

## REPORT: COUNTY TAKES STAND AGAINST LEGISLATURE OVER CONTRACTS

By Woodland Daily Democrat Staff

Yolo County officials have sent a letter to the State Legislature signaling its strong opposition to Assembly Bill 1250 that it says seeks to stop counties from contracting with community-based organizations, nonprofits, local businesses and other private providers of quality services on which counties and their residents rely.

Counties contract with organizations and businesses that have the expertise, capacity or the ability to deliver services more efficiently.

AB 1250 has passed the Assembly and will be heard in the Senate Governance and Finance Committee next Wednesday.

The bill is considered a play by unions to limit who can receive county funds.

Yolo County is also not alone in its opposition, which would affect cities and counties. Menlo Park's elected officials have also taken a stand on the legislation that proposes to prohibit cities from contracting out for key services.

Cities and counties regularly uses consultant firms to guide major projects. Opponents of AB 1250, introduced by Assemblyman Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, D-Los Angeles, say contracting for services helps cities and counties curb escalating pension costs by requiring fewer employees.

Locally, County Administrator Patrick Blacklock stated the "constraints contained within AB 1250 will jeopardize our ability to provide these vital services to our county's most vulnerable residents" who would be included under nonprofit groups as well as private providers.

Proponents of the bill claim it will not limit contracting with non-government groups, but the clear intent of AB 1250 is to prohibit these private contracts. The bill imposes significant new restrictions

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**- Yolo County Administrator Patrick Blacklock**

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and layers of bureaucracy designed to stop counties from contracting for local services.

"For instance, the bill requires CBOs, nonprofits and local businesses to disclose personal information about its employees and officers, including salary and other private information," according to Public Information Officer Beth Gabor. "This not only raises significant privacy concerns, but it will chill private sector's willingness to enter into contracts with counties to provide services. It also requires contractors to disclose extensive information on a monthly basis. These auditing and review requirements could create unnecessary gaps and delays in service delivery that can pose detrimental outcomes for the people benefiting from these programs."

By restricting counties' abilities to provide services in the most cost-effective manner, AB 1250 will also increase costs for taxpayers and reduce funding available for other local services. For many fundamental programs, it will not be a matter of who will provide the service but if they can even be offered at all.

"The role of local government is to determine the most effective way to deliver critical services in our communities," said Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chairman Duane Chamberlain. "We do not need another mandate that dictates how we govern our county or that impedes our ability to deliver high-quality and cost-effective services to local residents."