

County Government

Supervisors narrowly pass resolution in support of California Values Act

By **Anne Ternus-Bellamy** From page A5 | September 15, 2017

WOODLAND — Yolo County supervisors endorsed the California Values Act on Tuesday, voting 3-2 to send a message of support for SB 54 to state lawmakers and Gov. Jerry Brown.

Supervisor Don Saylor of Davis had asked his colleagues to endorse the measure, which would limit local law enforcement's involvement in federal immigration efforts by prohibiting local agencies from using resources to investigate, interrogate, detain, detect or arrest individuals for immigration enforcement purposes.

The so-called "sanctuary state" bill, which has passed the Senate, was amended Monday following negotiations between the author, Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles, and Brown to ameliorate Brown's concerns.

The measure now allows law enforcement officers to transfer and share information about inmates convicted of some 800 crimes with federal immigration officials.

Supervisors Jim Provenza of Davis and Oscar Villegas of West Sacramento voted in favor of Saylor's motion in support of SB 54 while Duane Chamberlain of the rural 5th District and Matt Rexroad of Woodland voted against it.

Prior to the vote, Saylor provided his rationale for Yolo County taking a position on state legislation.

"Over the last year or so," Saylor said, "there've been a number of concerns arising among the immigrant population of our county regarding their safety and their ability to remain and work productively as a part of our community."

SB 54, he said, would address some of these concerns in a way that is consistent with the board's legislative platform.

"Our legislative platform ... states that we will proactively analyze policy proposals or legislation which affects our most vulnerable residents such as Medi-Cal recipients, foster youth, immigrants, refugees and the aging," Saylor said.

"There's a great fear among the farmworker community ... that they may be deported. This fear is at an all-time high due to this administration and policies coming out of Washington, D.C.

“We want to send a signal to the residents of Yolo County and beyond that Yolo County stands with our residents, especially those vulnerable populations.”

Speaking in support of Saylor’s resolution on Tuesday was UC Davis professor Natalia Deeb-Sossa, a refugee herself from Colombia.

SB 54, she said, “will keep families together and promote public safety in our communities by making sure crime victims, survivors and witnesses aren’t afraid to come forward and seek help from law enforcement.”

“Many people in my community did not come here to speak on their behalf because they are afraid to step into this building and to stand before you here this afternoon, when you don’t know who is friend or foe,” Deeb-Sossa said.

“When you are afraid to go to a clinic even when you or your child is sick, when you are afraid to go to school ... this is not OK.

“Living in fear is not OK. I left Colombia because I was living in fear but now we are living in fear here, in Yolo County. Please make sure Yolo County is a safe community for us.”

In voting for Saylor’s motion, Provenza said, “What the bill actually does is it unites California as a state so no one city or county is singled out for its enforcement of similar provisions. I think that strengthens the effort.

“And I agree it’s a significant problem if people think they will be deported or run into problems with immigration if they report a crime or if they come into contact with law enforcement for any reason.

“I also don’t think that our taxpayers should be supporting the federal efforts,” Provenza added, “and I think ... much of immigration enforcement in this country is based on racial animus rather than... fairly enforcing the law.”

In voting against the motion, Rexroad said, “I don’t think this is the kind of thing we should get involved in.”

He noted that state Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, already voted in favor of SB 54 in the Senate and Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, D-Winters, has said she will support the bill in the Assembly.

“This is going to happen without us,” he said.

Rexroad also questioned the rationale for taking a position on SB 54.

The bill may affect Yolo County residents, Rexroad said, “but so does peace in North Korea and all sorts of things and we don’t get involved in those.”

SB 54 must be approved by the state Assembly before lawmakers adjourn on Friday.

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