



State of California

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

August 25, 2017

Pedro Nava
Chairman

Sean Varner
Vice Chairman

David Beier

Iveta Briggs

Anthony Cannella
Senator

Joshua LaFarga

Chad Mayes
Assemblymember

Don Perata

Bill Quirk
Assemblymember

Richard Roth
Senator

Janna Skille

Helen Torres

Carole D'Elia
Executive Director

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown
Governor, State of California
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 979 (LACKEY)

Dear Governor Brown:

The Little Hoover Commission supports Assembly Bill 979 (Lackey), which will strengthen Local Area Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) by easing the process to add special district representatives to the 28 county LAFCOs where districts have no voice.

On Thursday, August 24, 2017, the Little Hoover Commission adopted recommendations after completing a year-long study on special districts. In its review, the Commission found numerous barriers that make it challenging for LAFCOs to provide adequate oversight of special districts.

The Commission found that even though the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Reorganization Act of 2000 provided the option to add two special district members to county LAFCOs to broaden local governing perspectives, only 30 counties have special district representatives on their LAFCOs. The 28 counties without special district representatives on their LAFCOs, mostly in rural California, cite scarce resources to make this change in representation.

In order to change a LAFCO's membership structure a majority of special districts within a county must pass individual resolutions approving the change within one year. This has repeatedly proved itself a formidable obstacle to broadening the outlook of local LAFCOs. In its review, the Commission found that adding special districts to LAFCOs provides a more diverse decision-making foundation and stronger finances. In its recently-adopted report, the Commission recommends the Governor sign AB 979.

Because AB 979 would allow a simple one-time election process where districts could easily – and simultaneously – decide the question on adding special districts to LAFCOs, the Commission supports this legislation and urges you to sign the bill. If you have any questions, or if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carole D'Elia
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission