CALAFCO 2011 Legislative Policies

Adopted by Board of Directors on 18 February 2011

1. LAFCo Purpose and Authority

1.1. Support legislation which enhances LAFCo authority and powers to carry out the legislative findings and authority in Government Code §56000 et. seq.

1.2. Support authority for each LAFCo to establish local policies to apply Government Code §56000 et. seq. based on local needs and conditions, and oppose any limitations to that authority.

1.3. Oppose additional LAFCo responsibilities which require expansion of current local funding sources. Oppose unrelated responsibilities which dilute LAFCo ability to meet its primary mission.

1.4. Support alignment of responsibilities and authority of LAFCo and regional agencies which may have overlapping responsibilities in orderly growth, preservation, and service delivery, and oppose legislation or policies which create conflicts or hamper those responsibilities.

1.5. Oppose grants of special status to any individual agency or proposal to circumvent the LAFCo process.

1.6. Support individual commissioner responsibility that allows each commissioner to independently vote his or her conscience on issues affecting his or her own jurisdiction.

2. LAFCo Organization

2.1. Support the independence of LAFCo from local agencies.

2.2. Oppose the re-composition of any or all LAFCos without respect to the existing balance of powers that has evolved within each commission or the creation of special seats on a LAFCo.

2.3. Support representation of special districts on all LAFCos in counties with independent districts and oppose removal of special districts from any LAFCo.

2.4. Support communication and collaborative decision-making among neighboring LAFCos when growth pressures and multicounty agencies extend beyond a LAFCo's boundaries.

3. Agricultural and Open Space Protection

3.1. Support legislation which clarifies LAFCo authority to identify, encourage and insure the preservation of agricultural and open space lands.

3.2. Encourage a consistent definition of agricultural and open space lands.

3.3. Support policies which encourage cities, counties and special districts to direct development away from prime agricultural lands.

3.4. Support policies and tools which protect prime agricultural and open space lands.

4. Orderly Growth

4.1. Support the recognition and use of spheres of influence as the management tool to provide better planning of growth and development, and to preserve agricultural, and open space lands.

4.2. Support adoption of LAFCo spheres of influence by other agencies involved in determining and developing long-term growth and infrastructure plans.

4.3. Support orderly boundaries of local agencies and the elimination of islands within the boundaries of agencies.

4.4. Support communication between cities, counties, and special districts

through a collaborative process that resolves service, housing, land use, and fiscal issues prior to application to LAFCo.

4.5. Support cooperation between counties and cities on decisions related to development within the city's designated sphere of influence.

5. Service Delivery and Local Agency Effectiveness

5.1. Support the use of LAFCo resources to prepare and review Regional Transportation Plans and other growth plans to ensure reliable services, orderly growth, sustainable communities, and conformity with LAFCo's legislative mandates.

5.2. Support LAFCo authority and tools which provide communities with local governance and efficient service delivery options, including the authority to impose conditions that assure a proposal's conformity with LAFCo's legislative mandates.

5.3. Support the creation or reorganization of local governments in a deliberative, open process which will fairly evaluate the proposed agency's long-term financial viability, governance structure and ability to efficiently deliver proposed services.

5.4. Support the availability of tools for LAFCo to insure equitable distribution of revenues to local government agencies consistent with their service delivery responsibilities.

2011 Legislative Priorities

Primary Issues

Viability of Local Governments	Support legislation that maintains or enhances LAFCo's ability to review and act to assure the efficient and sustainable delivery of local services and the financial viability of agencies providing those services to meet current and future needs. Support legislation which provides LAFCo and local communities with options for local governance and service delivery, including incorporation as a city or formation as a special district. Support efforts which provide tools to local agencies to address fiscal challenges and maintain services.
Authority of LAFCo	Support legislation that maintains or enhances LAFCo's authority to condition proposals to address any or all financial, growth, service delivery, and agricultural and open space preservation issues.
Agriculture and Open Space Protection	Preservation of prime agriculture and open space lands that maintain the quality of life in California. Support policies that recognize LAFCo's ability to protect and mitigate the loss of prime agricultural and open space lands, and that encourage other agencies to coordinate with local LAFCos on land preservation and orderly growth.
Water Availability	Promote adequate water supplies and infrastructure planning for current and planned growth. Support policies that assist LAFCo in obtaining accurate and reliable water supply information to evaluate current and cumulative water demands for service expansions and boundary changes including impacts of expanding private and mutual water company service areas on orderly growth.

Issues of Interest

Housing	Provision of territory and services to support affordable housing and the consistency of regional land use plans with local LAFCo policies.
Transportation	Effects of Regional Transportation Plans and expansion of transportation systems on future urban growth and service delivery needs, and the ability of local agencies to provide those services.
Flood Control	The ability and effectiveness of local agencies to maintain and improve levees and the public safety of uninhabited territory proposed for annexation to urban areas which is at risk for flooding. Support legislation that includes assessment of agency viability in decisions involving new funds for levee repair.
Adequate Municipal Services in Inhabited Territory	Expedited processes for inhabited annexations should be consistent with LAFCo law and be fiscally viable. Funding sources should be identified for extension of municipal services to underserved inhabited communities, including option for annexation of contiguous disadvantaged unincorporated communities.