

AAR Updated Special District Recommendations

The Committee may wish to consider the following actions to develop information to inform future policy-making decisions:

1. Request that the Legislative Analyst make recommendations to the Committee on:
 - a. The desirability of special district reorganization including incentives for reorganization and consolidation, and
 - i. If desirable, recommendations to the Committee for approaches to implementation.
 - b. Whether the State should provide technical assistance to special districts and LAFCO's for analysis of potential consolidation.
 - c. The advantages and disadvantages of *functional* consolidation, as opposed to special district reorganization.
 - d. Whether the State should encourage direct election of special district boards even when seats are uncontested.
2. Request that the Legislative Analyst make recommendations to the Committee regarding the feasibility, arguments in favor and against reallocating property taxes from independent, enterprise special districts to cities and counties.
3. Request that the Legislative Analyst assess and report to the Committee:
 - a. The extent to which special districts are transparent and accountable to the public,
 - b. The extent to which special districts are efficient and cost effective, and
 - c. The extent to which compensation for special district employees is adequate, appropriate, reflective of responsibilities, and size of the jurisdiction.
 - d. The extent to which the Legislature can compel (either by incentive or requirement) special districts to hold regularly scheduled elections.
 - e. Whether there is evidence that special districts are being formed or continued in lieu of forming or joining general purpose governments.
 - f. What agency or agencies are responsible in the event that a special district cannot meet its financial obligations?

- i. Is there any oversight mechanism to monitor the extent to which special districts are at risk for failing to meet these obligations?
4. Request the Legislative Analyst assess the feasibility of requiring special districts to publish and annually update accountability report cards, similar to the School Accountability Report Card required of California's public, K-12 schools.
5. Request that a public policy organization conduct public opinion research to determine:
 - a. The extent to which Californians are aware of special districts,
 - b. Their attitudes regarding special districts,
 - c. Their attitudes toward continuation and consolidation of special districts, and
 - d. The information they want or need regarding special districts.
6. Request that a governmental association, such as the California Special Districts Association, conduct a survey of special districts to identify:
 - a. The advantages and disadvantages of reorganization and consolidation,
 - b. Any incentives or impediments for reorganization or consolidation, and
 - c. The desirability of special district reorganization or consolidation.