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CONTACT: Michael Guerra, 916-319-2030

SUBJECT: Every California Legislative Central Coast Caucus Priority Bill to Reach the Governor Becomes Law

SACRAMENTO - Today **Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay)** and **Assemblymember Gregg Hart (D-Santa Barbara)**, the co-chairs of the California Legislative Central Coast Caucus, celebrate Governor Newsom signing California Legislative Central Coast Caucus bills becoming law:

“Every Caucus Priority that landed on the Governor’s desk has been signed. This is a huge win for the Central Coast,” said Addis. “From biodiversity protection to climate action to fire preparedness, this package is good for the Central Coast and ensures vital progress for all of California. I am honored that, as part of this package, the Governor signed my Reef Safe Sunscreen bill (AB 1744) that will protect our ocean creatures.”

“The Central Coast is defined by our connection to the ocean, and protecting our coastline is one of our most important responsibilities,” said Hart. “With the Governor’s signature of AB 1448, California is strengthening protections against expanded offshore drilling and ensuring we have a say in the future of our coast. As the Trump Administration pushes to expand fossil fuel production in federal waters, we will continue working to safeguard our marine ecosystems and coastal communities for generations to come.”

The 2026 Central Coast Caucus priority bills that were signed into law include the following:

- **AB 1744 (Addis)** – Prohibits companies from using misleading terms such as “reef safe” or “reef friendly” on sunscreen products if they contain chemical ultraviolet filters.
- **AB 1448 (Hart)** – Prevents existing state-owned oil and gas infrastructure from supporting new federal offshore oil drilling.

- **AB 1919 (Pellerin)** – Allows the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to impose special taxes by an initiative.
- **AB 1668 (Pellerin)** – Extends the sunset date from January 1st, 2028, to January 1st, 2033 for the welfare tax exemption that is used to preserve native plants and animals, or lands that are used for recreation and the enjoyment of scenic beauty.
- **AB 1934 (Bennett)** – Requires the State Fire Marshal's Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop an implementation plan and report for a voluntary home hardening certification program by January 1st, 2028.
- **SB 599 (Caballero)** – Requires the Department of Water Resources to research, develop, and implement experimental tools that produce atmospheric river forecasts under the Atmospheric Rivers Program.
- **SB 1261 (Laird)** – Ensures that the Aging and Disability Resource Connections serving San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties can continue operating during a major transition affecting regional aging services.
- **SB 963 (Laird)** – Establishes clear deadlines in the Coastal Act under which the California Coastal Commission must review and take final actions on appeals of local Coastal Development Permit decisions.
- **SB 575 (Laird)** – Re-establishes the California Sea Otter Voluntary Contribution fund, allowing taxpayers to support sea otter conservation on their state tax returns.

Assemblymember Gail Pellerin (D-Santa Cruz) issued the following statement regarding her bills being signed into law:

"With the Governor's signature on AB 1919, Santa Cruz County residents now have the power to use the citizen initiative process to propose how Santa Cruz METRO is funded. Reliable, convenient public transit keeps our communities connected to work, school, health care, and one another. This law puts an important decision-making tool directly in the hands of the people METRO serves."

Assemblymember Steve Bennett (D-Ventura) issued the following statement regarding his bill, AB 1934, being signed into law:

"I'm thrilled to see AB 1934 signed into law," said Bennett. "This bill is a powerful step forward in empowering Californians to make the valuable investment in effective home hardening."

Senator Anna Caballero (D-Merced) issued the following statement regarding her bill, SB 599, being signed into law:

"Water is essential to California communities, our families, economy and our agriculture, and we must capture, store and use every drop of rain and snowfall that we possibly

can. In order to do this, California must be prepared. I authored SB 599 to allow California to use new predictive models to prepare for powerful atmospheric rivers that carry large volumes of water. By using these tools, we can preemptively clean our waterways to protect communities from flooding and capture excess water for future use. With the Governor's signature, this bill is now law and will strengthen forecasting and emergency preparedness and help communities better manage and store this critical resource. In California, every drop matters. I thank Governor Newsom for signing SB 599 and my legislative colleagues for their support, especially the Central Coast Caucus."

Senator John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) issued the following statement regarding his bills being signed into law:

"The Central Coast Caucus has advocated for the Central Coast in supporting legislation from caucus members that makes a difference in our home area. I am pleased that my three bills in the package were all signed by the Governor. Now there will be a limit on the time the Coastal Commission will hear an appeal; the sea otter tax checkoff is coming back and will support sea otter research efforts; and the senior programs in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties can breathe a little easier as their funding stream is protected. This legislation brings practical changes and will make a meaningful difference for the people and communities we represent."

These bills will become law on January 1, 2027.

The California Legislative Central Caucus is made up of eleven elected officials representing Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. The caucus is led by Assemblymembers Dawn Addis and Gregg Hart as co-chairs and Senator John Laird as the vice chair. Members of the caucus include Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, Assemblymembers Steve Bennett, Jesse Gabriel, Jacqui Irwin, Gail Pellerin, President pro Tempore Monique Limón, and Senators Anna Caballero and Henry Stern.