

Valley Voice goes to Sacramento

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Turlock Journal, Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Officials from the eight-county San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council will meet in Sacramento for a two-day conference this week to discuss several issues affecting the Valley.

The annual "Valley Voice" conference brings together elected officials from each of the Council of Governments within San Joaquin Valley, in addition to representatives from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Working on transportation, infrastructure, air quality, sustainable growth and other important issues, the conference provides local officials with the opportunity to seek new strategies and policies for the economic and social wellbeing of the Valley.

Legislators attending the conference will include Senator Anthony Cannella (R-Ceres), Assemblymember Kristin Olsen (R-Modesto), Assemblymember Adam Grey (D-Merced), and several other lawmakers representing Valley districts.

Representing Stanislaus County at the conference are County Supervisor Vito Chiesa and Patterson Mayor Luis Molina, who will work alongside 13 other San Joaquin Valley representatives over the course of two-days. Topics for discussion will include additional transportation funding to the Valley from the state's cap and trade program, local control and funding for the San Joaquin Amtrak passenger rail service, lowering the voting threshold for local transportation initiatives, support for large regional infrastructure projects promoting economic development, and enhanced water delivery and supply for the region.

"The San Joaquin Valley is a critical geographic region of the state, and there are a number of state funding and policy initiatives that are extremely important to our growth and prosperity," said Madera Mayor Robert Poythress, chair of the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council. "Our ability to come together and collectively advocate for our best interest is extremely important and sends a vital message about our regional collaboration."

The "Valley Voice" conference will be held today and Thursday at the State Capitol Building in Sacramento. To learn more, visit www.sjvcogs.org.