultural operations, small, minority-owned, and economically disadvantaged businesses, and businesses in older downtowns and commercial/industrial areas. The pandemic exposed systemic digital disparities contributing to inequitable access to education, health care, essential services, civic life, and public safety. Furthermore, the lack of affordable access further increases the achievement gap for students and the future workforce.

#### REQUESTED ACTIONS

##### Broadband Infrastructure Deployment

- Recommend the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) set 100% broadband access and adoption goals and accept state and local broadband maps to supplement the current FCC maps.
- Prioritize funding for communities committed to rapid deployment.



- Enable local governments to apply for funds to create/improve GIS mapping.
- Support HR 5058 Broadband Incentives for Communities.
- Support California and the Greater Sacramento Region for fair share of federal funding.

#### **Broadband Access, Adoption and Digital Literacy**

- Address the “Device Divide.” Encourage the FCC to acknowledge the access to computing devices for low-income households, students and adults. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is requested to address the affordable computing device need in its adoption programs.
- Increase the marketing of Affordable Internet Programs and simplify the eligibility criteria. Require broadband deployment grantees, especially major Internet Service Providers (ISPs), to offer affordable low incomes plans and to advertise the plan, including the FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
- Expand the E-Rate Program for schools and libraries through the FCC to bring low-cost access to unconnected students and library patrons living close to schools and libraries in disadvantaged or unserved areas, and extend to community colleges, historically black universities or colleges, minority service universities or colleges, and tribal universities and colleges.

## **International Business**

International trade creates wealth and high-quality jobs. The global pandemic and “Trade Wars” of the past three years have highlighted the impact of global trade in our lives. Businesses and regions with diversified revenue streams, including export dollars, are more resilient and less vulnerable than those focused on domestic opportunities. It is not a question of whether there will be another economic cycle, but rather when will there be a correction and to what degree of severity?

### **REQUESTED ACTIONS**

- Address port issues and congestion.
- Renew and expand the Section 301 exclusion program.
- Reengage in the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).
- Timely negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with India.
- Timely negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with the UK.
- Increase market access for US agricultural exports.

There is a continued need for federal investment to mitigate the Sacramento region’s flood risk. Through flood reduction infrastructure along with streamlined processes for local-led improvements, these critical steps will reduce life safety risk, protect tens of billions of dollars of existing infrastructure, and support economic growth. To support mitigating risk, changing FEMA’s implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) will be essential to support California’s agricultural industry, drive the economy and provide food for the country.

## Modernize FEMA’s National Flood Insurance Program for Agriculture

California’s Sacramento Region is surrounded by agricultural lands that are protected by levee systems. Agriculture is a huge economic driver for the Country, and essential from a national security perspective. Yet the requirements of the NFIP are interfering with the sustainability of this vital economic driver.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

Include provisions in the reauthorization of the NFIP which ease the requirements of the NFIP associated with agriculture:

- Allow umbrella policies where a farmer could bundle multiple low-value agricultural structures under a single policy.
- Allow limited construction of new agricultural structures in a floodplain when elevation or floodproofing is not practicable.

## Infrastructure Investments to Reduce Flood Risk in California’s Capital Region

California’s capital region lies at the confluence of two major rivers, a watershed totaling 26,000-square miles. During winter storm events, runoff from this large watershed rushes past this region, often surging dangerously close to flood stage, threatening the capitol, surrounding cities, towns, and communities. Reducing this flood risk is critical to the social and economic stability of our region and will only be achieved through a streamlined process of improving the existing levee, bypass, and water conveyance system.

### REQUESTED ACTION

- To support additional FY 2022 workplan construction funding for the West Sacramento Project and additional funding for the Programmatic 408
- To support the following provisions in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2022: authorization for the Lower Cache Creek feasibility study; reauthorization for cost increase for the Yuba River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project – Phase 3 Marysville Ring Levee; and to deauthorize a portion of the American River Common Features - WRDA 16 project at American River North Levee Upstream of Arden Way
- To support funding in FY 2023 to initiate three feasibility studies, to continue design and construction of ongoing projects, and additional funding for the Section 408 Regulatory program.

The food and agriculture sector of the Greater Sacramento Region is comprised of an estimated 55,000 workers who generate more than \$12.2 billion in direct economic impact. The sustainability of the industry is in jeopardy due to a shortage of skilled workforce. Regional investments and additions to the Farm Bill of 2023, will increase California's agricultural economy and the workforce, while strengthening the region's food supply chain.

## Ag Tech Workforce

The sustainability of our Food and Ag Industry is in jeopardy as the availability of a skilled workforce is in short supply. Due to recent advances in automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and related technologies, the need to incorporate digital skills in agrifood-tech is also imperative for our food and ag economy. A digitally trained, skilled workforce will strengthen the region's food supply chain and sustainable economic growth, which continues to recover from pandemic induced disruptions.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Increase the funding of the USDA Beginning Farmers & Ranchers Development Program (BFRDP) and Section 2501 (Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program), under the umbrella Of the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach (FOTO) program, which will reach its authorized \$50M funding level in 2023, split equally between SFRDP and Section 2501.
- Fund the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach (FOTO) Program to its authorized \$50 million funding level in 2023. This funding was appropriated in the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and must be made permanent.
- Support Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Funding increases over 2021 levels as proposed in the President's Budget Request. Specifically, in support of Title I; Adult Employment and Training Services, Youth Workforce Investment Activities, and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services and Apprenticeship Programs.
- Support H.R. 1603: Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021 to help achieve an earned legal status for Certified Agricultural Workers and improve the H-2A program.
- Support SB 486 & HR 2361: Rebuild Rural America Act to modernize infrastructure and expand investment to support local and regional food systems, sustainable agriculture production, and value-added agricultural industries. SB486 & HR 2361 will also ensure economic opportunities that create pathways to high-quality, family-sustaining jobs for all individuals in rural areas of the United States.

## Farm Bill 2023

As the largest agricultural producer and exporter in the nation, California generates an economic impact of more than \$12.5 billion, with every on-farm job-generating two off-farm jobs. The food and ag economy remains under severe stress due to the increasing impact of: market conditions (commodity prices); climate change variables (water insecurity, wildfires, and changing weather patterns); regulatory oversight (pesticide management, environmental compliance); and labor constraints (immigration and changing workforce needs).

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Support Workforce Funding levels in the American Jobs Plan for WIOA and fully fund beyond its FY 2020 authorized levels, including for job training, skills development, industry-based sector partnerships, career pathways and apprenticeships.
- Enhance the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides approximately 41.5 million Americans and nearly 4.5 million Californians with assistance purchasing food, with more than half of them, children and seniors. SNAP (CalFresh in California) addresses hunger and health status and is one of the most important federal programs addressing food insecurity.
  - Continue safeguarding proven successful marketing and trade programs included in the Farm Bill to ensure an equitable marketplace for the nation's farmers and ranchers. This is especially important for California and regional specialty crop producers.
  - Through the Farm Bill, make a vested effort to recruit and develop a new generation of farmers and ranchers and continue to provide incentives, outreach, and technical assistance to those who have not historically taken up farming as an occupation or lack the resources to start their own operations.
  - Increase the emphasis on and prioritization of new technologies for the mechanization of farming, from planting to harvest and post-harvest. Ensure broadband infrastructure investment to reach unserved/underserved rural communities and businesses, regardless of meeting the formal "definition of rural."

- Provide a stronger safety net against those unexpected problems with an effective crop insurance program, including improving the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Program to cover higher costs of production for California producers.
- Enhance stewardship contracting authority to 20 years in areas where wood supply flow is being provided to maintain or enhance milling infrastructure. Additionally, a portion of all gross receipts from stewardship contracts should go to the counties. Ensure that any remaining revenue be made available to prepare future projects.
- Clarify and prioritize the definition of “rural.” With a proper and consistent definition, like “Rural in Character,” which is currently used across program entities for funding eligibility, allocated funding will be directed to rural communities that are most in need. California is historically locked out of many critical funding sources, including USDA broadband funding, due to “Rural Definition.”
- Align waivers for the SNAP program with existing regulations for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to support guaranteed income programs.
- Combine the application process and delivery of WIC, SNAP (CalFresh), and Free and Subsidized School Lunch Programs.
- Provide reliable dedicated funding to certified Food Banks, with incentives for local food sources and to employ food insecure workers.
- Provide resources for innovative community feeding programs such as Family Meal and Great Plates that were led by and partner with independent restaurants to provide meals to vulnerable members of the community.
- Continue and expand funding for programs that leverage SNAP benefits to make healthy food choices, such as the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).
- Support Nutrition Education, including the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) at \$75.6 million and the Supplementation Nutrition Assistance Program Education – SNAP-Ed at \$900 million.

## Food System Resiliency and Institutional Procurement

The Greater Sacramento Region continues to experience persistent levels of food insecurity, lack of access to healthy affordable foods, and lack of equitable access to economic opportunities, all exacerbated by the pandemic. The 2021 Sacramento Region Food System Action Plan identified priorities to accelerate economic recovery and increase the resiliency of the regional food system. Priorities include investing to strengthen institutional procurement; reduce food and nutrition insecurity, remove barriers to federal programs; and expand the food system infrastructure.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Allow school districts the option of selecting Cash in Lieu of Commodities for use in the National School Lunch Program, an option that requires United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approval.
- Support development of food system infrastructure such as food hubs, central kitchens, and other facilities and equipment to increase opportunities for farm to institution procurement and increase economic benefit to local growers and the food and ag economy.
- Extend the 15% SNAP benefit increase.
- Make permanent the SNAP eligibility rules for higher education low-income students in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, simplifying eligibility.

The pandemic eliminated non-emergency surgeries affording regional health and system opportunities to proactively respond to the public health emergencies caused by COVID-19. Investments in community-based organizations resulted in the delivery of food to homebound individuals, the development of a centralized referral hub, and housing individuals in most need of shelter. Furthermore, collaboration mobilized resources to support the broader community and most vulnerable populations through community health clinics, increased vaccine capacity and capabilities and county-wide vaccination education efforts.

### Facing COVID-19 as a Community

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite a rapidly changing environment, and the elimination of non-emergency surgeries, hospitals, the health systems, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and other providers came together immediately responding to the public health emergency to assist some of the most vulnerable among us. The region's health care sector has played a significant role in improving the overall health of the community for decades and continues to do so even at the forefront of the pandemic.

### The Impact of COVID-19 on Health Care

America's hospitals, health systems, clinics and other health care providers have always been on the frontlines caring for patients. COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations put intense pressure on health care providers and continue with the unpredictability of new variants and related increases in cases. The pandemic has caused not only a severe financial burden on the entire health care system, but also placed intense pressure on the mental health and physical well-being of health care workers.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Support patient access to care by extending the current telehealth waivers beyond the period of the public health emergency to allow for collection of data and development of permanent policy for FFS and Medicare Advantage beneficiaries.
  - Delay the phased implementation of the Medicare sequestration cuts and create stability in Medicare reimbursements and Medicare Advantage plans so providers can maintain focus on managing the pandemic.
  - Consider a longer repayment period for Medicare Advanced and Accelerated Payments.
  - Support legislation that assists with the mental health needs of health care providers.
  - Support the technical fix to the Public Service Student Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF).
  - Support legislation that increases Medicare-supported Graduate Medical Education (GME) slots and our nations nursing schools and faculty so that those willing to enter the health care profession have a place to do so.
  - Support health care workforce development programs, like HRSA Title VII programs.
- The Provider Relief Fund (PRF) has been essential to providers remaining financially viable during these unprecedented times. However, the PRF only covers expenses and lost revenues through March 2020, before the delta and omicron surges. Providers need additional assistance and ask Congress to urge HHS to immediately expedite distribution of the remaining PRF dollars and replenish the nearly \$17 billion that was diverted away from providers to other agency pandemic efforts.

As one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States, the Greater Sacramento Region offers a high quality of life and affordable housing. However, the Army Corps of Engineers’ wetland permitting process limits future growth. Recently, two large landscape-level Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) have been approved with aquatic mitigation features: the South Sacramento HCP and the Placer County Conservation Plan. Despite initial success, further refinement is needed in the 404-permitting program under the Clean Water Act.

**Waters of the US Exemptions**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

- The Biden Administration, through EPA, is issuing new regulations governing what is covered as a “water of the U.S.” requiring mitigation. Some critical exemptions that have been recognized by both Democratic and Republican Administrations must continue.

**United States Army Corps of Engineers Staffing**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

- The approval of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will only place additional workforce burdens on the local Corps staff as major infrastructure enhancements are vigorously implemented. The IIJA authorized \$160 million in funding for additional Army Corps staffing over five years, but this funding should be immediately directed to the local districts so additional hiring can commence to keep up with federal infrastructure investment.

**Private Payment for Expediting Corps Permitting**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

- Federal law now allows public agencies to pay for expedited permitting and staffing from the Army Corps to issue their Clean Water Act 404 permits. Consideration should be given to allow the private sector to fund such Corps staffing as is currently allowed for public sector agencies either directly or through one of the region’s several Habitat Conservation Plans.

**Wetland Bank Credit Amounts**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

- Army Corps Headquarters allows the Corps to accept/ recognize up to 25% of credits from newly approved wetland banks that have yet to be fully built, yet current informal policy in California is to only allow the first phase of banks to sell 15%. Urge the Army Corps Regional Office in California to increase their informal policy from 15% to 20% of mitigation bank credits to be sold and recognized by the Army Corps in the first phase of credits.

**Flexibility in Wetland Mitigation**

**REQUESTED ACTION**

- Current Army Corps regulations require applicants to identify specific mitigation bank credits that are often unavailable once a project commences. Considerations should be given to allowing applicants/landowners to offer multiple flexible pathways to achieve mitigation compliance that can increase certainty to the process.

Federal funding streams assist Sacramento regional local law enforcement agencies in upgrading systems and equipment. A Next Generation 9-1-1 federal grant is also needed to allow public safety agencies to match modern communication methods. The use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) has increased in recent years among the public, however federal law does not permit local law enforcement agencies to enforce violations or detain operators. We ask that the federal government help local agencies tackle local challenges without outdated roadblocks.

## Regional Federal Programs

Businesses benefit when communities are vibrant, healthy, and safe. Ensuring the safety of Sacramento business owners, residents and visitors is a top priority for Public Safety agencies in the Sacramento Region which rely on federal programs and strong federal-state-local partnerships for training, equipping, and education of public safety personnel to better serve its citizens.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Advocate for the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) to help communities identify and close gaps in Housing, Logistics, and Supply Chain Management.
- Fund the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program at \$1 billion, and advocate for the expansion of program principles to include mitigation of risks posed by all hazards, not exclusively natural hazards.
- Fund the Assistance to Firefighter Grant Programs at a total of \$1 billion, including \$414 million in Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grants, \$560 million in Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants, and \$46 million in Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grants; and support the regional fire grant applications submitted to FEMA.
- Support full funding for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP).
- Fund the Urban Search and Rescue Program at \$50 million.
- Support full funding for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program and changes to the program that allows the FBI to transmit threat data to DHS for accurate threat risk assessments.
- Provide full funding for the COPS Hiring Grant Program and support regional grant applications.

## Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911)

Sacramento urges Congress to create a federal grant program to assist local governments in implementing NG911 projects and appropriate \$470 million in assistance to local governments

to modernize 911 infrastructure. With the high utilization of digital and mobile devices, the way most people communicate has drastically changed in the last twenty years. Implementing NG911 will leverage available technology to build on previous federal investments and have a profound impact on the country's ability to prepare, protect, and respond to emergencies by improving response times, enhancing the safety of the public and first responders, and increasing community resiliency.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Appropriate \$470 million in funding for the implementation of NG911 projects.
- Advocate for federal financial assistance made available under a new NG911 grant program to be administered directly to local government agencies in recognition that there are regional variables and considerations in the implementation of NG911 projects and, as such, local government agencies are best suited to make appropriate use of the funding to meet program goals in their regions.

## Public Safety Technology: Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Emerging technology has the capability of drastically improving safety for first responders and the public alike, but the laws have not evolved as fast as these technologies. Specific to drone technology, non-government operators are increasingly using UAS overhead of mass gatherings and emergency events, further jeopardizing public safety and emergency operations. In such cases, local public safety agencies should be given the authority to ground these UAS for the safety of the public.

### REQUESTED ACTION

- Request that non-federal public safety agencies be given the lawful authority to contact and detain operators and pilots for violations of CFR14 Part 107. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has jurisdiction over the National Airspace and current state and local agencies are unable to enforce violations of this section.



Sacramento's regional economy relies on the movement of goods between farms, manufacturing plants, airports, businesses, and homes across the nation and world. With the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Greater Sacramento Region is positioned to leverage federal investments in transportation infrastructure over the next decade. An infrastructure investment allows the Sacramento Region to complete projects essential to the megaregion, including highway expansions, additions to existing passenger rail services, zero-emission transportation and the use of low-carbon fuels.

## Transportation Funding and Policy Priorities

The Sacramento Region's relies on major interstate freeways, passenger, and cargo airports, freight, and passenger rail lines, light rail, an inland port, transit systems, and human service transportation programs. A key player in the national economy, the region requires a multi-modal transportation system that balances freeway, street, rail, air, and transit to move goods, services, and people throughout. Federal support to further strengthen the Sacramento Region's goods movement infrastructure will pay dividends in fostering economic growth.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Support federal funding for Sacramento Region priority projects which have strong local support and are critical to regional and national economic interests. Priority projects for the mega-region include:
  - I-80 and U.S. 50 Yolo Express Lanes
  - ACE: Valley Rail Extension to Sacramento
  - Capitol Corridor: Sacramento-Roseville Third Track
  - I-5 Sacramento Express Lanes
- Implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law thoughtfully while expeditiously implementing regulations and programs.
- Continue the commitment to funding all modes of transportation, particularly transit services which benefit both urban and rural communities.
- Identify sustainable transportation funding sources.

A reliable, quality water supply is key to the continued economic expansion of California, the North State, and the Sacramento Region. Meeting the region's current and future water needs will require continued investment in diversified and interconnected water infrastructure (surface water, recycled water, and groundwater), augmented forestry and upper watershed management, coupled with cooperative voluntary efforts to continue good stewardship of the American, Feather and Sacramento Rivers by local agencies and other stakeholders.

## REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Fund the Sacramento Regional Water Bank, specifically \$30 million in FY23 funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Western Water Storage program. The Water Bank has received USBR WIIN Act funding previously and is considered a grandfathered project. Also needed is federal acknowledgment by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and funding to build out the infrastructure and governance of the Water Bank through other various water resource programs within the Bureau of Reclamation and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Support and fund the plan to build the RiverArc project through various water resource and climate adaptation programs within the Bureau of Reclamation and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Continue federal support and funding for the construction and planning of Sites Reservoir from the Environmental Protection Agency's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) and the Bureau of Reclamation's Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIN).
- Federal support for the Voluntary Agreements from both the Biden Administration and Congress will be critical to its success. Specifically, to resolve the litigation between the federal government, State of California, public water agencies, and NGOs regarding the Incidental Take Permit and the Biological Opinion.
- Add a new Temperature Control Device at Folsom Dam to help the region maintain its water supply now and into the future. The Temperature Control Device is already an authorized project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and will need additional appropriations.
- The Federal government should provide funding for abatement and treatment of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) to protect public health and ensure that local ratepayers are not responsible for funding the clean-up of contamination caused by the U.S. Air Force or other parties.

For the Sacramento Region, continued federal programs and funding are necessary to increase the quality of pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) education, higher education, and to enhance the region's workforce development to maintain a strong business community. Pre-K-12 education is a direct influencer of economic growth and provides social benefits which help retain a ready workforce. Higher education is essential to the Sacramento Region's success and increasing the number of college-educated adults grows our economy and attracts private sector investment.

## Pre-K-12 Education

The economic growth of any region is directly related to the strength of its education system and its ability to retain and attract a ready workforce. Education can enhance quality of life and produce extensive social benefits for society and its people. A substantial investment in education promotes productivity, creativity, and plays a crucial role in securing economic and social progress.

Pre-K-12 education leaders across the Sacramento region are urging Members of Congress and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to adopt thoughtful legislation that complements our efforts to support the success of every child from cradle to career.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Provide full and fair funding to support Special Education programs.
- Provide supplemental funding and support for public pre-K-12 schools related to the health, economic and educational challenges of COVID-19.
- Grant a waiver to California to adopt higher income thresholds for working families to be eligible for Head Start.
- Provide the necessary resources to improve student support services, mental and behavioral health, and school safety.
- Increase funding to modernize and repair schools to bring them into the 21st Century.
- Reauthorize Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and adopt guidance for safe and inclusive schools.

## Higher Education

Across the Sacramento Region, institutions of higher education and the businesses community are united in their belief that an increase in the number of college-educated adults is needed to grow our economy and attract private sector investment. Area leaders have mobilized behind a goal to ensure that 60% of working-age adults in the Sacramento Region have a diploma, industry-recognized certificate, or college degree by 2030.

### REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Double the maximum Pell Grant to \$13,000, expand Pell Grant Eligibility to students whose families have an income of up to at least \$100,000 and index it to inflation, and allow for realistic adjustments to Pell income protection allowance based on regional costs of living.
- Keep the Pell Grant program surplus in the Pell Grant program, extend Pell Grant eligibility to Dreamers, as well as to incarcerated students, and allow graduate students to use Pell Grant eligibility that remains from their undergraduate education.
- Fund the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) program at \$1.028 billion.
- By 2024, double the Federal Work-Study Program to \$2.5 billion and allow funds to be used for student positions in research laboratories and other research opportunities.
- Fund Title V, Parts A, and B of the Hispanic-Serving Institutions program at \$266 million.
- Fund the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions program at (or above) \$20 million.
- Fund GEAR Up at \$408 million.
- Fund TRIO at \$1.28 billion.
- Fund pilot programs and long-term student success and degree completion efforts.

- Strengthen the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet students' true needs.
- Reintroduce and pass the Basic Assistance for Students in College (BASIC Act).
- Support debt reduction or debt reset programs that enable adults with some college credits, but no degree, to return and complete their studies.
- Fund programs that support student parents.
- Support efforts to standardize definitions of alternative credentials.

## Workforce Priorities

In California, 47% of jobs require skills training, and employers report that many jobs remain difficult to fill, without a well-trained workforce. Currently, 3 out of 5 jobs require skills training, suggesting that the national economy faces a serious skills gap.

Workforce development organizations across the Sacramento region urge Congress to adopt legislation that enhances funding for Career and Technical Education Programs, in order to meet the training and hiring needs of the Greater Sacramento Region.

## REQUESTED ACTIONS

- Increase funding to \$105 million for the Strengthening Community College Training Grants program administered by the Department of Labor.
- Empower states and Career Technical Education (CTE) educators to effectively implement high-quality CTE programs, by increasing funding for the Perkins Basic State Grant program in FY 2022 as part of a campaign to double the investment in CTE.
- Establish Energy as a National Career Cluster.
- Expand grants to states to fund local programs of adult education and workplace literacy.
- Reauthorize and reinvest in WIOA at a level that meets current and projected demands.
- Include two key pieces of legislation in the America COMPETES Act: The JOBS Act (S. 864/H.R. 2037) and the College Transparency Act (S. 839/H.R. 2030).
- To realize the full promise of the IIJA investment, place a high priority on workforce investment that provides rapid training, upskilling, and reskilling to bring workers onto the job, remove regulatory barriers and commit to formal 7-12 Career Exploration programs.

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