



**Santa Barbara County Taxpayer Advocacy Center**

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***"The SBCTAC...Fighting for the Taxpayer and Helping our Business Members Succeed!"***

**2/21/25 SBCTAC Opposes County's Proposal to Increase County Supervisor Salaries**

Dear Chairwoman Capps & Honorable Board Members,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the President & CEO of the Santa Barbara County Taxpayer Advocacy Center. Your board is considering a pay raise of 48% to make your annual salaries roughly \$171,000 per year.

In considering the pay raise your staff has given you counties like LA, Orange, San Diego, and Santa Clara counties to use for comparisons in salary. Back in 1991 when I served on the Board of Supervisors, I used 'comparable counties' in advocating for safety retirement and salary increases for county fire and deputy sheriffs. The 'comparable counties' measurement has been used ever since for salary considerations. Initially, those counties

included Monterey, SLO, Kern, and Ventura counties with an understanding that Ventura County was a much larger county with a much larger budget. I strongly urge your board to not set the precedent of using counties like LA, Orange, San Diego, or Santa Clara counties for any salary comparisons, including your own.

Additionally, as the story of the proposed salary increase evolved publicly over the last couple of weeks, the question has come up whether the job of a county supervisor is a full or part-time job. I have publicly stated the answer to that question depends on what any supervisor wants to make it. When I served on the Board of Supervisors I certainly made it a full-time job. However, one of my colleagues, Bill Wallace was a veterinarian and he continued to work as a veterinarian 2 to 3 days a week. The bottom line is every elected County Supervisor makes their own decision as to how much time they will allocate to the job. From everything I know, all five of you treat your position as a full-time job. While I personally oppose this pay raise, to the extent you do increase your salaries as proposed, I would encourage you to include a provision with the pay raise that expressly states that County Supervisors shall be prohibited from receiving any outside compensation. I had a statutory prohibition from receiving outside compensation when I served as Chairman of the CA Agricultural Labor Relations Board. There are countless state and federal positions that have the restriction of no compensation other than the compensation received for the specific job. You very well may have a contractual prohibition for your department heads prohibiting them from receiving outside compensation. If you don't you should probably do so going forward.

The bottom line is your board has an opportunity to put aside the question of whether your position is full or part-time by tying your salary into the restriction that you will not receive outside compensation.

Sincerely,  
Mike Stoker  
President & CEO, SBCTAC