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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA
GOVERNMENT CENTER, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

December 5, 2006

Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Direction to CEO to report back to the Board on preparing a 2007 Climate Change Action Plan and other measures addressing the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Direct the CEO to work with County Agency Directors to prepare a report back to the Board that addresses:

1. Preparation of a 2007 Climate Change Action Plan: report back in 2007 on costs, timeline, and funding opportunities for preparing a plan to address reduction of the greenhouse gas emissions of County government operations.
2. Actions that county agencies have taken over the last five years and are in the process of taking to address greenhouse gas emissions reductions including energy conservation and green building standards.
3. A list of actions that county agencies may recommend for Board consideration in the near future to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
4. An analysis of making the County finance program available to County agencies to fund energy conservation and emission reduction projects.
5. A report on opportunities for public education regarding reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
6. Identifying opportunities for County staff to support APCD efforts if the APCD adopts our recommendation to develop a Countywide Climate Change Action Plan.

DISCUSSION:

As the largest local government in the county, County government has the opportunity to become a leader in efforts to reduce climate change while at the same time reducing air pollution, consumption of fossil fuels, and the County's utility costs.

Over the last ten years, County government has implemented many energy conservation strategies including purchasing hybrid vehicles, energy conservation retrofits of county buildings, and installation of solar panels. We would like to build on

these successes and other efforts underway, and tie them together with a comprehensive plan for addressing climate change at the County government level in 2007.

With the passage of the AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, carbon emission caps and carbon emissions trading are likely to become realities in California in the near future. Organizations that are well prepared for this new paradigm will be best positioned to both take advantage of opportunities that arise and avoid having to take drastic measures under strict State mandates.

While the County of Ventura can again exercise regional environmental leadership by adopting a Climate Change Action Plan, other jurisdictions across the State and nation have already taken this step. For example, the County of Sonoma has adopted a Climate Change Action Plan.

Locally, cities and special districts have implemented many energy conservation and alternative energy projects that have reduced greenhouse gas emissions while lowering energy bills. The Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance has aided many government agencies in implementing energy conservation projects, and is expanding their services to nonprofit agencies, homeowners, and businesses.

Ventura County's novel and aggressive recycling and reuse programs also contribute to emission reductions. Our County Recycling Market Development Zone combined with our local recycled product and feedstock industries and local alternative energy manufacturers provide a great base of business support for new green industries and technologies. This developing economic cluster would be boosted by the County becoming an early implementer of carbon emission reduction strategies, and in turn, would provide partnership opportunities to meet our emission reduction objectives.

Given all the above mentioned factors, adoption of a 2007 Climate Change Action Plan by the County would be a natural progression from measures we have already put into place, efforts underway, and new State legislation. The first steps of preparing a Climate Change Action Plan are typically to prepare an emissions inventory of existing operations, an accounting of emissions reductions already accomplished, and a projection of future emissions. The next step of plans is typically to set emission reduction targets. Finally, strategies and projects to meet our emissions reduction targets would be identified in concert with county departments.

In addition to the recommended actions for our Board and county government, we also intend to seek the Air Pollution Control District Board's support for preparation of a countywide Climate Change Action Plan. As was done by the San Luis Obispo APCD, such a plan would perform an emissions inventory of the entire county, analyze how existing air pollution control programs also accomplish greenhouse gas reduction, and identify possible strategies for further reductions, business assistance, and public outreach. By necessity, a countywide plan would be less detailed in nature than what could be prepared and implemented by the county for its own operations.

Recommendation #6 asks that county staff identify opportunities to support the APCD effort if approved by the APCD Board.

In conclusion, with adoption of the recommended actions, our Board will be presented with information on past and pending county emission reduction activities and a report on how we can do more to address climate change in the future. We encourage your support for taking these steps forward on a 2007 County Climate Protection Action Plan.

Cordially,

Steve Bennett
Supervisor, First District

Kathy Long
Supervisor, Third District