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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Approves New Agreement to Strengthen Public Safety and Retain Critical Legal Staff

Stockton, CA – At their meeting on Tuesday, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approved a new three-year labor agreement with the San Joaquin County Attorneys Association, ensuring competitive compensation and stability for County attorneys who serve at the core of the local justice system.

Board Chair Sonny Dhaliwal, Supervisor for District Three, emphasized the connection between employee retention and community safety, saying, "Public safety and good governance go hand in hand. A justice system cannot function without skilled professionals who stay, serve, and build experience over time. This agreement is an investment in stability, accountability, and service to the public. It helps ensure County justice services operate reliably and responsibly for everyone."

The approved contract covers the period from January 13, 2026 through January 13, 2029, and applies to approximately 164 County attorneys including Deputy District Attorneys, Deputy Public Defenders, and Child Support Attorneys. The agreement includes base wage increases totaling sixteen percent over three years, expanded longevity pay, and a ten percent increase to Attorney I wage steps to enhance recruitment for entry level public safety legal classifications.

The total three-year cost of the agreement is approximately \$16.7 million, with costs incorporated into departmental budgets and ongoing fiscal monitoring by County staff.

In addressing the Board, County leaders and staff noted that attorney recruitment and retention have been an ongoing challenge across California. The new agreement positions San Joaquin County to remain competitive while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Human Resources and the Auditor Controller will implement the agreement and provide guidance to County departments to ensure smooth rollout.