



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Board of Supervisors

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Amber Manfree
Chair

Hon. Catherine S. Blakespear
Chair, Senate Committee on Environmental Quality
1021 O Street, Suite
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

February 10, 2026

Dear Sen. Blakespear,

On behalf of the Napa County Board of Supervisors, I write in strong support of Assembly Bill 35, the effort to exempt Proposition 4 funding appropriations from rulemaking authored and principally co-authored by bipartisan Assemblymembers from the farthest northern and southern reaches of our state. These are regions with substantial divergence in many of their interests, but with shared interests in good government that delivers on voter expectations. Napa County respectfully requests the passage of AB 35 through your policy committee in recognition of the critical role these funds will play in climate resilience and mitigation projects across California.

Administrative rulemaking is a lengthy and complex process by design. Too often in our state's recent past, opponents of voter-approved, ballot-measure funded projects have used the complexities of rulemaking to stymie the will of the state's voters. One need look only to the High-Speed Rail project (funded by a \$10 billion bond approved by voters in 2008) and the Sacramento Valley Water Storage Project (\$1 billion bond, 2014), both of which are subject to costly administrative rulemaking procedures, neither of which are yet built, to see that rulemaking causes costs of projects to balloon and delayed disbursement of bond funds.

California is at a critical point in its efforts to mitigate and reverse rapidly changing climate conditions. Recognizing this, voters in 2024 approved \$10 billion for climate-related projects. Nearly 40 percent of the bonds are allocated to water supply improvements and flood mitigation.¹⁹ The next three biggest categories, representing a cumulative 40 percent of the remaining bonds, are designated for wildfire prevention and forest health, sea level rise and coastal restoration, and the protection and restoration of natural areas.

These resilience and restoration projects are too important to the future of our state to allow their implementation to be held up in years of rulemaking. The Legislature should look instead to the models set by 2018's Proposition 68, where voters approved \$4.1 billion for climate adaptation, water quality, and parks and to which rulemaking did not apply. As of 2026, \$4 billion has been committed, funding 3111 projects across 72 programs, and only \$68 million, or about 1.6%,

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remains outstanding.¹ Similarly, Proposition 84, passed in 2006 and exempted from rulemaking requirements, funded 42 projects totaling \$48.6 million by 2009, just three years after passage, and an additional 27 projects totaling \$38.7 million by 2013.² These results, delivered to California voters effectively and efficiently, speak for themselves. Imposing administrative rulemaking requirements on Proposition 4 funds will subject the programs designed to deliver these projects to significant administrative costs and delays in implementation.

Locally, the Napa River Ecology Center, a project repurposing the former City of American Canyon Corporate Yard to showcase the importance of the American Canyon Wetlands, is expected to receive approximately \$2.77 million in Proposition 4 funds through a grant from the State Coastal Conservancy.

The Napa County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the passage of AB 35 through your Committee on Environmental Quality.

Sincerely,

Amber Manfree
Chair
Napa County Board of Supervisors

CC:

Members and Staff of the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality
Sen. Chris Cabaldon
Asm. Cecilia Aguiar-Curry

¹ <https://bondaccountability.resources.ca.gov/p68.aspx>

² https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/prop84/