

February 24, 2015

The Honorable Jacqui Irwin
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 171 County Veterans Service Officers Funding - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Irwin,

As Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of EL Dorado County, I write to inform you that El Dorado County supports AB 171 which seeks to increase local assistance funding for County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs).

CVSOs are the initial, local point-of-contact for claimants accessing the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. They are instrumental in helping our returning veterans in understanding the complex VA process. AB 171 would encourage innovation and reward outstanding service by CVSOs and again increase the amount of state assistance provided to counties to fund the activities of CVSOs to \$5.6 million statewide, and to make this increase permanent.

It is critical that the CVSOs again receive an increase in this allocation. For the past two years, funding has been \$5.6 million. If funding returns to \$2.6 million as noted in the Governor's budget, new efforts that have been implemented to care for our veterans, including new hires, will be in jeopardy. Additionally, there continues to be a large number of underserved veterans and their dependents who are not aware of the federal and state benefits available to them as a result of their military service. Presently, there are an estimated 15,000 veterans living in El Dorado County. Passage of AB 171 would make it possible to expand services to thousands of underserved veterans and their dependents.

For these reasons, El Dorado County supports AB 171 and wishes you success in its passage. If you have any questions, please contact William Schultz.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

cc:

Members, Board of Supervisors

The Honorable Mark Leno - Chair, Senate Budget Committee

The Honorable Shirley Weber - Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

The Honorable Jim Nielsen, Vice Chair, Senate Budget Committee

The Honorable Melissa Melendez, Vice Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

The Honorable Richard Roth - Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #4

The Honorable Adrin Nazarian - Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4

_____(Name) - _____ County Veterans Service Officer

Pete Conaty & Associates