

Date of Hearing: April 9, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, Chair

AB 1479 (Tangipa) – As Introduced February 21, 2025

SUBJECT: County road commissioner: County of Madera.

SUMMARY: Authorizes the Board of Supervisors of Madera County to transfer duties of the Road Commissioner to the County Director of the Department of Public Works. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that the Board of Supervisors of Madera County may abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if the Board transfers all duties of the Road Commissioner to the County Director of the Department of Public Works.
- 2) Specifies that the Director of the Department of Public Works of Madera County shall not be required to have any special permit, registration, or license.
- 3) Requires any civil engineering functions that are required to be performed by the Road Commissioner to be performed by a registered civil engineer acting under the authority of the Director of the Department of Public Works.
- 4) Finds and declares that a special statute is necessary and that a general statute cannot be made applicable because of the particular needs of Madera County.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Creates the Office of Road Commissioner for each county and, except in San Francisco, requires that every person who is appointed as Road Commissioner must be a civil engineer. The Road Commissioner must annually submit to the county board of supervisors a tentative road budget covering all proposed expenditures for county road purposes and manages personnel, equipment, and expenditures related to county road work [Streets and Highways Code (SHC) §§ 2006, 2007, and 2009].
- 2) Authorizes any county to abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if the county transfers all of the Road Commissioner's duties to the county Director of Transportation. The Director is not required to have any special permit, registration, or license, and any civil engineering functions required to be performed by the Road Commissioner must be performed by a registered civil engineer acting under the authority of the Director of Transportation (SHC § 2006.1).
- 3) Authorizes any county to create an office entitled Public Works Director, combining the duties of Road Commissioner and Surveyor and any other compatible duties not legally required to be performed by another county officer (Government Code § 24300).

FISCAL EFFECT: None.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bill Summary and Author's Statement.** This bill allows the Board of Supervisors of Madera County to abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if it transfers all of the Road Commissioner's duties to the County Director of the Department of Public Works. Any civil engineering functions that are required to be performed by the Road Commissioner must be performed by a registered civil engineer acting under the Director of the Department of Public Works. This bill is sponsored by Madera County.

According to the Author, "AB 1479 is a simple measure to streamline county operations and reduce unnecessary expenses. The bill allows the Madera County Board of Supervisors to eliminate the County Road Commissioner position and transfer its responsibilities to the Director of Public Works. For years, Madera County has relied on Public Works for these duties, but outdated requirements have forced costly outsourcing of the Road Commissioner role. This inefficiency wastes taxpayer dollars without benefiting residents. AB 1479 ensures fiscal responsibility, strengthens county services, and modernizes governance to better serve Madera County's needs."

- 2) **Background.** State law creates the Office of Road Commissioner in each county and, except in San Francisco, requires every person who is appointed as a Road Commissioner to be a civil engineer. A Road Commissioner must annually submit to the county board of supervisors a tentative road budget covering all proposed expenditures for county road purposes. In conformity with the board of supervisors' adopted policies and budget, the Road Commissioner manages personnel, equipment, and expenditures related to county road work.

Any county can abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if the board transfers all of the Road Commissioner's duties to the county Director of Transportation [AB 247, (Hayden), Chapter 83, Statutes of 1979]. The Director of Transportation is not required to have any special permit, registration, or license. Any civil engineering functions that are required to be performed by the Road Commissioner must be performed by a registered civil engineer acting under the authority of the Director of Transportation.

- 3) **Prior Legislation.** SB 207 (Dahle), Chapter 24, Statutes of 2022, authorized the Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County to transfer the duties of the Road Commissioner to the County Director of the Department of Public Works.

SB 79 (Nielsen) Chapter 33, Statutes of 2021, authorized the Board of Supervisors of Colusa County and the Board of Supervisors of Glenn County to transfer the duties of the County Road Commissioner to the County Director of the Department of Public Works.

SB 907 (Canella), Chapter 135, Statutes of 2018, authorized the Board of Supervisors of Merced County to abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if it transfers all of the Road Commissioner's duties to the County Director of the Department of Public Works.

AB 807 (Carpenter), Chapter 426, Statutes of 1975, authorized the Board of Supervisors of Orange County to abolish the Office of Road Commissioner if it transfers all of the Road Commissioner's duties to an environmental management agency.

- 4) **Arguments in Support.** According to Madera County, “Consistent with recently granted authorities provided to other counties in the state, AB 1479 (Tangipa) would authorize the Madera County Board of Supervisors to abolish the office of the County Road Commissioner and transfer its duties to the Director of Public Works. Over the last decade, the County has progressively empowered the Department of Public Works to provide these necessary services where possible under existing law.

Further, because of recruitment and retention challenges, the County has been forced to contract out the Road Commissioner position to comply with the requirements of existing law. This has created an unnecessary expense of taxpayer dollars and presents fiscal challenges to the County going forward without providing a direct benefit to the constituents of Madera County.”

- 5) **Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

Madera County [SPONSOR]

Opposition

None on file.

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