



## Report from Assemblymember Jim Wood – May - June 2023 Mendocino County

The 2022-23 Legislative session is well underway. All the bills have gone through their house of origin and are now being considered in the opposite house. The budget has been signed however, there are still some budget related bills in process. For more news and updates – please check out my [website](#).

### **2023 BILLS**

Below is a list of some of my bills that passed in the Assembly and are now awaiting hearings in Senate.

#### **AB 50 - Interconnectivity Times and Distribution Planning**

This bill strives to improve interconnectivity times for new and existing electric customers, promote more efficient distribution planning, and increase communication between large electric corporations, local governments, and the state government.

#### **AB 242 – Employment Critical Access Hospitals**

This measure would permanently allow critical access hospitals (CAHs) to employ physicians. CAHs are defined by the federal government as small hospitals with 25 or fewer beds, often located in remote and rural areas. Allowing physicians to be employed in CAHs where it would be financially challenging to start or operate an solo practice ensures the community will have the essential health care services in rural communities.

#### **AB 286 – Broadband Infrastructure Mapping**

This bill will improve broadband mapping resources and efforts in California by updating and overlaying data already collected by the CPUC and it would ensure that publicly available maps express subscriber's real internet speed data assuring that providers do not over represent the depth and breadth of their service territory.

#### **AB 869 – Rural Hospital Seismic**

AB 869 would help a targeted subset of financially distressed hospitals meet the state's seismic safety compliance requirements. The bill would allow the state to provide grants to financially distressed small rural and district hospitals to fund seismic upgrades, and delay the completion date to 2035 or whenever funds are available.

#### **AB 1537 – Skilled Nursing Facilities**

Ensures that skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) spend a minimum of 85 percent of non-Medicare health revenues from all payer sources in each fiscal year on direct care services for residents.

#### **AB 1092 - Mergers and Acquisitions in Health Care**

AB 1092 expands regulatory oversight over health plan transactions, building on prior legislation (AB 595, Wood, Chapter 292, Statutes of 2018), which requires an entity that intends to merge with a health plan to give notice to, and secure prior approval from, the Department of Managed Health Care.

#### **AB 1272 – Drought Preparedness**

This bill will direct the State Water Resources Control Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop principles and guidelines that can improve climate resiliency and drought preparedness which will benefit the water supplies for both people and fish in coastal Northern and Central California watersheds.

### **GREAT NEWS!!!**

I was given an opportunity to ask for funding in this year's budget for a few special projects throughout the district and was successful on three requests in Mendocino County.

**Mendonoma Health Alliance** has been working on so many great projects; recently they have begun the process of launching a mobile health clinic to deliver primary care to the most underserved and most distant community members in their service area. I am happy to report that this year's budget includes \$350,000 to help them reach their goal.

I have met twice with the [Anderson Valley Service Learning Team](#) in my office in Sacramento. The work they did to reopen the Paul Dimmick campground a few years ago was really impressive and this year they talked with me about their efforts to build a skate park in Anderson Valley. I am thrilled that I was successful with a budget allocation of \$250,000 for that purpose.

In 2018, the Legislature approved California Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project with the goal of increasing the amount of California grown fruits and veggies available to people using the CalFresh program. For every dollar spent on a marked CA grown fresh product, the CalFresh customer gets \$1 in CalFresh credit. It's a great program but not one that is going to go statewide at this time. There are two retailers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District who are participating in the program, [Harvest Market](#) in Fort Bragg and [Mendoza's](#) in Mendocino (both owned by the same family). I was able to get an additional \$250,000 approved in the budget for Harvest's program to assure that it continues a bit longer.

## **SOME BRIEF NEWS**

### **Ukiah Prohousing designation**

The state's Prohousing designation is awarded to acknowledge the policies local governments are undertaking to promote housing development. The program encourages jurisdictions to pass and implement policies that accelerate housing production, promote favorable zoning and land use, reduce construction and development costs, and provide financial subsidies. They also received \$455,000 from the Prohousing Incentive Pilot Program for the development of affordable multifamily housing.

Ukiah also received over \$517,000 in Permanent Local Housing Allocation funding for deposit in its Local Housing Trust Fund.

Point Arena received \$285,000 for the development of Accessory Dwelling Units and the rehabilitation of owner occupied housing.

### **Groundbreaking at the Ukiah Recovery Center**

I joined Jacque Williams, the staff of the Ford Street Center and the Ukiah Recovery Center (URC) and a large group of community members to celebrate the ground breaking of the new URC facility. It has been a tremendous amount of work and has taken perseverance but Jacque, her staff and the board have succeeded and construction of the new facility will be underway soon.

### **Broadband Digital Equity Workshop**

I participated in a workshop hosted in Santa Rosa by the North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium (which includes Mendocino County), the California Department of Technology and the California Public Utilities Commission. The goal of the workshop was to gain input on the development on the State Digital Equity Plan and the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Five-Year Action Plan. The turnout was good and it was a very robust discussion.