



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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August 22, 2024

The Honorable Tina McKinnor
Assembly District 61
1021 O Street, Suite 5520
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2561 (McKinnor) Local public employees: vacant positions – OPPOSE

Dear Assemblymember McKinnor,

I am reaching out on behalf of the Mendocino Board of Supervisors to express our opposition to Assembly Bill (AB) 2561.

After careful review, the County believes that Assembly Bill 2561 will impose expensive and unnecessary burdens on local agencies and create additional layers of bureaucracy that will detract from efforts to recruit and retain the public workforce.

The recent amendments do not address the County's primary concerns, in some cases worsening the impacts of the bill. For these reasons, the County remains opposed to AB 2561, which:

- Undermines collective bargaining efforts by requiring agencies to meet and confer with bargaining units as soon as a vacancy rate exceeds an arbitrary 20% threshold – removing the prior requirement that vacancy rates persist for at least 180 days.
- Imposes an expensive reimbursable state mandate on thousands of public agencies, requiring every local agency to hold annual public hearings regardless of their vacancy rates.
- Detracts from resources needed to address vacancies and distracts local governing boards from addressing the needs of their communities.
- Ignores the diversity of public agencies in our state, as some agencies will trigger the bill's onerous requirements if even just one position becomes vacant.
- Lacks any resources to address root causes of vacancies and ignores recent cuts to funds and programs designed to address the vacancy problem among local agencies.

Local governments recognize the impact of long-term vacancies on employees and services. Specialty positions face workforce shortages, and local governments compete with other sectors for talent. Counties are tackling significant service delivery overhauls mandated by the state. Mandating additional meet and confer requirements and public hearings on vacancy rates will add to this already very full plate. Local agencies aim to address workforce shortages through collaboration and modernization but require support.

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Local agencies are committed to continuing the work happening now between all levels of government and the workforce to expand pipeline programs, build pathways into public sector jobs, modernize the hiring process, and offer competitive compensation. Workforce shortages cannot be closed overnight; it will take investment from all levels of government, including the state.

The County welcomes partnering on workforce strategies and believe there is a more productive and economical pathway than AB 2561. For those reasons, the Board of Supervisors of Mendocino County joins CSAC and RCRC, to oppose AB 2561.

Sincerely,



Maureen Mulheren, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Jim Wood, California State Assembly, 2nd District
The Honorable Mike McGuire, California State Senate, 2nd District