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General Counsel

MEETING DATE: February 19, 2025

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission
of Orange County

FROM: Assistant Executive Officer

SUBJECT: California Association of Local Agency Formation
Commissions Membership Status Update

BACKGROUND

The California Association of Local Agency Formation Commissions (CALAFCO) was founded in 1971 as a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting LAFCOs and providing statewide coordination of LAFCO activities. CALAFCO is responsible for providing educational and legislative resources to its member LAFCOs and a conduit to the Legislature and other governmental agencies throughout the state on LAFCO-related matters.

CALAFCO has a 16-member Board of Directors that oversees the agency's activities and a full-time Executive Director to administer the daily day-to-day activities of the agency. The Board is composed of LAFCO Commissioners elected from the four CALAFCO regions: central, coastal, northern, and southern. The southern region (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego) is represented by four Board members, including Commissioner Derek McGregor.

Due to recent CALAFCO activities, OC LAFCO has expressed concerns with the decision-making of the Board and the agency's organizational direction. The following section provides a summary of OC LAFCO's concerns for the Commission's review and consideration of not renewing its membership with CALAFCO for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

DISCUSSION

On November 1, 2024, Executive Officer Carolyn Emery sent a letter to CALAFCO's Executive Director René LaRoche expressing several concerns, including:

- Lack of transparency and membership engagement involving the restructuring of the CALAFCO legislative platform.

- Inconsistent and potentially disadvantageous actions relative to a legislative proposal vetted through the CALAFCO process.
- Seemingly prioritization of external group interests over LAFCO practitioners.
- There was a continuous absence of collaboration among the Executive Officers and the CALAFCO Executive Director, as well as a lack of responsiveness from the former Executive Director to OC LAFCO staff and Board member McGregor.

As of the publishing of this agenda item, a response to OC LAFCO's letter has not been received from the CALAFCO Board.

In addition to OC LAFCO's letter, other LAFCOs and groups of LAFCO staff members submitted letters outlining mutual concerns and suggesting improvements to the CALAFCO Board. In response to the letters, the Board scheduled a meeting on January 10, 2025, to discuss and address the concerns outlined in the letters. The meeting was attended in person by staff from numerous LAFCOs, including Commissioner McGregor and OC LAFCO staff. At the culmination of the meeting, the CALAFCO Board did not take any action to address the concerns expressed by its membership. Since the January 10 meeting, CALAFCO's Executive Director resigned, and the CALAFCO Board recently held an additional meeting on February 7, 2025, to further discuss its membership concerns.

Based on CALAFCO's recent activity, the San Bernardino LAFCO Commission unanimously voted not to renew its CALAFCO membership starting FY 2025-26. San Diego LAFCO also sent a formal notice stating that it will not renew its membership. Los Angeles LAFCO is also taking an item at its February 12 meeting not to renew its CALAFCO membership. Other LAFCOs throughout the state also intend to discuss with their commissions their future membership with CALAFCO. The Board's lack of response and leadership to address OC LAFCO's concerns and those presented by other LAFCOs, its inability to engage the membership to find solutions, and coupled with the extensive amount of hours spent by Commissioner McGregor and staff during this process, lead staff to recommend that the Commission consider not renewing its CALAFCO membership for FY 2025-26 and redirect resources to other opportunities benefiting OC LAFCO. The opportunities include working with other LAFCOs that are ending their membership with CALAFCO to focus on commissioner and staff learning events (education, training, and networking) and legislative advocacy services.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Commission:

1. Direct staff not to renew OC LAFCO's membership with CALAFCO for Fiscal Year 2025-26 and send a letter to notify the CALAFCO Board of the Commission's action not to renew its membership with CALAFCO.

Respectfully Submitted,



LUIS TAPIA

Attachment:

1. Notice Letter - Non-renewal of CALFCO Membership for FY 2025-26.

February 19, 2025

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General Counsel

Gay Jones, Chair
CALAFCO Board of Directors
1451 River Park Drive, Suite 185
Sacramento, CA 95815

SUBJECT: Non-renewal of CALAFCO Membership for FY 2025-26

Dear Ms. Jones,

This letter is to inform you that the Local Agency Formation Commission of Orange County (OC LAFCO) is giving notice to CALAFCO that it will not be renewing its membership starting Fiscal Year 2025-26. On February 19, 2025, OC LAFCO took action not to renew its CALAFCO membership. This notice is being provided to inform CALAFCO of OC LAFCO's upcoming non-payment of its FY 2025-26 membership dues.

Prior to July 1, 2025, as a current CALAFCO member in good standing, OC LAFCO will continue to participate in CALAFCO activities as feasibly possible.

If you have any questions concerning the information outlined above, please do not hesitate to contact me at (714) 640-5100.

Sincerely,

Luis Tapia
Assistant Executive Officer

cc: CALAFCO Board of Directors
CALAFCO Southern Region Board Members