

SAN JOAQUIN Valley CALIFORNIA REGIONAL POLICY COUNCIL Voice 2011



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

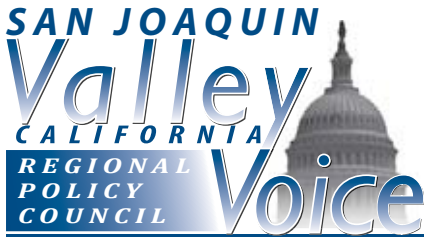




2011 WASHINGTON D.C. “VALLEY VOICE” AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 - 8 AM TO 5 PM

- 8:00 a.m. Meet at the Hilton Garden for Briefing and travel to: **B-318 Rayburn House Office Building (Ways and Means Hearing Room)**
Contact: Caitlyn Shannon, 202-225-2523
- 9:30 a.m. **Valley Voice Funding and Policy Priorities - Policy and Project Presentations**
Meeting with House staff – Denham, Costa, Nunes, and McNerney
Introduction of Regional Policy Council Participants
- **Damon Nelson**, Legislative Director, *Rep. Devin Nunes*
 - **Nick Choate**, Legislative Director, *Rep. Jim Costa*
 - **Robin Roberts**, Chief of Staff, *Rep. Dennis Cardoza*
 - **Bret Manley**, Legislative Director, *Rep. Jeff Denham*
 - **Kyle Lombardi**, Legislative Director, *Rep. Kevin McCarthy*
 - **Andrew Horowitz**, Legislative Director, *Rep. Jerry McNerney*
- 11:00 a.m. **Mike Doyle, McClatchy Newspapers**
Mike will come to meeting room to discuss the goals and objectives of the Valley Voice meetings.
- Noon *Lunch – Rayburn Cafeteria*
- 1:00 p.m. **Congressman Jeff Denham**
Contact: Carol Kresse, 202-225-4540
- 1:30 p.m. **Congressman Jim Costa**
Contact: Juan Lopez, 202-225-3341
- 2:30 p.m. Travel to Senator Feinstein’s office
- 3:00 p.m. **Senator Dianne Feinstein**
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Contact: Bryer Davis 202-224-2501
Travel back to B-318 Rayburn House Office Building.
- 4:30 p.m. **Congressman Jerry McNerney**
Contact: Theresa Frison, 202-225-1947
- 5:00 p.m. **Congressman Devin Nunes**
Contact: Caitlyn Shannon, 202-225-2523



2011 WASHINGTON D.C. "VALLEY VOICE" AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

6:00 p.m. **Reconnaissance and Review**

6:30 p.m. **Group Dinner OLD EBBITT GRILL**

*675 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
p: 202.347.4800*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 - 8:30 AM TO 1:30 PM

8:30 a.m. Meet at the Hilton Garden Inn for Briefing and walk to White House.

9:30 a.m. **White House, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs**
David Agnew, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
Review of American Jobs Act and Administration Priorities
 Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Room 230A
The entrance is near 17th Street NW and State Place NW (see map)
 Have security desk contact: Irene Hsu, 202-456-2201

11:15 a.m. Early Lunch, Hart Senate Office Building

12:00 p.m. **Senator Barbara Boxer**
Meeting with the Senator for presentation of "Valley Voice" projects and priorities.
Check-in with staff at the Senate appointments desk, 1st floor of the Capitol.
 Contact: Rachel S. Cohen, 202-223-8109

1:00 p.m. **Congressman Kevin McCarthy**
 House Majority Whip Office H-107 (Conference Room)
 Contact: Kristin Thomson, 202-225-0197



2011 WASHINGTON D.C. "VALLEY VOICE" AGENDA

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 - 2 PM TO 4 PM

BREAKOUT MEETINGS - TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Federal Agency and Committee Priority Issues Meetings - Surface Transportation Reauthorization Proposals and Prospects

2:00 p.m. **Senate Environment and Public Works Committee**

Tyler Rushforth, Counsel

508 Hart Senate Office Building

Contact: 202-224-8832

Staff Liason: Len Simon

3:00 p.m. **House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee,**
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit

Jennifer Hall, Counsel

B-376 Rayburn House Office Building

Contact: 202-225-6715 Staff Liason: Len Simon

3:00 p.m. **Office of the Secretary of Transportation**

Joanna Turner, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs

Beth Osborne, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE (West Building - next to Starbucks)

Have the Security Desk call: Linda Gilchrist, 202-366-4089

Staff Liason: Brandon Key

Federal Agency Priority Issues Meetings - Housing Community Development and Economic Development

2:30 p.m. **Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development**

Matt Erskine, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Bryan Borlik, Director of Performance Division

Malinda Matson, Legislative Affairs for California

14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW

Have the Security Desk call: 202-482-2900

2:30 p.m. **Office of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development**

Neighborhood Stabilization Program

Community Development

451 7th Street, SW

Have the Security Desk call: Erica Jacquez, 202-402-4807 Staff Liason: Rukia Dahir

4:00 p.m. **Reconnaissance and Review - Hilton Garden inn**

SAN JOAQUIN
Valley
CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL
POLICY
COUNCIL **Voice**

FEDERAL
TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORIZATION





SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

Goods Movement Priorities for Federal Transportation Authorization

PROGRAM	REQUEST
NEPA Streamlining and Regulatory Reform	1. Change federal NEPA regulations to set a specific review time in which Federal resource agencies are required to provide comments to the project sponsor. The time limit could be six (6) month or one (1) year as long as there is a defined time for review. 2. Permit integrating state and federal environmental impact studies without compromising environmental standards, to avoid project cost increases that occur due to lengthy processes.
Metropolitan Planning Organizations	1. Maintain 50,000 population threshold for metropolitan planning organization designation. 2. Maintain federal planning funds for MPOs to continue regional planning activities and goods movement programs.
High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System	1. Guaranteed \$2 billion annually for High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System with priority for those areas listed as "moderate and above" 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM2.5 nonattainment areas.
Create Freight Corridor Program	1. Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for freight corridors with priority for those areas listed as "moderate and above" 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM2.5 nonattainment areas.
Port Corridor Management Plans	1. Include Port Corridor Management Planning in criteria for existing planning grants. 2. Redefine port funding as within 25-50 miles of a port and a port access corridor as within 300 miles of a port.
Freight Rail Line Notification and Protection	1. Revise short-haul rail abandonment regulations to require short-haul rail line operators to notify transportation planning agencies and metropolitan planning agencies of their intent to abandon a segment of rail line. 2. Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for national short-haul rail program with priority for those areas listed as "moderate and above" 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM2.5 nonattainment areas. 3. Require short-haul rail line operators to file environmental and economic impact reports that address local and regional issues in accordance with NEPA.



Federal Transportation Authorization

NEPA Streamlining and Regulatory Reform

Requests: National Environmental Protection Act Regulatory Reform

1. *Change federal NEPA regulations to set specific review time in which federal resource agencies are required to provide comments to the project sponsor.*
2. *Permit integrating state and federal environmental impact studies without compromising environmental standards to avoid project cost increases that occur due to lengthy processes.*

Background

San Joaquin Valley transportation agencies are grateful for the emphasis that Congressional proposals for Transportation Reauthorization have placed on regulatory reform in the project delivery process. The Valley also appreciates Congress' continued support for transportation planning efforts as a small share off the top of each program we help administer.

- Time is money in transportation. Unnecessary project delays inflate the cost of already expensive projects.
- Local governments and state DOTs should have a reasonable expectation of the time it takes for federal agencies to review environmental documents.
- NEPA standards are typically exceeded by the California Environmental Quality Act. Integration is an inexpensive, relatively simple policy fix that has the potential to greatly improve project delivery and lower costs.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Requests: Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure and Funding

1. *Maintain 50,000 population threshold for metropolitan planning organization designation.*
2. *Maintain federal planning funds for MPOs to continue regional planning activities and goods movement programs.*

Background

The Valley's transportation planning agencies appreciate Congress' continued support for transportation planning efforts as a small share off the top of each program we help administer.

- The Valley is concerned about proposals to eliminate MPOs designations for those agencies within the 50,000-200,000 population threshold.
- Locally elected officials should represent the needs of their constituents through the MPO in the planning and selection process of transportation-related activities.
- Changing the population threshold disenfranchises locally elected officials and further strengthens the role of unelected state department of transportation officials, who do not necessarily consider or thoroughly understand the transportation issues in all regions of a state.
- We urge you to reject the consideration of phasing out over 50 percent of the United States' Metropolitan Planning Organizations.



Federal Transportation Authorization

High-Priority Corridors

Request: High-Priority Corridors on the National Highway System

1. *Guaranteed \$2 billion annually for High-Priority Corridors on the National Highway System for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM 2.5 nonattainment areas.*

Request: Create Freight Corridor Program

1. *Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for freight corridors for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM 2.5 nonattainment areas.*

Request: Port Corridor Management Plans

1. *Include Port Corridor Management Planning in criteria for existing planning grants.*
2. *Redefine port funding as within 25-50 miles of a port and a port access corridor as within 300 miles of a port.*

Background

- Home to more than 4 million people, the San Joaquin Valley's status as the "nation's salad bowl" and its proximity to major ports in northern and southern California classify it as a major hub of interstate commerce.
- The agricultural base of the San Joaquin Valley is a \$25 billion industry that provides produce and dairy products to the global economy.
- Placing a funding emphasis on projects and programs that improve freight delivery is beneficial for interstate commerce and national interests to improve a struggling economy.
- The Valley is home to over 31,000 miles of roadways and is highly dependent on efficient road, rail, air and port systems that support timely goods-to-market transactions.
- The Valley's critical role in national agricultural goods movement and as a thoroughfare for imports that enter through California ports should be recognized in a national goods movement program.
- By focusing scarce resources on regions with heavy, through-way, goods movement traffic and poor air quality, the national interest is served by addressing multiple problems through individual projects. CMAQ has proven a valuable program in the Valley for the same reason and we support its continuation.
- Using ozone and PM 2.5 non-attainment areas as criteria for goods movement funding benefits other regions besides the Valley, particularly Southern California and the ports of Long Beach and San Pedro. However, regions in states as diverse as Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and New Jersey also benefit.

Federal Transportation Authorization

Freight Rail Line Notification and Protection

Requests: Short-Line Rail

1. *Revise short-haul rail abandonment regulations to require short-line rail operators to notify transportation planning agencies of their intent to abandon a segment of rail line. This change would not necessarily delay the abandonment process.*
2. *Guaranteed \$1 billion annually for national short-line rail program for Extreme 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and PM 2.5 nonattainment areas.*
3. *Require short-line rail operators to file environmental and economic impact reports that address local and regional issues in accordance with NEPA.*

Background

Investment in short-line rail projects can reduce the number of semi-trucks on California's highways and provides another option for transporting Valley goods to state ports. By reauthorizing the transportation bill to maximize short-line rail, the following benefits will be achieved:

Economic Stimulus – Transportation investment on average results in 45,000 new jobs per \$1 billion in expenditures. In addition, rail increases state revenue through exports;

Trade Deficit Reduction – Better rail infrastructure between the Valley and the ports will help increase the 40 percent share of the \$25 billion in agricultural products exported from the Valley;

Energy Independence – Products shipped by rail are 10 times more energy efficient than trucks, reducing oil consumption and our dependence on foreign sources;

Improved Air Quality – Rail access between the Valley and the port could reduce 400 trucks per day on I-5 – one of the largest reductions in diesel emissions for any project in the state;

Combat Climate Change – Using rail to transport more freight between the Ports and the Valley would result in the reduction of hundreds of tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year.



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Air Quality Priorities

PROGRAM	REQUEST
CMAQ	1. Preserve federal funding for the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program that allows for air pollution reduction efforts.
H.R. 1582 “Common Sense Ozone Regulation Act”	1. Support H.R. 1582 “Common Sense Ozone Regulation Act”
Establishment of Air Quality and Health Empowerment Zone Designation	1. The Establishment of Air Quality and Health Empowerment Zone Designation which would provide financial assistance for incentive programs in areas that face significant air quality, health, and economic challenges.





SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Air Quality Priorities

CMAQ

Requests: Preservation of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program

1. The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council supports legislation and funding programs, such as the continuation of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program, that provide federal funding for air pollution reduction.

Background:

The Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program was created under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, continued under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and reauthorized by SAFETEA-LU. More than \$8.6 billion was authorized over the five-year program (2005-2009), with annual authorization amounts increasing each year during this period. Through 2005, the program supported nearly 16,000 transportation projects across the country. Reducing pollution and other adverse environmental effects of transportation projects and transportation system inefficiency have been long-standing objectives of the Department of Transportation. The strategic plans for DOT and for the FHWA both include performance measures specifically focused on reducing air pollution from transportation facilities. By choosing to fund a CMAQ project, local governments can improve air quality and make progress towards achieving attainment status and ensuring compliance with the transportation conformity provisions of the Clean Air Act.

Recent transportation bill proposals being considered in Congress greatly threaten future designated funding for air pollution reduction programs such as the CMAQ program. As populations continue to grow in rural and urban areas alike, the CMAQ program provides the funding and the broad array of tools to accomplish healthy, clean, efficient, and sustainable alternative modes of transportation to meet the population demands. These alternative modes essentially reduce congestion, improve air quality, achieve energy independence, increase physical activity levels, and improve traffic safety, all of which are critical goals that are in the interest of the nation.

San Joaquin County

The San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) prioritizes projects for funding from the CMAQ program according to the cost-effectiveness policies adopted by the eight San Joaquin Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations in 2007. These cost-effectiveness policies promote projects that provide the greatest emission reductions per dollar of CMAQ funding spent. In the most recent 2009 CMAQ funding cycle SJCOG funded over \$26 million in projects to significantly reduce vehicle emissions in San Joaquin County. These projects included corridor specific adaptive traffic control systems, two park-and-ride lots, five intersection signalization projects, and the purchase of multiple alternative fuel buses to support both existing and expanded transit services. One of the most notable projects funded through the 2009 CMAQ cycle was the expansion of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in the City of Stockton. The funding for this project included the purchase of BRT vehicles, operations, and the modification of traffic signals along the new BRT corridor to allow for bus priority. In addition to specific transportation projects funded through the CMAQ program, SJCOG also funds its ongoing transportation demand management (TDM) program which focuses on ridesharing and alternative modes of transportation. The success of this program has resulted in hundreds of carpools, vanpools and bicycle trips occurring each day in San Joaquin County over single-occupancy vehicle trips. The future of these programs and the success of SJCOG in making quantifiable reductions in vehicle emissions in San Joaquin County is dependent on the continued funding of the CMAQ program.



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Air Quality Priorities

CMAQ

Stanislaus County

The CMAQ Program has enabled the Stanislaus County region's communities to fund technological applications to improve transportation systems, increase transit services, improve flow of traffic, and allow for more bicycle and pedestrian commuting. This is in an effort to reduce vehicle emissions and improve the air quality in our region.

The Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG) region received approximately \$14.5 million in CMAQ funding for the Federal Fiscal (FFY) years 2010/11 and 2011/12 Call for Projects. About \$1.3 million is funding the improvement of 6 Bicycle Pedestrian Paths for commuters, \$1.8 million is funding the Purchase of Alternative Fuel Vehicles and a CNG Fueling Station, \$3.6 million in funds is allowing for improvement to the flow of traffic and safety at 12 locations region wide, \$5.8 million is funding signalization improvements at 16 regional locations, and approximately \$2 million in funding is allowing an increase and improvements to transit services.

Merced County

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) priority for CMAQ funding is for public transit services and vehicle purchases. If all transit needs are being met, other projects are pursued. Currently, the Merced County Region has approximately \$7 million, funding 15 projects. About \$3 million is funding 3 bikeway improvement projects, \$2 million is funding a roundabout, and about \$2 million is funding 11 cleaner-engine/cleaner-vehicle projects, abiding by the San Joaquin Valley's cost-effectiveness policy. \$3 million is unprogrammed and we anticipate programming that soon in somewhat similar ratios.

Madera County

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) has used CMAQ funds in collaboration with the Madera Unified School District to convert its existing diesel school bus fleet to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). This innovative partnership has improved CMAQ project delivery in Madera County and reduced the quantity of pollutants emitted near local schools.

Fresno County

Fresno COG prioritizes cost-effective projects for funding under the CMAQ Improvement Program. During the February 2008 funding cycle over 48% of the available funding was granted to projects that provide the greatest air pollution emission reductions for each dollar spent. The October 2009 cycle committed over 39% of available funds for cost-effective projects. In 2009, funding was granted for systems in support of the SJV ITS Strategic Deployment Plan; traffic signal synchronization projects and 9 miles of shoulder stabilization projects to reduce entrained dust in support of PM10 pollutant reduction. Many CNG and Hybrid Electric projects that support Fresno's bus rapid transit system were also funded as well as CNG and electric powered maintenance vehicles, park and ride lots; and a variety of pedestrian/bicycle projects to reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated emissions.

Fresno COG had over \$36 million in requests for projects that would reduce air pollution emissions, yet only had \$13.4 million in available funding. Additional funding would speed emission reductions.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

Air Quality Priorities

CMAQ

Kings County

In the Kings County Region, the CMAQ program is vital to our transit agency and member jurisdictions in funding their vehicle and infrastructure needs. This includes the transition from gasoline powered vehicles to ultra-low emission vehicle (such as CNG powered) fleets, idle-reduction (such as traffic lights and synchronization, intersection channelization, etc.) and goods movement projects. These projects are necessary if we are to have any opportunity to meet air quality standards.

Examples of the expenditures in the current four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) element:

- Transit: more than \$3.4 million in CNG vehicle infrastructure, more than \$1.0 million in CNG rolling stock, and more than \$300,000 in service expansions.
- Goods Movement: \$750,000 in infrastructure.
- Low Emission Vehicle Program: \$3.5 million in vehicle purchases and \$1.1 million in infrastructure.
- Reduced Idle Time Program: more than \$3.6 million.

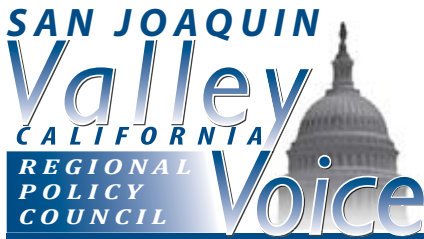
Tulare County

Tulare County has used CMAQ funds for a number of projects including CNG facilities and conversion of heavy and light duty public fleets to CNG (waste vehicles, transit buses, public safety vehicles), installing roundabouts, funding new transit routes, installing emissions traps and more.

Kern County

Golden Empire Transit (GET) is the metropolitan Bakersfield provider of public transit services. Since 1992, GET has converted its entire bus fleet to natural gas. At the present time, it has a total of 100 vehicles, of which 19 are paratransit and 62 are full size buses. All buses are natural gas technology.





SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Air Quality Priorities

H.R. 1582

Requests: Support for H.R. 1582 "Common Sense Ozone Regulation Act"

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council requests support for H.R. 1582 "Common Sense Ozone Regulation Act" introduced by Rep. Kevin McCarthy. H.R. 1582 removes the applicability of the now revoked 1-hour ozone standard in areas that have been designated as "extreme" non-attainment for the new, more health protective 8-hour ozone standard.

Background:

- The federal non-attainment penalties which are currently imposed on San Joaquin Valley residents and businesses are unfair and unjustified. Despite significant challenges, air quality in the San Joaquin Valley has improved dramatically. These improvements are largely the results of major investment and sacrifice by Valley businesses and residents. Since 1980, stationary source emissions, which are controlled by the local air pollution control district, have been reduced by more than 80%. Although significant challenges remain, this past year, the Valley experienced its cleanest winter and summer in recent history.
- A common sense approach is warranted in implementing the new ambient air quality standards that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is about to publish. H.R. 1582 will in no way delay clean air efforts in the San Joaquin Valley and will not remove EPA's authority to establish a new 8-hour ozone standard. As an "extreme" non-attainment area for the current standard, the Valley is required to adopt all feasible control measures, and is working to develop advanced, yet currently unavailable, technologies to obtain additional reductions. In assessing the achievability of the new standard it is important to consider the fact that the proposed new standard encroaches on the naturally occurring, or background, ozone concentrations in the Valley. In promulgating feasible implementation strategies we must also be cognizant of the fact that many areas in the San Joaquin Valley suffer from chronic double-digit unemployment rates which are now nearing 20%.





SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Air Quality Priorities

Air Quality and Health Empowerment Zone

Requests: Establishment of Air Quality and Health Empowerment Zone Designation

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy council supports the Establishment of Air Quality and Health Empowerment Zone Designation which would provide financial assistance for incentive programs in areas that face significant air quality, health, and economic challenges. Given the Valley's air quality challenges and continued double digit unemployment rates, the Valley would be a prime candidate for designation under this new program. The program would provide a mechanism for ongoing appropriations for incentive programs to accelerate the introduction of new emissions reduction technologies.

Background:

- Despite significant progress, the San Joaquin Valley continues to be severely impacted by adverse air quality and is in severe non-attainment of several federal and state air quality standards for particulates and emissions. Since 1980, when air programs in the Valley began taking shape, we have reduced emissions from stationary sources by 80% and total emissions by nearly 60%. These reductions in emissions have come about as the result of significant investment by Valley businesses. The number of days and the magnitude by which the Valley exceeds the health-based standards have been reduced dramatically. However, we need to do much more before we have healthier air for all Valley residents. The region's topography and meteorology provide ideal conditions for trapping air pollution for long periods of time, and producing harmful pollutants such as ozone and particulate matter.
- The Valley's non-attainment status leads to a number of negative health and economic impacts. A recent study by California State University, Fullerton estimates the annual value of the impacts from air pollution at \$5.6 billion. In order to attain the standards and avoid the negative health and economic impact, the Valley will need to achieve significant emissions reductions beyond those obtained through existing federal, state, and local regulatory programs. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's draft attainment plan obtains approximately 90% of the required emissions reductions from new and existing regulatory programs. The remaining emissions reductions can not be achieved through regulatory programs and will need to be achieved through incentive-based programs. The majority of the incentive-based reductions will address mobile sources of pollution which account for 80% of the nitrogen oxide emission in the San Joaquin Valley.





San Joaquin Valley Economic and Housing Priorities

Economy and Housing

Requests:

1. Continue support of the HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership, including TIGER grant and livable communities funding for the Valley.
2. Continue support for EDA program funding for the construction, expansion or upgrade of essential public infrastructure and facilities for Valley communities hit hardest by the economic downturn.
3. Continue support for planning and technical assistance for regional planning efforts including the ongoing "San Joaquin Valley Regional Energy Plan", "Valley Blueprint", and "Smart Valley Places".
4. Continue Block Grant funding (CDBG, NSP and HOME) to the State of California and Valley entitlement jurisdictions for affordable housing, economic development and foreclosure relief funding.

Background:

- The Valley has long suffered as an area of significant concentrated poverty, high unemployment, poor air quality and a sprawling growth pattern of low-density, auto-dependent suburban development that continues to consume valuable agricultural land.
- The sheer size of the San Joaquin Valley, 27,000 square miles, four million residents, 62 cities and numerous communities, makes it somewhat difficult for coordinated and sustainable planning and development efforts. In spite of this, the Valley continues to work together and support each other's efforts.
- Valley rural water systems are in deteriorated conditions with poor water quality that includes nitrites, benzene and other contaminants harmful to the health of our residents.
- Three cities in the San Joaquin Valley are among the top ten cities worst hit by foreclosures as of July 2011. Other San Joaquin Valley cities, while not making the "top ten" list, are still well ahead the rest of the nation in foreclosures.
- In San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced counties, mortgages under water have reached more than 57 percent, according to CoreLogic tracking. In Stockton, San Joaquin County, foreclosures have recently jumped 57 percent, with one in every 124 housing units with a foreclosure filing in July, according to Realty Trak reports.
- Eight San Joaquin Valley cities are in the top 20 nationwide for unemployment rates. While California's unemployment rate, at 12 percent, compares with the rest of the country, the rate in the Valley shows an average unemployment rate of 18 percent, with some communities nearing 30 percent.