



California Special Districts Association
Highlights of 2015

The Voice of Special Districts

Advocacy & Public Affairs • Member Services • Professional Development • Value Added Benefits

 Visit us at www.csdanet.net

MEMBERSHIP REACHES RECORD NUMBERS

Seventy-one new members joined in 2015, bringing our total membership to a record 1,088. Our core membership of independent special districts is also at an all-time high. Retention rates are high as well, as districts continue to look to CSDA for the quality professional development opportunities, information sharing, and advocacy services they've come to expect from *their* association. In addition to our public agency members, CSDA enjoys the support of 117 Business Affiliates. We are grateful to these companies not only for their financial contributions, but for lending their expertise to our educational sessions, publications, and more. A special thank you goes to Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, CSDA Finance Corporation, Hanson Bridgett, Meyers Nave, and Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA).

71 NEW
MEMBERS

CONNECTING YOU WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES AND THE CAPITOL

- **Listening to Our Membership** – As part of District NetWorks, CSDA hired two full-time public affairs field coordinators, one in Northern California and one in Southern California, with the mission to support and unite special districts.
- **Visited Nearly 300 Special Districts** – Listening to the concerns and needs of the membership, sharing the latest information from Sacramento, and strengthening the foundation of CSDA's advocacy efforts.
- **Added Chapter Participation** – The number of affiliated local CSDA chapters expanded from 12 to 14, with new chapter affiliation agreements passing in Butte and San Bernardino Counties.
- **Increased Grassroots Responses** – The number of statewide responses to CSDA "Calls to Action" grew by nearly 300 percent above last year, intensifying our impact on legislation in Sacramento.

CALLS TO ACTION
RESPONSES
GREW 300%

Highlights of 2015



Advocacy and Public Affairs

PROTECTING LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR LOCAL SERVICES

- **Blocked Property Tax Diversions** – Successfully opposed legislation attempting to divert approximately \$2 billion in local agency revenue to fund “Mardi Gras” bonds issued by former RDAs at interest rates in excess of eight percent (Assembly Bill 2493, Bloom).
- **Achieved Accountable and Collaborative Infrastructure Development** Supported the replacement of RDAs with new infrastructure and economic development tools requiring the consent and representation of affected special districts (AB 2, Alejo and E. Garcia and AB 313, Atkins).

ENSURING COST-EFFECTIVE PUBLIC WORKS

- **Promoted Volunteerism** – Successfully supported a legislative measure that extends the ability of special districts to utilize volunteers without fear of violating prevailing wage laws (AB 327, Gordon).
- **Prevented Shift of Project Liability** – Successfully opposed a precedent-setting bill that would have unfairly transferred long-standing responsibilities and costs from private contractors to special districts and other public agencies (AB 1315, Alejo).

SAVING DISTRICTS MONEY AND SECURING MANDATE REIMBURSEMENTS

- **Secured Full Reimbursement of Pre-2004 State Mandates** – Ongoing efforts to secure mandate reimbursement for claims made over a decade ago resulted in the state fully reimbursing pre-2004 mandate claims in the amount of \$756 million.
- **Provided Solutions to Soaring Election Costs** – Sponsored cost-cutting provisions to provide clarity and make it easier for any special district to voluntarily consolidate elections into a November general election (AB 1535, Committee on Elections and Redistricting).
- **Fought Rising Workers’ Comp Rates** – Successfully supported a legislative measure to create a drug formulary for workers’ compensation that should result in reduced medical claims from injured workers and begin to combat the overutilization of dangerous and habit-forming prescription drugs (AB 1124, Perea). Also, successfully opposed legislation that would have further driven up the costs of workers’ compensation (AB 305, Gonzalez).

YOUR VOICE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CAPITOL

- **Courtroom: Mello Roos Case** – Participated in five amicus briefs on behalf of special districts, including *Golden State Water Company v. Casitas Municipal Water District*, which protected the use of Mello-Roos financing for eminent domain and intangible asset acquisitions for special districts.
- **CalPERS: Risk Mitigation** – Kept CSDA members closely informed on the latest CalPERS public employee pension rate discussions, and presented special district feedback directly to CalPERS executives and board members.
- **State Auditor: High Risk Local Agency Audit Program** – Participated in a working group with the State Auditor’s Office to provide the special district perspective during the Auditor’s drafting of the High Risk Local Government Agency Audit Program regulations.

Professional Development Serves as a Trusted Resource

SPECIAL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CONFERENCE – CORE GOVERNANCE TRAINING

CSDA started the year with our Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA) Conference in Napa. The conference, which drew over 100 leaders from around the state, focuses on the necessity of the board and general manager to work closely toward a common goal, and covered all four modules of the SDLA over the course of the two-and-a-half day conference.

BOARD SECRETARY/CLERK CONFERENCE

In 2015 CSDA hosted two Board Secretary/Clerk Conferences with a total of 369 attendees. The tracks for both first-time and returning attendees continue to be very popular. New this year were longer, three-hour sessions, which allowed attendees to focus on some hot topics including human resources, policy and procedure writing, and finance.

GENERAL MANAGER LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Attendance at the General Manager Leadership Summit continues to grow and topped 200 attendees for the first time. Popular session topics included succession planning, the Brown Act, general manager performance evaluations, board and general manager relations, negotiations, difficult employees, and disruptive behavior at board meetings.

2015 CSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITOR SHOWCASE

Held September 21 - 24 in Monterey, this year’s conference was another record-setting event with well over 700 attendees. Over 30 breakout sessions provided attendees with valuable information covering a variety of topics including navigating an audit, public records, water and sewer rates, and more.

ON-DEMAND WEBINARS LAUNCHED

This year CSDA launched our on-demand webinar service that enables attendees to participate in many of CSDA’s most popular webinars at a time and place that is most convenient for them. Participants are able to log in, watch the webinar of their choice, and even print their certificate of completion on their own time. Twenty titles will be available by the end of 2015, in addition to our regularly scheduled “live” webinars, with more being added all the time.

HR BOOT CAMP FOR SPECIAL DISTRICTS

CSDA partnered with the Special District Risk Management Authority and Liebert Cassidy Whitmore for the first Human Resources Boot Camp for Special Districts. This one-day workshop was designed to maximize an attendee’s time and featured substantive information for attendees to use right away on hiring, performance evaluation, employee discipline, and legal trends.



Adding Value to Membership – New Benefits

CSDA is always looking at ways to enhance the benefits of membership by adding programs and discounts that save districts time and money. In May, CSDA announced the new member benefit **Streamline**. This website tool was developed with special districts in mind, providing members with an efficient and affordable means of creating a website that meets transparency guidelines.

CalTRUST, the local agency investment pool endorsed by CSDA, reported a new high watermark of over \$2.4 billion in assets. *Nearly a third of those assets are from special district investments.* In October, CalTRUST expanded their slate of products with the addition of a new Government Money Market Fund.

In February, participants of the **District Purchasing Card** program received rebates totaling more than \$16,000 for purchases made in 2014. The program was developed in partnership with Bank of the West and now has more than 40 agencies taking advantage of the improved cash flow, better expense management, and potential for greater cash rebates.



Consultant Connection™

CSDA's **Consultant Connection™** was launched in July to give members access to a pool of experts who can provide them with exclusive discounts and benefits. Offerings include free consultations in the areas of strategic planning, leadership development, public outreach, and more.

MORE RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

A new Parliamentary Procedure Quick Reference covering the basics of effective meeting management was added to our collection of free online resources. Labor law posters were added to the CSDA bookstore as well.

Other website enhancements included the ability to renew your agency's membership online and manage roster and contact information through your online profile.

CALIFORNIA SPECIAL DISTRICTS ALLIANCE: YOUR DISTRICT'S PREMIER RESOURCE

The California Special Districts Alliance partners – CSDA, CSDA Finance Corporation, and SDRMA – work together to bring special districts the best in resources and services.



**CSDA
Finance Corporation**

CSDAFC

Within the past year, the **CSDA Finance Corporation** responded to dozens of inquiries from districts seeking financings for a wide range of projects and purchases – from real estate acquisitions to sewer extension projects and fire trucks to solar installations. The Finance Corporation facilitated over \$21 million in financings for special districts in 2015. With an expanded pool of consultants and program options, the Finance Corporation now offers more financing solutions to CSDA members.



Special District Risk Management Authority

Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA) continued its focus on providing special districts the most cost-effective risk management solutions possible, including property/liability coverage, workers' compensation, and health benefits. For 2015-16, the SDRMA Board of Directors kept rates flat for property/liability for the sixth year in a row, and also kept rates flat for the workers' compensation.

There were 201 attendees at SDRMA Safety/Claims Education Day in Sacramento on March 24, 2015. This free event for SDRMA and CSDA members included the Annual Membership Meeting, special guest speaker Scott Deming, and sessions on employment practices, workers' compensation, Target Solutions, risk transfer agreements, claim reporting and loss prevention/safety awareness.



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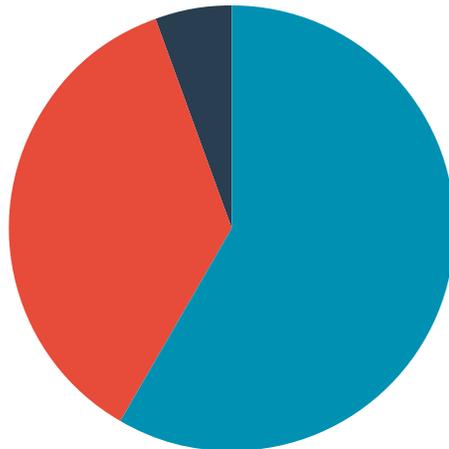
Summary of CSDA 2015 Legislative Statistics

TOTAL NUMBER OF BILLS

- Reviewed 2,772 bills
- Actively tracked 335
- Directly lobbied on 64 bills

36 BILLS SUPPORTED

- 21 - Signed into law
- 13 - Failed passage
- 0 - Amended to remove support
- 2 - Vetoed



26 BILLS OPPOSED

- 3 - Signed into law
- 13 - Amended to address concerns
- 6 - Failed passage
- 4 - Vetoed

