

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, January 8, 2010

## **Coast Community College District Opposes Sale of Orange County Fairgrounds**

By: Jerry M. Patterson, Board President

I am writing on behalf of the Coast Community College District Board of Trustees which unanimously opposes the Governor's proposed sale of the Orange County Fairgrounds and urges members of the community, students, and other interested parties that utilize the Fairgrounds to contact their legislators and ask that they support and vote for Assembly Bill 1590.

Assembly Bill 1590, introduced by Assembly Members Jose Solorio and Van Tran, proposes to repeal the sale of the Fairgrounds, and our Board has unanimously voted to support the bill.

The proposed sale would be devastating to the Coast Community College District, and one of its three colleges, Orange Coast College. The college has an agreement with the Fairgrounds to provide parking resources to our students, and to utilize the Pacific Amphitheatre for its annual graduation exercise. Our Board strongly supports the continued use of the Fairgrounds by Orange Coast College and the current users. In the event that the Fairgrounds are sold to a private developer, for a use other than a Fair, it would cost the Coast Community College District millions of additional dollars to replace the current uses afforded to us by the Fairgrounds agreement.

In addition, development of the Fairgrounds property for housing or commercial use would add new levels of traffic congestion and pollution to an already densely populated Orange County region.

In the unfortunate event that the sale of the Fairgrounds proceeds, whatever amount of money received by the state (estimates range up to \$100 million) would only be a one-time contribution to an ongoing annual state budget deficit of about \$20 billion. This is less than 1% of one year's deficit! However, it would be a huge, permanent loss of a public resource for the citizens of Orange County that utilize the resources of the Fairgrounds, including Orange Coast College students.

With a multi-year ongoing structural budget deficit faced by California, this "solution" to sell the Fairgrounds is a mere "drop in the bucket" for the State's budget challenges. Further, out of 58 counties in California, Orange County is the only County faced with losing its Fairgrounds. The proposed sale will make no long-term difference to the state, but will deliver severe long-term, negative impacts to the community and institutions that benefit from the Fairgrounds. Please contact your legislator today to oppose the sale!

Jerry M. Patterson, a resident of Fountain Valley, California, is Board President of the Coast Community College District, which consists of Coastline Community College, Golden West College, and Orange Coast College.

# # #