



# 2025-2026 *(Mid-Session Update)* Federal Legislative Platform



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*Chair - District 3*



**Steven J. Ding**  
*Vice Chair - District 4*



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*Approved by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, March 3, 2026*



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- Steven J. Ding**, *Vice Chair* ..... District 4
- Mario Gardea** ..... District 1
- Paul Canepa** ..... District 2
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# San Joaquin County

## 2025-2026 Federal Legislative Platform

Established in 1850 as one of California's original 26 counties, San Joaquin County is composed of 28 departments and agencies that provide a full range of services to more than 800,000 residents. Encompassing an area of 1,426 square miles, including 35 square miles of water and waterways, with eight cities – Escalon, Lathrop, Lodi, Manteca, Mountain House, Ripon, Stockton, and Tracy – San Joaquin County has a long history of providing responsive public service and innovative programs while operating under sound fiscal principles. Working together, an elected Board of Supervisors and County staff strive to represent, support, and protect the individuals, families, businesses, and natural resources that make the County a great place to live, work, and play.

San Joaquin County is the 14th largest county in California by population. The median income is \$82,837 and the median property value is \$550,000.

The County's primary economic industry is agriculture, which grossed more than \$3 billion in total production value and more than \$4 billion in agriculture-adjacent industries, for a total of \$7.8 billion in total agricultural economic output, according to the [2023 Crop Report](#).

### Strategic Priority Issues

To maximize the greatest outcomes for San Joaquin County residents, businesses, industries, and visitors, the Board adopted the following strategic priorities through fiscal year 2028. For a link to their adopted strategic priorities through June 30, 2025, [click here](#).

These priorities guide County staff and the County's Federal legislative advocates, for concentrated legislative focus during the 2025-2026 Federal Legislative Session. The Board approved strategic priority areas are:

#### 1. Maintain Fiscal Responsibility and Promote Organizational Innovation

- a. Establish and report on measurable outcomes for current, new, and expanding programs
- b. Foster internal and external collaboration to provide better community outcomes
- c. Utilize technology that improves public access to services and information
- d. Implement a workforce plan that focuses on customer service, retention, and recruitment/hiring
- e. Engage in effective legislative advocacy

#### 2. Public Safety / Quality of Life

- a. Address quality-of-life issues through early intervention, education, and blight remediation; focusing on public safety and health
- b. Enhance all aspects of the County's public safety system
- c. Reduce illegal dumping
- d. Reduce response times for emergency services

#### 3. Support a Healthy Community

- a. Support investments in health care infrastructure and services that enhance access to physical and behavioral health care, and improve health outcomes
- b. Support investments in recreational infrastructure and programs to improve well-being for the community at large
- c. Support systems that prioritize a wrap-around approach to service delivery
- d. Support preventative approaches that promote healthy lifestyles and optimal health

#### 4. Reduce Unsheltered Homelessness

- a. Maximize utilization of supervised publicly- or privately-operated shelters designed to provide temporary living arrangements
- b. Safe camping
- c. Increase permanent supportive housing
- d. Foster County/City/State coordination and participation
- e. Enhance partnerships with non-profits, faith-based organizations, and businesses that align with the Board's goals

#### 5. Water Management

- a. Enhance Water Quality
- b. Reduce Flood Risk
- c. Improve Water Storage/Sustainability
- d. Protect the Delta and Ecosystem

#### 6. Economic Development

- a. Protect and promote agriculture
- b. Expand business development
- c. Expand infrastructure / reduce traffic congestion
- d. Prepare the workforce for local job demands
- e. Incentivize public/private partnerships

The Board of Supervisors' State Legislative priorities are as follows (*listed alphabetically by policy area*).

### Agriculture and Natural Resources

1. Support legislation and budgetary proposals that would provide funding assistance to local agencies for the development of strategies for prevention, preparedness, and combating agro-terrorism and dangers posed by invasive plant, animal and insect species, imported pests, and other threats posed to the San Joaquin County agricultural economy.
2. Support legislation and budgetary proposals that support and strengthen local control of air-quality and environmental issues related to the agricultural industry.

### General Government

3. Support economic stimulus/job proposals which would assist the County in providing vital local government services to its residents, as well as funding for economic development, including infrastructure projects essential to the sustainability of communities.
4. Advocate for maximum Federal financial support and local flexibility in the administration of Federally mandated programs.
5. Support legislation and/or budgetary proposals which would prevent future sequestration or similar across-the-board funding reductions.
6. Support funding to cover the costs of unfunded Federal mandates on State and local governments, as well as legislation to reduce burdensome and unnecessary regulatory and administrative requirements of Federal programs.

7. Advocate for and support maximum flexibility, simplification, and financial support in Federal legislative and regulatory requirements.
8. Maintain close relationships with San Joaquin County's Legislative delegation to foster more effective advocacy and understanding of the County's issues.
9. Seek Federal reimbursement for the County's costs associated with services to undocumented immigrants, including incarceration, public safety, and medical services.
10. Oppose legislation that would permit States to pass Federally imposed penalties to local agencies, unless the penalty was incurred by the local agency.
11. Support legislative and administrative efforts to ensure protection of tax-exempt bonds, and oppose proposals to reduce or eliminate Federal exemption for interest on municipal bonds.
12. Respond as timely and effectively as possible to legislative issues both by Board of Supervisors action and, if time constraints exist, by the affected department head(s) with concurrence of the County Administrator. If consideration by the Board of Supervisors is not feasible, the County Administrator will notify the Board.
13. Support legislation or regulatory changes that would give greater flexibility for the County to implement pension reform based upon sustainability and affordability of the plan's fiscal health.
14. Support legislation or regulatory action that promote difficult to recruit and retain positions in health care, environmental health, engineering, clinical mental health, law enforcement, nursing, and agriculture.
15. Support maximum Federal funding directly to local agencies for various infrastructure projects critical to the economic vitality of San Joaquin County.
16. Support legislative and/or administrative proposals to streamline grant application and administration processes.
17. Support legislative and administrative efforts that would require an economic evaluation that yields a favorable cost-benefit analysis before new regulations are implemented.

## Health and Human Services

18. Advocate for Federal health care and public health funding formulas that equitably reflect the demographics of California's Central Valley, population characteristics, and health burdens.
19. Seek to preserve and expand Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal funding for health care programs, while aggressively opposing funding reductions in these programs which would result in decreased access to health care and/or would shift costs or risk to the County.
20. Advocate for San Joaquin County to maximize Federal funds for health care programs and services which result in direct payments to the County.
21. Support and advocate for programs and funding that would create new and expanded health-focused workforce development training and education programs, and funding to support loans, grants, and scholarship programs to incentivize the health career track.

22. Support legislation and budgetary proposals for local health department programs which would: **A)** address prevention of chronic health conditions, **B)** fund injury and violence prevention, **C)** support and enhance local disease control and prevention, **D)** provide a sustainable disease control and outbreak response infrastructure that would include epidemiology, surveillance, investigation, and response, **E)** support public health infrastructure development to enable national accreditation, and **F)** support emergency, bioterrorism, and pandemic influenza preparedness, response, and infrastructure development to address public health threats and emergencies.
23. Advocate in support of funding for health care information technology infrastructure to enhance the quality of patient safety, the reporting of diseases to public health to improve surveillance, emergency response, population health, and the delivery of health care services.
24. Advocate in support of policies that promote healthy eating and increase access to opportunities for physical activity.
25. Support legislative and/or budgetary proposals that support maternal, child, and adolescent programs that: A) provide increased funding; B) protect children from environmental health risks, such as unintentional injuries, lead poisoning, and poor air quality; and C) ensure that women and adolescents have access to unique prevention and health care services.
26. Advocate for the preservation of prevention and public health funds. Advocate for the allocation of funds (rather than competitive grants) to local government health departments with an emphasis on addressing health disparities.
27. Support the County's established Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Look-Alike Clinics; and ensure appropriate and equitable treatment of County affiliated FQHCs regarding payments, reporting, and operational requirements.
28. Advocate for policies that reduce health inequities within San Joaquin County and address social determinants of health that focus on environmental and social-economic factors that impact personal and public health. Factors include housing, education, workforce development, family-sustaining wage jobs, transportation, safe neighborhoods, and places for daily physical activity.
29. Advocate for full implementation of mental health parity with physical health services to include mental health and substance use disorder treatments.
30. Support health care reform that does not jeopardize the current health care delivery infrastructure and its financial underpinnings at the County's level, and urge careful deliberation to ensure all County residents have access to affordable and meaningful health care.
31. Oppose efforts to rescind enhanced funding from 1115 Medicaid Waivers which supports San Joaquin General Hospital (SJGH), County outpatient services, and the Organized Delivery System for Drug Medi-Cal to support substance use disorder treatment.
32. Support legislation or other administrative proposals that maintain the appropriate labor workforce to operate SJGH during emergencies including, but not limited to, a public health emergency, pandemic, and other natural disasters or terrorist events.
33. Support the repeal of the Federal Institute of Mental Disease Exclusion which limits Medicaid payments to psychiatric inpatient or residential facilities with more than 16 beds.

34. Support legislation, regulatory changes, and/or administrative efforts that would provide funding for San Joaquin County to address the serious issue of homelessness. This includes funding that would improve the quality and quantity of data collection and sharing, provide rental assistance and job readiness programs, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, substance use disorder treatment and health services, and would encourage and improve collaboration between the County, cities, agencies, the Continuum of Care, and the private sector to address the permanent housing crisis that plagues many Central Valley counties, including San Joaquin.
35. Support simplification, flexibility, and lessening of restrictions on Federal benefits pertaining to the maintenance of income requirements to qualify for social services programs.

## **Housing, Community and Economic Development, and Workforce Investment**

36. Oppose any legislative or administrative actions that would temporarily or permanently divert Federal program resources, such as Airport Improvement Program, Passenger Facility Charges, and the Law Enforcement Officer Reimbursement program, that support the economic viability of the County's Stockton Metropolitan Airport.
37. Seek, advocate, and support the reinstatement of critical unemployment and mass layoff statistical information gathering, which was excluded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2006.
38. Seek, advocate, and support Federal funding and other economic development related incentives for the development and enhancement of the Innovation Hub (iHub) San Joaquin program.
39. Seek, advocate, and support Federal incentives and grants that support regulatory, administrative, and legislative proposals that would sustain, support, and accelerate economic development in San Joaquin County.
40. Support legislation and budgetary proposals that would address regional economic development and transportation challenges by planning, developing, and delivering cost-effective and responsive solutions.
41. Support legislation that would incentivize participation in high school apprenticeship programs by the private sector.
42. Support legislation that would incentivize the hiring of unemployed job seekers from high-risk populations, including the homeless, individuals coming out of jail, the long-term unemployed like welfare recipients, individuals with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged youth with barriers to employment.

## **Public Safety, Emergency Preparedness and Resilience**

43. Support Federal funding and equitable distribution of funding for local public safety efforts including law enforcement, drug courts, juvenile justice, delinquency prevention and intervention, counter-terrorism programs, and construction and operation of incarceration facilities.
44. Support legislative and administrative funding opportunities which provide ongoing resources and funding streams to sustain the Family Justice Center.
45. Advocate for legislative and administrative funding to expand opportunities for restorative justice programs.

46. Support legislative and administrative funding opportunities that develop programs to combat human trafficking and the commercial exploitation of children.
47. Advocate for program development that supports coordination of response efforts to events involving mass casualties and other critical incidents amongst local, State, and Federal services and programs.
48. Support efforts to provide access to affordable flood insurance for property and business owners including agriculture and legacy communities located in the floodplain.
49. Support legislation or regulatory action that will allow the County to plan for, respond to, and receive reimbursement and property tax relief for emergencies and disasters.
50. Support legislation and budgetary actions that provide full and flexible funding for ongoing emergency preparedness, all-hazard planning, and recovery at the local level through opportunities such as:
  - Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities,
  - Homeland Security Grants, and
  - Emergency Management Performance Grants.
51. Support maintaining or reducing current cost-share levels in the Stafford Act.
52. Advocate for emergency management and homeland security policies, practices, and funding to be designed in a way that promotes innovation locally with maximum flexibility for services to target individual community needs, hazards, threats, and capacities.
53. Advocate for additional Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) technical assistance for counties to assist staff in navigating Direct Assistance programs and regulatory requirements for approved disaster projects.
54. Advocate and support legislation that would require coordinated planning and funding levels to provide comprehensive levee evaluations and improvements (including project and non-project levees) to achieve enhanced Statewide urban flood protection.
55. Support legislative, regulatory, and administrative proposals that would improve coordination between Federal and State levee inspection programs to eliminate redundancies and accelerate correction of problems by requiring: **A)** joint Federal, State, and local inspections, **B)** consistent inspection criteria, **C)** coordination to necessary permitting activities, and **D)** allowing a reasonable amount of time to complete requirements correction work.
56. Support additional State and Federal funding for engineering studies to evaluate whether existing levees meet Federal levee safety regulations pursuant to 44 CFR 65.10.
57. Support additional State and Federal funding to design and construct levee rehabilitation and repair projects to comply with Federal levee safety regulations pursuant to 44 CFR 65.10.
58. Support legislative and administrative efforts that would provide funding to analyze, plan, design, construct, and maintain facilities to improve levees and waterways in San Joaquin County for the protection of communities, water supplies, agriculture, and other local businesses.
59. Seek, advocate, and support legislation and/or projects that would increase funding levels for comprehensive levee evaluations and flood protection, and improvements to existing flood protection/levee systems (project and non-project levees) to achieve enhanced Statewide urban flood protection and ensure San Joaquin County communities maintain or establish 100-year flood protection.

60. Support legislative, administrative, or regulatory efforts that would provide required funding for local levee maintenance activities and relief from certain environmental restrictions for maintenance activities.
61. Support legislative, administrative, regulatory efforts and/or projects for flood hazard mitigation including repair and restoration of levees and channels after flood events.
62. Aggressively oppose legislative efforts to shift Federal and/or State flood control liability or obligations to local agencies.
63. Support legislation and/or regulations that would reduce local impacts related to FEMA Flood Insurance Rate floodplain mapping changes.
64. Support legislation or regulatory changes which would mandate coordination between State and Federal agencies regarding flood protection and floodplain management regulations.
65. Oppose legislative or regulatory efforts that would impose arbitrary increases in flood protection standards without sufficient feasibility studies or identified funding sources for local implementation.
66. Oppose legislation or regulatory changes that would result in duplication of efforts between local, State, and Federal floodplain administrators in evaluating community development projects.
67. Support legislative, regulatory, and budgetary efforts to provide additional surface water storage projects that would provide improved flood control, water supply, and/or environmental conditions for San Joaquin County.
68. Oppose amendments to the National Flood Insurance Program reauthorization that mandate flood insurance coverage in residual risk areas.
69. Support legislative, administrative, or regulatory efforts that would streamline the permit process for the removal of silt from rivers, flood control channels, and Delta waterways, and provide required funding to perform these activities.
70. Support additional State and Federal funding for flood hazard mitigation projects.
71. Support additional State and Federal funding for floodplain mapping and remapping projects.
72. Support flexibility and common-sense regulatory approaches to balance State and Federal engineering design standards regarding trees within levee prisms against environmental, habitat, aesthetic, and maintenance cost considerations.
73. Support legislative, administrative, regulatory efforts and/or projects that would provide required funding for studies or projects to ensure 200-year flood protection for the Mossdale Tract area.

## Resource Management, Environmental Health, and Sustainability

74. Seek, advocate, and support legislation for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reform that streamlines environmental compliance processes and regulatory permitting processes, including CEQA-NEPA reciprocity.
75. Support legislation that would provide for extended producer responsibility or funding for the development and implementation of product recycling programs.
76. Support legislation that would provide incentives for development of landfill gas-to-energy, waste-to-energy, and streamline the permitting process.

77. Oppose legislation that would impose new solid waste disposal requirements on local government unless the funding mechanisms needed to implement the requirements are provided.
78. Oppose legislation or regulatory reform requiring municipal landfills (Class III) to accept semi-hazardous wastes, including medical or radioactive waste products.
79. Support legislation that would provide local control of where locally-produced wastes are disposed, for the purpose of assuring waste diversion mandates are met, and adequate funding for implementation.
80. Support legislation that would require State and Federal disposal facilities comply with State-imposed waste diversion mandates or provide local jurisdictions relief from diversion mandates for waste over which they have no control.
81. Support legislation and/or regulations which would establish fair, transparent principles and procedures to manage end-of-life costs of universal and other waste products.
82. Support legislative, administrative, and budgetary proposals that provide resources for and/or facilitate management or eradication of invasive plant, animal, and insect species.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

83. Support legislation or budgetary proposals that provide funding assistance to local governments to retrofit existing facilities to reduce energy consumption and/or for renewable energy projects.
84. Support legislation or budgetary proposals that would provide funding assistance to local governments for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
85. Seek, advocate, and support legislation and/or budgetary appropriations which would provide increased Federal and State funding for local agencies to address the backlog of road and bridge maintenance.
86. Advocate for California's fair share of contributions from the Federal Highway Trust Fund.
87. Advocate in support of a sustainable, long-term solution to ensure the solvency of the Federal Highway Trust Fund.
88. Advocate for counties and cities to share equitably in the growth of Federal revenues available to California for the network of local roads.
89. Continue to support legislation and/or budgetary proposals that would provide dedicated funding to address local transportation needs, including bridge maintenance projects, safety projects, and bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.
90. Seek, advocate, and support legislative actions that support and/or fund innovation and implementation of new and emerging technologies for the purposes of improving mobility and/or safety through engineering, public education, and enforcement.
91. Oppose legislation or administrative proposals that would unreasonably limit the County's discretion in reviewing, imposing conditions and mitigations upon, and permitting private telecommunications and other equipment within the public right-of-way or on private property. County decisions could be based on or include prohibiting aesthetic and other environmental considerations, eliminating the ability to require public benefits in exchange for use of public infrastructure, imposing unreasonable review timelines, and circumventing conventional local agency review and public input processes.

## Veterans and Veterans Affairs

92. Continue to advocate in support of funding for the Richard A. Pittman Veteran Affairs (VA) Community-Based Outpatient Clinic and Living Center adjacent to the San Joaquin General Hospital campus in French Camp.
93. Support congressional efforts to expand Veterans Affairs health care benefits to include Priority Group 8 Veterans.
94. Aggressively seek to maintain the ability of the County public hospital to continue partnering with the VA in providing services to Veterans and their families. Oppose any new VA regulations, such as the draft Request for Proposal from the VA (Draft RFP VA 791-12-R-0009, Medical – Surgical Services, Patient Centered Community Care) to establish a standardized health care contracting system, which would prevent public hospitals from being able to continue working with VA regional offices.

## Water and the Delta

95. Support legislation and/or regulatory reform that would serve to restore the San Joaquin River in-stream flows to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) in accordance with the adopted resolutions and water resources planning documents within the County.
96. Advocate and support legislative or regulatory efforts that would provide for the use of surface water to recharge critically over-drafted groundwater basins.
97. Support State and Federal programs that assist water customers in disadvantaged communities and help ensure that these populations are not denied essential services.
98. Support legislative or administrative proposals that provide robust funding for existing Federal programs that support maintenance and development of water and wastewater infrastructure programs, such as the State Revolving Funds, Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), Rural Utilities Service, Public Water System Supervision grants, and Public Works and Economic Development programs.
99. Support legislative or administrative proposals to create a drought assistance fund within the Federal government that would be used to assist State, local, tribal, and critical service entities with drought-related activities and would expand the technology transfer of drought and water conservation strategies.
100. Support additional sources of funding for State Financing Authorities applying for WIFIA loans, as prescribed in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2018 legislation.
101. Support preservation and enhancement of financing mechanisms for investment in water infrastructure, including preserving the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and lifting the cap on Private Activity Bonds for water infrastructure projects.
102. Support funding professional development training initiatives to assist the development and utilization of innovative activities relating to the workforce development and career opportunities in the water sector, as prescribed in the WRDA 2018 legislation.
103. Oppose legislative or administrative efforts that broaden the application of the Clean Water Act (CWA) or expand the Federal government's jurisdiction under the CWA. Conversely, support legislative or administrative efforts that limit the jurisdictional application of the CWA and excludes isolated wetlands, ephemeral ditches and streams, and other waters not directly connected or adjacent to navigable waters.

104. Support legislative, administrative and regulatory efforts in support of practical reforms to National Flood Insurance Programs that maintain or enhance affordability of flood insurance premiums.
105. Advocate for and support Federal policies and planning proposals that would provide resources for comprehensive flood risk reductions efforts, including the development of additional surface water storage facilities as defined under adopted Integrated Regional Water Management Plans or Groundwater Sustainability Plans.
106. Support legislative, administrative, and budgetary proposals to develop Mokelumne River Water Right Application 29835 and implement projects that would put the water to beneficial use.
107. Seek legislative and administrative support for funding to develop projects and management actions that reduce groundwater overdraft.
108. Seek legislative and administrative support for utilization and protection of Mokelumne River surface water rights and other water sources to support increased groundwater storage and improved groundwater levels.
109. Seek legislative and administrative support to oppose any regulatory actions that would unreasonably restrict stream segment utilization and impair the development of future water supplies, flood protection, and ecosystem needs throughout the Mokelumne River watershed.
110. Support legislative, regulatory, and budgetary efforts to provide additional surface water storage projects that would provide improved flood control, water supply, and environmental conditions and/or achieve multiple benefits including flood protection and groundwater recharge.
111. Advocate for and support legislation or regulatory efforts that would include groundwater recharge and storage as a beneficial use of water and provide for the use of surface water to recharge critically over-drafted groundwater basins.
112. Support legislative, regulatory, and budgetary efforts that enhance water supply reliability including advocating for State and Federal financial support for new and replacement water infrastructure.
113. Support the efforts of State and local agencies to implement Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements.
114. Support Delta-related activities that adhere to water rights priorities, and area-of-origin protections. Oppose proposals to burden general taxpayers and/or others who do not directly benefit for the cost of water supply projects and/or water project mitigation efforts.
115. Seek comprehensive legislative and administrative support to address Delta- related problems, including devoting State financial resources for transportation and flood control infrastructure and emergency response in the Delta. Ensure that plans that affect the Delta are defined, interpreted, and implemented in a manner that avoids conflict with San Joaquin County land use authority, economic development, agricultural, and recreational opportunities.
116. Support legislative and administrative efforts that provide funding and other means of support for projects that perpetuate the long-term sustainability of the Delta and for the Delta Counties Coalition and other coalitions, processes, and groups that further the co-equal goals of improving Statewide water supply reliability while restoring and/or preserving the Delta ecosystem.
117. Support legislative and administrative efforts that provide State or Federal funding for projects consistent with adopted County legislative platforms and do not advance the single-tunnel Delta conveyance project or other isolated Delta conveyance proposals.

118. Oppose legislative, regulatory, and administrative efforts, including plans, projects, and infrastructure proposals, that would negatively impact San Joaquin County's communities, agricultural economy, and/or the Delta.
119. Ensure that water conveyance facilities routed through San Joaquin County have no adverse effect on existing and future agricultural operations and that adverse effects of such facilities are fully mitigated.
120. Oppose legislative and administrative proposals related to the Delta that would compromise the County's governmental prerogatives in the areas of local land use authority, tax and related revenues, public health and safety, economic development, and agricultural stability or through which a non-elected board or commission would usurp or limit the County's ability to govern.



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