

# POSITION PAPERS & ADDENDUMS

(REVISED JANUARY 5, 2004~ CONTAINS ONLY 2003)

## **Joint Chamber's Commission of El Dorado County Position Statement - THE CALIFORNIA WILD HERITAGE ACT OF 2003 - S. 1555**

The El Dorado County Joint Chamber's Commission has taken the position of 'Oppose Unless Amended' on The California Wild Heritage Act of 2003 introduced by U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer. In its current form, Joint Chamber's believes the California Wild Heritage Act of 2003 may jeopardize forest environments, inhibit the Forest Service from meeting recreational demands and significantly harm local economies. It is vital that this Act be carefully evaluated for negative long-term impact on rural communities.

The Joint Chamber's suggests the following criteria for determinations of limited use designations proposed in the California Wild Heritage Act of 2003.

- 1. Local governments must support designations.** Local governments are representative of local citizens, charged in part with the responsibility of providing for the general welfare of the citizens. Local citizens have the greatest impact from wildfire and economic losses. Local government officials are an invaluable resource for evaluating the need for additional primitive land uses according to the following listed criteria.

Only areas supported by local governments should be included in the Act. The Boards of Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Lake, Mariposa, Plumas, San Bernardino, Shasta and Trinity Counties unanimously oppose additional wilderness or Wild and Scenic River designations within their counties; Alpine and Lake Counties reserving the right to support a portion of Noble Canyon, Snow Mountain, Yuki Mountain and Sanhedrin Mountain. San Bernardino County conditionally supports designation of Deep Creek as a Wild and Scenic River. The Boards of Butte and Inyo counties have requested additional information before considering support for the California Wild Heritage Act of 2003. The North Fork of the American River, Duncan Canyon and the Granite Chief Wilderness all within Placer County are the only areas to receive unanimous support from the County Boards of Supervisors but information to date indicates the Board has yet to support the Act.

- 2. The exclusive use of fire must be capable of preserving and protecting the landscape's natural features in perpetuity.** Prescribed and natural fire maintained the landscapes for thousands of years until the late 1800's. Today, the artificial vegetative density of most of the federal lands, combined with tighter air quality standards, prevents fire from being widely used. Inclusion of the 1964 Wilderness Act provision that permits necessary measures for the control and prevention of fire, insects and diseases creates a false expectation that other methods to preserve and protect will be permitted.

Today's wildfire explosion exemplifies the need to actively safeguard forested areas. Justification for mechanized fuels treatment is increasingly difficult in general forests and may never be a priority for designated wilderness. Therefore, areas being designated in this legislation must be first evaluated for conditions that permit re-introduction of fire. Where conditions preclude re-introduction of fire, areas must be pre-treated prior to designation. Additionally, the total area being designated when combined with existing designations cannot exceed the total acreage that can realistically be treated by fire given budget challenges and air quality standards.

- 3. Designations must be consistent with historical and present uses.** The designations prescribed in this legislation limit uses to non-motorized. Prohibitions include motor vehicles such as snowmobiles, motor homes, and off-highway vehicles, and motorized equipment such as chainsaws and mountain bikes. Additionally, commercial enterprises

are prohibited along with roads (both temporary and permanent) and structures. New land use designations should not preclude historical and present uses. RCRC believes conflicting historical and present uses, where they exist, should be exempted in this legislation.

4. **Designations must contribute to the future anticipated demand for national forest uses.** Recreational activities have been the fastest growing uses of national forests and remain a principal and growing use. Since 1950, recreational visitors have increased from 69 million to nearly 800 million within the Sierra Nevada national forests. This activity must be reflected in land use decisions.

The designations proposed in this legislation will reduce the opportunities for developed camping, and vehicular activities, placing more concentrated use on the remaining facilities. Future needs for utility corridors and cell-phone towers must also be considered, as must future water development and storage potential.

5. **A balance of multiple uses must be maintained within reasonable geographic vicinity.** The American public is diverse as is their expectation of national forest usage. The public is best served where a diversity of recreational and commercial opportunities are offered within reasonable driving distances. Rural economies are stabilized through diversified resource uses. Areas proposed in this legislation must be evaluated in terms of providing geographically diversified uses of the natural resources.

The Act also includes annual appropriations for land acquisitions and agency authority to designate acquired lands as wilderness without Congressional approval. The focus will likely include current private land inholdings.

The California Wild Heritage Act of 2003, introduced by U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer establishes 2.5 million acres in wilderness areas, 66 thousand acres in wilderness study areas, 21 thousand acres in potential wilderness areas, 75 thousand acres in salmon restoration areas, 525 miles in wild and scenic rivers, 79 miles in wild and scenic study areas, 17 thousand acres in a lower Sacramento river conservation area, and 29 thousand acres in ancient bristlecone pine forest. Each designation significantly limits management and land use. The California Wild Heritage Act of 2003 will seriously harm rural communities if not carefully evaluated for long-term effects.

Opposition has continued to mount with the reintroduction of this legislation; as evidenced by our consistently growing Coalition listed below. With over 51% of El Dorado County designated as National Forest or Bureau Land Management lands the people of El Dorado County are proud stewards of the natural beauty that is our homeland.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb,  
on behalf of the Joint Chamber's Commission of El Dorado County

El Dorado County Chamber  
El Dorado Hills Chamber                      Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber

Listed below are additional members of the coalition in opposition of The California Wild Heritage Act of 2003 - S. 1555:

**Back County Horsemen**  
**Calaveras County Board of Supervisors**  
**CET&LC** (California Equestrian Trails & Lands Coalition)  
**CRCD** (Coarsegold Resource Conservation District)  
**El Dorado County Board of Supervisors**  
**El Dorado County Business Alliance**  
**Jeepers Jamboree**  
**Assemblyman Tim Leslie**  
**Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi**  
**North Fork Chamber**  
**Senator Rico Oller**  
**Recreation and Equestrian Coalition**  
**RCRC** (Regional Council of Rural Counties)  
**SAMS**  
**Sierra Resource Conservation District**  
**South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce**  
**TAMBA** (Tahoe Area Mountain Bicycling Association)  
**Farm Bureau**  
**BIA of Superior California**  
**SAGE**  
**El Dorado County Board of Realtors**  
**El Dorado Forum**  
**El Dorado Builders Exchange**

May 6, 2003

Chairman Helen Baumann  
County of El Dorado -Board of Supervisors  
330 Fair Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667

Dear Chairman Baumann,

On behalf of the El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission and the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber, I am writing to endorse the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors letter to Governor Gray Davis, dated May 13, 2003, encouraging him to enact measures to reform California's current Workers' Compensation System.

The El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission and the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber support comprehensive, systematic worker's compensation reforms to lower premium levels without reducing benefits for injured workers. Joint Chambers and Sac Metro Chamber support proposals to address a number of vital issues, including skyrocketing medical costs, permanent disability issues, and fraud.

California's workers' compensation costs ranked first in the nation, even before the enactment of last year's AB 749, which raised benefits for injured workers. The pure premium rate for worker's compensation has increased significantly in recent years, and rate increases will be even greater in the coming years due to the lack of systematic reforms to offset the benefit increases in AB 749.

We commend your proactive position and concern for the business community in El Dorado County, the region and the State.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb, CEO  
El Dorado County Chamber  
On behalf of;

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce

Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber    El Dorado Hills Chamber

Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber

cc: Honorable Gray Davis, Governor  
    Honorable Rico Oller, California State Senate  
    Honorable Tim Leslie, California State Assembly  
    Honorable Alan Nakanishi, California State Assembly

May 07, 2003

TO: Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee

FROM: El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission

**SUBJECT: AB 1438 (LONGVILLE) EXPEDITED PROCESS: COPIES OF SEIZED BUSINESS RECORDS - SUPPORT  
SCHEDULED FOR HEARING: APRIL 22, 2003**

The Joint Chambers Commission **SUPPORTS AB 1438 (Longville)**, as proposed to be amended, which establishes an expedited process where a business may obtain copies of important business records, including computer records, seized by a government agency during an investigation.

The several sections of the California Labor code, along with many other sections of California law, permit the seizure of business records, including computer hard drives, during the investigation of alleged wrongdoing on the part of the employer. It can take months, or even longer, to get these records back, even in cases where no violations were ever found to have occurred.

Businesses of all sizes have reported suffering significant financial losses, and even the loss of their business, if they, or an employee, become the target of an investigation in which their records are seized.

California currently does not have a viable process where a business can obtain a copy of the seized records prior to the conclusion of the investigation. Without day-to-day business records, a company entity is unable to operate. Employers are unable respond to even simple requests for information such as confirmation of orders; answering employment verification requests or even to access the data necessary to authorize the timely distribution of employee paychecks.

The Joint Chambers Commission believes that **AB 1438** will correct this problem and provide a process where a business can obtain access to the records within 72-hours of making a request ensuring a company can make copies of critical business records necessary to keep their company in operation.

cc: The Honorable John Longville  
Ann Richardson, Governor's Office

June 5, 2003

To: Whom It May Concern

Re: Workers' Compensation

On behalf of the El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission and the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber, I am writing to endorse the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors letter to Governor Gray Davis, dated May 13, 2003, encouraging him to enact measures to reform California's current Workers' Compensation System.

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California's workers' compensation costs ranked first in the nation, even before the enactment of last year's AB 749, which raised benefits for injured workers. The pure premium rate for worker's compensation has increased significantly in recent years, and rate increases will be even greater in the coming years due to the lack of systematic reforms to offset the benefit increases in AB 749.

We urge your proactive position and encourage your support for the business community in El Dorado County, the region and the State.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb, CEO  
El Dorado County Chamber  
On behalf of;

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce

Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber    El Dorado Hills Chamber

Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber

June 12, 2003

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator  
1 Post Street, Suite 2450  
San Francisco, CA 94104

**RE: SUPPORT S. 1125, THE "FAIR ACT"**

Dear Senator Feinstein;

On behalf of the Joint Chambers Commission of El Dorado County, I am writing to ask for your support and co-sponsorship of S. 1125, the "Fairness in Asbestos Injury Resolution Act of 2003."

Last year, I wrote to you regarding the need for a solution to our nation's broken asbestos claims system. Since then, the situation has grown even more desperate for asbestos health victims, the businesses, workers and shareholders wrapped up in this calamity, and our overburdened courts. Fortunately, a bi-partisan framework solution to this crisis is now available.

S. 1125 is a work in progress, but provides the framework needed to ensure the truly sick are adequately and expeditiously compensated through a privately financed national trust.

Additionally, the legislation would provide much needed certainty and finality for asbestos defendants, sparing our economy from further unnecessary bankruptcies and lost jobs.

Last, the legislation spares our courts from the "elephantine mass" of asbestos plaintiffs by moving all claims to a special 5-judge panel in the federal government. This would also preserve more funds to help the sick, which see nearly half of every award under the present system siphoned away to pay administrative/court costs.

Most importantly, the "FAIR Act" institutes national medical standards to ensure that sick people are the priority, and will receive most of the compensation. This is so critical given the RAND Institute's finding that up to 90% of all present claimants are not "functionally impaired."

I hope that you will consider joining Democrats Zell Miller and Ben Nelson as a co-sponsor of this legislation. Again, it is critical that Congress forge a solution to the asbestos litigation crisis this year. We believe you may have found that solution in S. 1125.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb, CEO  
On behalf of:

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce

Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber

El Dorado Hills Chamber

July 08, 2003

Re: **AB 1426 (Steinberg)**

Senator Rico Oller  
State Capitol Building  
State Capitol Room 4048  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Rico Oller:

The El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce is strongly opposed to the passage and enactment of AB 1426 as introduced by Assemblyman Darryl Steinberg of Sacramento.

In its current form AB 1426 mandates that jurisdictions within the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), which includes El Dorado County, be required to issue a total of 10% of all new housing units over a 5-year period for “low” or “very-low” income units. (Note: This defining language appears to arbitrarily change within the bill to include “moderate” income in some sections.) **We support the recent votes of opposition to AB 1426 by our Assemblymen Tim Leslie and Alan Nakanishi, and we join the cities of Elk Grove, Folsom, Roseville and Lincoln in their opposition to this legislation.**

There are numerous problems with this bill including the negative precedent it sets on state legislators to vote to enforce regional mandates on local and regional (SACOG) governments in areas where the majority of those legislators are not residents. If this situation is encouraged it will have negative affects on all local planning efforts, including El Dorado County (EDC), as the language of AB 1426 adds new and incompatible elements to EDC’s current general plan and EIR processes, including the development of Housing and Land Use Elements.

Specific issues that support the Business Alliance’s opposition to AB 1426 include:

- AB 1426 encourages inclusionary housing policies, which all members of the Business Alliance are on record as opposing (ref: *Vision for El Dorado County: Position on Issues for the Proposed General Plan*, released April 10, 2003) because they are not successful in encouraging development of affordable housing units.
- AB 1426 states that the requirements of the legislation cannot be a substitute for other affordable housing requirements, but *must be added to them*. This requirement penalizes those who have already applied other affordable housing methods by mandating that they provide even more.
- The funding sources provided for in AB 1426 are not reliable, readily available or workable overall. For example, Article 3 – *Incentives* – states that if the county meets certain requirements, then the county will “...receive priority eligibility in the award of competitive state grants or loans for infrastructure projects...” However this is no guarantee that those funds will be available when needed, and competition from within the SACOG region could displace EDC from receiving any funding benefits. If a goal is not economically feasible or attractive to project developers, the net result will be that nothing will get built.
- AB 1426 introduces extensive new layers of bureaucracy (and accompanying costs) into the county planning/ building process as demonstrated in the following requirements:

1. :“...each city and each county in the region ..prepare and submit to the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee an annual report...”
2. Affected jurisdictions must “...submit a report to the Legislature regarding the number of affordable residential units in the region”
3. “This bill would, among other things, authorize the establishment of a (new!) joint powers agency...”
4. Another section of AB 1426 adds to each county’s responsibility a provision that they must provide relocation assistance under specified conditions.

All these items will further burden cities and counties with the need for additional staff and funding to implement the bill’s mandates. With state, city and county budget shortfalls at historic highs most jurisdictions are being forced to lay off existing personnel or are under hiring freezes. This is not the time to mandate new programs, staff and expenditures.

- Affordable housing is impacted by several components that AB 1426 ignores, fails to consider, or cannot apply to El Dorado County (EDC) including the fact that many housing units are unaffordable because fees are already so high. In EDC at least \$30,000 or more is already loaded on new homes due to fees and this could double under new General Plan mandates. EDC is having difficulty providing affordable housing for local *moderate*-income earners such as teachers, police and firemen, as well as low and very-low income earners. Applying more fees to support the new regulatory and program costs of AB 1426 will not help to alleviate high housing costs or make homes more affordable.
- One requirement of AB 1426 states: “*Residential rental units required or caused to be affordable (by the bill)...shall remain affordable for at least 30 years*” and goes on to set rules for “spending” any recapture of profits from the subsequent sale, mandating use of the profits for more low income housing. Collectively the Business Alliance is not aware of any of its members who would agree to such stringent constraints on an investment in any community. This language is prohibitive to most, if not all, investors - unless a tax credit program can be applied.
- AB 1426 would necessitate El Dorado Hills housing (where most of our high-density projects are located under approved, *existing* development agreements) to be included as the basis for developing 10% additional low- to very-low income homes, even though approved, existing development agreements cannot be modified to force inclusion of the required 10% of low to very-low income housing. This will force the county to place the 10% elsewhere, *without a development funding source*.
- As currently constructed AB 1426 – Article 2 titled *Housing Development Approvals* – ties a jurisdiction’s performance of the bill’s goals to the period January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2007. El Dorado County will not have a new General Plan adopted until well into 2004 at best, although a Housing Element has already been drafted and submitted to the State for review. Implementation of this bill would force another delay on the county’s schedule for approving its new General Plan by forcing new rules onto the county.
- Article 2 also sets forth the period of January 1, 1999 to January 1, 2004 inclusive as the time period for setting a construction standard by which at least 50% of affordable housing units is to be compared. Yet El Dorado County has been under a court Writ of Mandate that has prohibited approval of virtually any new subdivision units from 1999 to present (July 2003).
- Section 65965 3 (A) allows a city or county to count rehabilitated units under certain conditions as part of the 10% affordable housing requirements. Although this appears to be

a mitigating benefit to complying with AB 1426, it is a specious argument considering the vast majority of EDC's development has taken place on the county's west slope where few older units exist to be rehabilitated. This development pattern is similar in other affected rural areas as well.

- Section 65965.5 (a) states that *"...10% of the multifamily zoned sites identified in the housing element ... shall be provided by right and conditioned upon density and development standards ...with at least one-half of those sites having density and development standards to accommodate very low income households."* As currently set forth in EDC's new Housing Element, multi-family zoned property allows densities above 5 dwelling units per acre (DUA). We would need 6-10 DUA to make it financially feasible to build housing for low-to-moderate income households. AB 1426 effectively restricts 50% of our current multi-family-designated lands resulting in an over-provision of *very-low* income housing, while depriving the county of much-needed *moderate-income* housing.
- Section 2 of Article 4 – *Contingency and Sunset*- states that by passing AB 1426 the Legislature *"...declares that a special law is necessary....due to the unique fiscal, jurisdictional[situation]....in the greater Sacramento region."* This statement accepts as fact an unsubstantiated declaration by the bill's author. The bill should clarify or reference exactly what the "unique" situation is in the Sacramento region and should be supported by data.

To recap: the El Dorado County Chamber believes AB 1426 is counterproductive to the goals of providing affordable housing because it is punitive rather than incentive based and it relies on mandates that are doomed to fail in achieving the bill's purported goals. The arbitrary 50% rule in this bill is applied throughout the Sacramento region yet this broad-brush approach is incompatible with El Dorado County's needs. AB 1426 conflicts with our area's zoning standards and our developing General Plan, and will negatively affect EDC residents' ability to plan their own community according to local preference and standards. Also, as mandated by the State, our GP Housing Element will already address the wide range of income level housing needs of our community.

The El Dorado County Chamber is strongly opposed to AB 1426 and requests that El Dorado County be omitted from this legislation. We urge our Board of Supervisors and the City of Placerville, by copy of this letter, to join us in opposing AB 1426.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb  
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Assemblyman Darryl Steinberg  
Assemblyman Tim Leslie  
Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi  
EDC Board of Supervisors  
Placerville City Council

July 29, 2003

California Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
Planning and Local Services Section  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Subject: Two Proposals for the Recreation Trails Grant Program:  
Shared Use Bridge Proposal – Olmstead Loop Trail  
Rehabilitation of Trailhead Facility Proposal – Cool Staging Area

To Whom It May Concern:

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the grant proposal developed by the Sierra Economic Development District (SEDD) and Auburn State Recreation Area to fund the Shared Use Bridge Proposal on the Olmstead Loop Trail, and the Rehabilitation of Trailhead Facility Proposal at the Cool Staging Area in the Cool/Pilot Area.

The communities of Cool and Pilot Hill recently completed a community action plan with the assistance of SEDD. Among other things, this plan identified the enhancement of the local trails system as a key priority. These grant proposals will allow the communities of Cool and Pilot Hill to enhance and upgrade the area's unique local trail system and improve the restroom facility located near the trailhead. The Cool Staging Area and the Olmstead Loop Trail are vital components of our local trail system. The Cool Staging Area is the only local staging area open to the public and the Olmstead Loop Trail is a hub to many other trails that provide access into the American River Canyon, the City of Auburn and the greater Cool/Pilot Hill area. This area is growing in popularity and providing adequate facilities to our users and a safe shared use trail is essential to meeting key priorities identified through the community action plan.

Cool and Pilot Hill are located in the High Sierra sub-region of El Dorado County, a region that has historically depended on the timber and agriculture sectors for its economic vitality. While these industries continue to be important, our region must diversify its economic base. By funding this grant, it will build local capacity for addressing our economic diversification needs. Grant funding, such as that available through the Recreation Trails Grant Program will be essential to our success.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in funding these two projects. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb  
Chief Executive Officer

August 11, 2003

Representative John T. Doolittle  
United States House of Representatives  
4230 Douglas Blvd. Suite 200  
Granite Bay, CA 95746

Dear Representative Doolittle:

This letter is written in support of a federal earmark project recently submitted by Folsom Lake College (FLC). FLC's service area encompasses the City of Folsom and El Dorado County, as well as parts of eastern Sacramento County. The college is expected to serve 15,000 - 20,000 students by 2010. FLC is a component of the Los Rios Community College District. Los Rios is the second largest community college district in the state with 67,000 students enrolled at its four colleges-American River, Consumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City. The district serves 1.6 million people living in a 2,400 square mile area.

The project's propose is to review the region's projected economic development with the educational and job training programs in the community and region. The objective is to develop a coordinated plan that will match economic development with education and training programs to ensure the availability of a well-trained workforce as the region's economy develops and expands.

As this project is undertaken, Folsom Lake College will develop business and educational partnerships with essential business communities, educational institutions and workforce planners. Local Chambers of Commerce, economic and workforce development agencies, local high schools, and businesses will be engaged to identify and address career ladder training needs and education programs of local employers.

In order to be an important contributor to the economic development in El Dorado County and the rest of the service area, FLC has been and will continue to work closely with business leaders to determine which programs will most effectively serve the region. While the City of Folsom has experienced substantial economic growth and job creation, rural areas of El Dorado County have not kept pace. Phase I of this proposal will assess the potential for economic growth and evaluate educational programs that will foster that growth. Phase II will involve the preliminary development and implementation of the most effective educational programs to foster economic development in El Dorado County.

Given the current fiscal state of affairs of our community and state, more partnership efforts throughout our communities are encouraging to manage and address educational and economic development needs. I urge you to consider supporting this project that will enable our community to strengthen its economic development opportunities.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent – Bumb

Chief Executive Officer

**The El Dorado Business Alliance  
P.O. Box 121, Shingle Springs, CA 95682**

August 21, 2003

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors  
330 Fair Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667

Re: **SB 711 – Oak Tree Ordinance**

Honorable Board Members:

Santa Monica Senator Sheila Kuehl (D) has authored Senate Bill 711, which would require permits, fees and double mitigation for the cutting of *any* oak tree in California. SB 711 would require that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) apply to timberland and oak woodland agricultural conversions. One can only assume that Ms. Kuehl is attempting to remedy a local problem with a statewide mandate, or she is uninformed about the millions of oak trees that exist in El Dorado and other rural counties. Either way this proposal speaks to the necessity for planning such as this to be done on a local (county-wide) basis.

El Dorado Business Alliance (BA) member organizations have expressed strong concern about SB 711 becoming law locally and throughout California. Although restrictions such as those presented in this bill, may serve communities in Southern California or the even the Bay Area, they are certainly not appropriate for El Dorado County. The negative effects of this legislation on California's residents, commerce and agriculture industries, could be devastating. Not only would enactment of the proposed restrictions be a bureaucratic nightmare, but at a time when California is reeling from budgetary short-falls, the costs could be unbearable. Statewide programs such as this would require creation of an agency to oversee the program, (or more unfunded mandates for counties), and staff and enforcement personnel to make it functional and cohesive, all at potentially enormous costs. With a reported 12,000 businesses closed, leaving or already left California this year alone, it is inconceivable that our legislature would continue to propose such far-reaching, unnecessary and expensive new programs.

It is the position of the El Dorado Business Alliance that a (oak) tree ordinance should be developed based on local needs. It should be locally enacted and it should be locally enforced as deemed to be necessary by area residents. We ask the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors to consider sending a letter to Senator Sheila Kuehl, and/or our elected representatives, opposing such legislation in El Dorado County.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Beal, Chairperson

Cc: Senator Rico Oller  
Assemblyman Tim Leslie  
Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi  
Business Alliance  
Distribution Lists

*The El Dorado Business Alliance is made up of the following organizations: The Building Industry Association of Superior California (BIASC), El Dorado Builders' Exchange, El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission, El Dorado Forum, El Dorado County Association of Realtors (EDCAR) and Surveyors, Architects, Geologists and Engineers (SAGE).*

September 4, 2003

Dear

The El Dorado Joint Chambers Commission represents over 1,700 member businesses in El Dorado County. We are writing to inform you of our opposition to SB 2 (Burton) and or any new state laws mandating employer-paid health insurance.

California businesses cannot afford the multibillion-dollar tax increases that the proposed universal health care mandates would require. Businesses like those in El Dorado County across the state would like to be able to provide health care to all of their employees and their families, but for many employers the costs are simply too high.

Rather than mandating that employers provide health care coverage, the Legislature must focus on helping to lower health care costs so employers can afford to provide their employees with a voluntary benefits package.

The cost of doing business in California is rising, even as the economy is slowing. California employers already pay the highest workers' compensation rates in the nation and are faced with numerous labor laws unique to the state. We cannot afford anymore-costly new mandates.

Many businesses like those in El Dorado County are already suffering during this economic downturn and are faced with tough employment decisions. Now is not the time to impose additional costly mandates that will further slow job creation. Please **oppose** All employer health care mandates that come before you.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb, CEO  
On behalf of;

**This letter will be sent to the Health Care Conference Committee as well as our state elected officials. A cc will be sent to Gov. Davis.**

January 5, 2004

Honorable Gray Davis  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: WILLIAMSON ACT SUBVENTIONS**

Dear Governor Davis,

On behalf of the El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission we respectfully urge you to reconsider the permanent elimination the \$39 million for the Budget Item 9100: Tax Relief. The California Land Conservation Act, also known as the Williamson Act, is our state's most important farmland protection law and the subventions are critical to the continued success of the Act. These two programs currently protect 16.3 million acres of agricultural land, much of it having scenic open space and wildlife value, including more than half of the state's prime farmland.

The Williamson Act has offered an innovative approach to agricultural land protection for over 35 years by building an interrelated set of property tax, land use and conservation measures in a single policy package. Without the Act, California would have suffered significantly more leapfrog development, lost much of our open space, and paved over some of the richest soil in the world.

The open-space subvention program constitutes the state's contribution to farmland protection. The subventions help replace the foregone property tax revenue due to county participation in the Act. In El Dorado County the Williamson Act contracted lands protect 34,495 acres and provide over \$42,000 in subventions to our already lean county operating funds.

If the subventions are not funded, there is no doubt that counties will be forced to discontinue their participation in the Act. This comes at a time when California is facing tremendous population pressure and would further jeopardize the economic viability of thousands of family farming and ranching operations especially in counties like ours that are at the "leading edge" of suburban development. Our Ag-tourism is a substantial economic engine in El Dorado County and we must protect this valuable resource. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution on February 11, 2003, requesting that the Williamson Act subventions remain whole in the upcoming budget negotiations.

We respectfully urge you to fully fund the Williamson Act Subventions in your proposed May Revision of the State Budget.

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb, CEO  
On behalf of;

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce

Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber

El Dorado Hills Chamber

## **EL DORADO COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WHITE PAPER- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce strongly recommends the 1996 General Plan Amended (GPA).

This plan did not include an Economic Development element. As such should the 1996 GPA be adopted, an Economic Development Element is not required and should not be included.

Therefore the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce (EDCC) proposes an aggressive ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM for El Dorado County that starts immediately. We offer our complete cooperation to provide leadership and support to the citizens of El Dorado County and our Supervisors.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

We in El Dorado County are at the crossroads, we can continue the direction toward being a bedroom community or we can create an aggressive “Economic Development” effort that will provide jobs and improve the quality of life. In the next few pages, we will address our recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. We will identify key factors that we feel will lead to higher paying jobs, higher household income and an involved and committed business community.

Many factors must be considered for a positive ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. One of the critical areas to be addressed is the unpleasant environment for growth in the County. These concerns include:

1. Excessive Restrictions
2. Restriction that are out of date (e.g. home based internet)
3. Permit Process- Slow and difficult/not business or citizen friendly. These issues, fees, and a lack of trust in the system contribute to user frustration and are roadblocks to economic development.

We propose, an approach that starts immediately, and is an ongoing effort to create an “Aggressive Economic Development Process.” This process would include government leaders, representatives from the business community and all citizens that are committed to smart growth. The process should include business involvement, focus groups and community meetings to develop a consensus and create citizen trust. A commitment is required to make El Dorado County a better place to live. An Economic Development Plan that provides measurable targets, priorities, the appropriate resources and support is necessary.

Priorities must include items such as:

- Increased household income (With improvement greater than California's)
- More job opportunities in the county (Stop exporting 45% of the work force)
- Reduction of the average commute
- Improve the jobs to housing availability (Now the worst ratio in the region)

### **THE PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTY**

A minimum of four issues must be included in our Economic Development Plan. Again these are not recommended as part of the General Plan, but a “work in progress”. The FOUR POINTS to be recommended:

1. Economic Development Advisory Committee

An advisory committee with the purpose of establishing guiding principles for creating smart growth in the County. The committee will include governmental, business and community leadership. It will be charged with developing economic growth guidelines.

## 2. Guiding Principles for Economic Development

Economic Development to enhance quality of life with smart growth. A set of guiding principles is necessary.

The chamber will commit to provide the leadership to create the “Economic Development Advisory Committee” for the purpose of DEVELOPING GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO PRESENT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS by February 15, 2004.

## 3. County Economic Development Department

The Chamber strongly recommends a greater commitment to this department. This commitment should include additional staff and funding. This is necessary to:

- Retain existing business
- Attract target businesses
- Put a greater emphasis on smart growth objectives
- And, to provide support for Re-Development Zones

## 4. Re-Development Zones

The creation of a series of re-development zones to provide focus, tax incentives, and balanced economic growth. This will create priorities for infrastructure investment, improved geographic and job diversity. In specific situations it will encourage job growth in ‘rural’ areas similar to other rural county programs.

The AREAS recommended for Re-Development consideration include:

- Pollock Pines
- Georgetown
- Diamond Springs / El Dorado
- Somerset Area
- Shingle Springs / Cameron Park
- Coloma / Lotus
- Placerville (Fairgrounds) / Possible relocation of the fairgrounds as a joint effort with the City of Placerville

The Chamber will host public meeting in each of the geographic areas recommended to measure interest and support. These meetings would be facilitated and a report would be provided to Supervisors by February 15, 2004.

In conclusion, if El Dorado waits until all objections to Economic Development and smart growth are overcome, or until the General Plan is approved, we will have lost many valuable opportunities.

Let us move forward TOGETHER with a commitment to smart economic growth:

- To enhance the lives of the citizens
- To create economic guidelines and priorities
- To create a business friendly community and government
- To provide unified leadership and focus not seen before in El Dorado County

El Dorado County must identify a few good issues and focus on them. The Chamber has suggested four. Additionally, we will provide unified leadership; we have committed the Chamber, as the Voice of Business

Should El Dorado County not become a part of the region in their planning, the region will suffer, but El Dorado County and our Citizens will suffer more.

General Plan Team  
2850 Fairland Court  
Placerville, CA 95667

The vision for our County must contain a strong agricultural identity. With our varied growing conditions, climate, elevation, hydrology, and soils we enjoy the ability to produce a diversity of agricultural crops and livestock. To safeguard the economic base upon which the county relies (agriculture), we must protect and promote the agriculture and natural resource values that generate products and draw visitors to the county. This can only happen if we take a strong stance in support of agricultural land protection and in developing future water supplies. With goal in mind of preserving and enhancing our agricultural base the Agricultural Council of the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce submits the following comments regarding the General Plan Alternatives.

1. **The County failed to consider an “agriculture alternative”.** The County has stated that the agricultural industry is integral to economic well-being and the quality of life enjoyed by all who reside here. To support that assertion, and to insure that agriculture remains viable, an “Agriculture-Constrained Alternative” should have been examined.
2. **The Draft General Plan documents are complex and a comprehensive review has been difficult.** The concept of a General Planning document implies a strategic planning piece that contains a vision and a general framework for how the county views its future. Some Plan elements are general, as is appropriate for this type of document, but within other sections there is too much detail. It is appropriate to move the details out of this document and to define those county requirements by means of an ordinance that is subject to public review.
3. **The Right to Farm Ordinance Disclosure as a Deed Restriction is paramount to the health of agriculture in the county.** A mandatory disclosure of the Ordinance as a deed restriction is essential not only to protect agriculturists from “nuisance” complaints for standard agricultural practices, but to ensure that non-agricultural neighbors understand the environment of living in a rural, agricultural setting.
4. **Agricultural Districts and zoning should provide for the protection of existing agriculture as well as for the promotion of future agricultural development.** Protection for agricultural operations by way of zoning or land use designations is key to our continued success. Recognition of existing agricultural operations within those designations is the first step to protecting agriculture in the county.
5. **Agricultural operations should be exempt from the requirements for scenic corridors and view sheds.** Where the guidance in the plan concerning ridgeline development, grading, and visual integrity may be appropriate to commercial or housing developments, they should not apply to agricultural terracing, crop conversions, and normal cultivation practices. These practices have minimal impact on a view shed compared to other types of development.
6. **Biological corridor constraints should not be imposed on private agricultural properties.** Farmers and ranchers should be permitted to protect their crops and livestock from depredation by wildlife. Through good land stewardship, agricultural land currently provides a substantial portion of the wildlife habitat in the County. It is unreasonable to expect agriculturists who provide valuable habitat on their private land to alter their practices in order to satisfy new biological constraints. .

7. **Water for agricultural purposes should be protected and future water projects must be developed to support commercial and residential development.** The irrigation water systems that were developed for agriculture in the county will soon be fully utilized. New water rights and storage facilities must be actively sought by the county to meet increasing water demands and to provide drought protection. Identified agricultural water demands for future projects should be protected from other municipal, commercial, and housing demands or the continued viability of agriculture will be significantly jeopardized.
8. **Agricultural Districts and zoning need to be defined based on current farming and ranching uses.** It should be recognized that many small operations can be viable and that certain crops grow well on non-choice soils. Slope restrictions should not constraint compatible agricultural production, such as vineyards or livestock grazing. Elevation criteria should only be used for guidance when evaluating agricultural land uses, not utilized as a regulatory mechanism. Agricultural parcels outside of Ag Districts should qualify for the same protections based on their suitability for agriculture, not based on location within a District.
9. **The agriculture community must be active participants in the implementation process.** The implementation phase that follows General Plan adoption is critical to the future of the county. During this phase it is crucial that agricultural interests be at the table when these discussions occur and decisions are made.
10. **Agricultural Districts must be preserved and expanded where appropriate.** A concept has been developed and previously provided to the Planning Department and Board of Supervisors whereby existing Agricultural Districts would be examined for appropriateness and new areas suitable for Agricultural Districts would be identified and created. The concept is based upon soils, elevation, current land use, and other factors. This concept needs to be incorporated into the County General Plan.
11. **The County must recognize the diversity of agriculture within the County.** The General Plan Alternatives treat agriculture as if it was one homogeneous endeavor throughout the county. In reality, processes and infrastructure required for timber production are vastly different than those for small scale specialty crop production. Lack of recognition of this diversity is a critical flaw of all Alternatives.
12. **Mitigation measures are designed to address future residential, industrial and commercial development, but clearly threaten the continuation of agriculture in the County.** Two examples are the restrictions on oak removal and the requirement that a ground water study being conducted by an engineer prior to issuance of permits. Other measures, such as the proposed noise control, run counter to the existing right to farm ordinance. Proposed mitigation measures are much too detailed to be contained in a General Plan. The general intent of the mitigation measures should be included, with the specifics contained in associated ordinances.
13. **Alternatives fail to recognize the overall economic contribution of agriculture to El Dorado County.** Agriculture contributed over \$390,000,000 to the El Dorado County economy in 2002. In addition to the economic contribution, agriculture serves as the catalyst for the establishment and growth of associated business enterprises. There is significant potential for growth and expansion of agriculture with a sound General Plan. As currently presented, the existing Alternatives will have a significant detrimental impact on agriculture, threatening its existence.

14. **General Plan Alternatives do not recognize the contribution of agriculture to the quality of life in El Dorado County.** Residents and visitors constantly state that it is the rural character of the area that draws them to El Dorado County. Encouragement of a viable agricultural industry is essential to maintaining this rural character. The current Alternatives contain severe restrictions that will significantly impair the ability of agriculture to remain viable.
  
15. **Development of the General Plan must be done with a direct connection to the Water Resources Development and Management Plan for El Dorado County.** This will involve an accurate assessment of all viable agricultural land in the County with the projected water demand associated with this area. It will also require a pairing of the issues affecting agriculture in the General Plan with those in the Water Resources Development and Management Plan.

The Agriculture Council eagerly awaits the opportunity to work with County Government to shape a General Plan that best serves the interest of the County. We feel strongly that agriculture must play a substantial role in the implementation phase of the General Plan. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information that may be needed and to arrange for our assistance in this continuing effort.

Sincerely,

Dave Bolster, Chair  
Agricultural Council, El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce