



County of El Dorado

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Legislation Text

File #: 07-1061, **Version:** 1

Supervisor Sweeney recommending Chairman be authorized to sign a letter of support for the Williamson Act subventions to legislative representatives, budget conference committee members, legislative leadership and the Governor's office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

FUNDING: The county receives approximately \$45,000 in Williamson Act subvention from the state.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION/BACKGROUND: The governor's budget proposes to eliminate approximately \$39.1 million in Williamson Act subventions. The proposed reduction would amount to a very small budget savings for the state while the impacts of eliminating these subventions would be catastrophic to one of the most important conservation tools used by counties to protect valuable agricultural/open space resources. The premise used to justify the proposed elimination of the subvention is that property tax revenues have recently grown at a stronger rate than state general fund revenues so state subsidies are no longer necessary to maintain the fiscal integrity of local governments. In actuality, property tax revenues have dropped considerably in many parts of the state as a result of the cooling housing market.

The preservation of agriculture and open space is not just a local priority: it is, and must remain a state priority as well.

FISCAL IMPACT/CHANGE TO NET COUNTY COST:

If successful, the county will continue to receive approximately \$45,000 in Williamson Act subventions that partially offset property tax losses incurred by enrolling agricultural land in Williamson Act contracts.