



January 21, 2021

To: Sonoma County Residents, Board Members, County Staff
Fm: Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange, Inc. (SYASL)
Re: State Legislative Advocacy Request for Proposals – One Page Overview and Resumes

SYASL has been proud to work for – and achieve great successes on behalf of – Sonoma County and its residents since 1992. SYASL has a highly effective, diverse, non-partisan team of nine lobbyists and we have specialized in the representation of California's counties for decades.

SYASL has assisted Sonoma County on major issues, such as:

- Recovery from multiple fire, flood, and public safety power shutoff (PSPS) events. Unprecedented state reimbursement for costs and lost revenues. Strategy coordination for regional lobbying effort.
- Statutory formation of the County Medical Services Program (CMSP), which provides health care services to the medically indigent in-county and has saved Sonoma literally tens of millions of dollars in what would otherwise be costs associated with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 17000 costs.
- Creative seed funding for what is now the Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC), which started in Solano County and includes Sonoma County. PHC is the non-profit health care organization that contracts with the State to administer Medi-Cal benefits through local providers to ensure they have access to high-quality and cost-effective health care.
- Assistance in securing the two-thirds votes necessary in both houses for SB 1 (Beall) to better fund local roads; assisting in the passage of Proposition 1; helping to defeat Proposition 6.
- Success with the local planning process post-closure of the Sonoma Developmental Center.
- Finding \$7 million to help buttress the County's behavior health systems.
- Acquisition of the Spud Point Marina. And then, when the County decided it did not want the Marina, returning it to the State of California.

SYASL understands the challenges that lie ahead for Sonoma County and its residents, including – but not limited to – emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuilding local businesses, social equity, battling the effects of climate change and continuing to rebuild from numerous fires and floods, the structure and practices of PG&E, addressing homelessness in meaningful ways, extending broadband to everyone, securing sufficient Realignment resources, ensuring a clear path for the adequate provision of health and behavioral health services, and many more.

SYASL is best positioned to assist with these challenges based on our proven ability to fight for the County and its residents and provide a return on investment every single year. It is an honor to represent Sonoma County and its residents. We hope to continue our work for you and with you. More information about SYASL can be found here: <https://syaslparkers.com/>.



Paul J. Yoder is one of the founding partners of Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange. Paul has been a legislative advocate in California for over thirty years. In 1990, he began his career as a lobbyist for the County of San Diego. At the time, he was the youngest lobbyist in the state.

In 1993, Paul joined SYASL's predecessor firm, Gerber and Associates, Inc., where he lobbied for many of the firm's public clients, including several counties, water agencies, and public transit interests, as well as the firm's corporate clients. This was the point at which Paul began his representation of Sonoma County and its residents.

In 1998, Paul joined with Joshua Shaw to acquire Gerber and Associates, Inc. The firm was subsequently renamed Shaw / Yoder, Inc. In 2001, he again partnered with Mr. Shaw in the acquisition of several other lobbying firms, and together they successfully transitioned additional sets of clients. Paul now successfully represents dozens of local governments in legislative and regulatory matters.

Paul's government advocacy duties and experience at the firm include: drafting legislative language; reviewing, tracking and analyzing legislative bills, laws, and agency regulations, committee testimony; maintaining beneficial relationships with key legislators and legislative staff, administrative agency staff, including in the Governor's Office; coordinating legislative strategies with other interest groups and related associations; and, maintaining liaison with clients regarding pending legislative issues and developing strategies to move client interests forward.

Paul holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature, from Yale University. He has completed all the course work towards a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy and Administration, at the California State University at Sacramento. He is currently learning Portuguese and how to play the electric bass poorly.

Examples of Paul's successes for Sonoma County include:

- State-provided trailers to house the local homeless population; Sonoma was among first to receive them anywhere in California. Also, the County is allowed to keep them.
- Defeat of the last-minute AB 6 gut-and-amend effort that would have undercut the County's position in legal action against opioid manufacturers.
- Resolution in a matter of just days with respect to Amazon's employee COVID testing by coordinating with our colleagues who represent those interests; likewise, almost instantaneous resolution of impediments to placing the County's Access App in the Apple App store.
- Coordination between State Health and Human Services and other Newsom Administration staff on Access Sonoma.
- Initiating the advocacy effort to secure hundreds of millions of dollars to help local governments address homelessness in the 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 State Budgets. Among other things, this led to two Homekey projects in the County.
- One-time mandate repayment of \$7 million that helped buttress the local behavioral health system and ensured solvency of the County's health services functions.
- Pioneering design-build for public agencies in California.
- Defeat of any and all bills opposed by Sonoma County during the 2019-20 state legislative session.



Karen Lange became a partner in Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange in 2016 and has worked with the firm's partners and staff since 2006. Karen began her career in public policy in 1998, first interning for a member of Congress. Following that, she began working in the California State Assembly. During the California energy crisis in 2001, Karen left the Legislature to work for Navigant Consulting, which was advising the State of California on energy contracts procured by the State. Karen returned to the Legislature and worked as the Legislative Director for a member of the California Assembly, focusing on health care, energy, and water issues.

Don Peterson hired Karen to become a lobbyist with his firm, Peterson Consulting, Inc. in 2006. Mr. Peterson maintained a long-standing strategic partnership with Joshua Shaw and Paul Yoder and shared several clients – including Sonoma County. Since her hiring, Karen has worked on issues for nearly two dozen California counties and county-related organizations. Karen worked for Peterson Consulting for three years, until Don Peterson passed on December 9, 2009. On that date, what was then Shaw / Yoder / Antwih purchased Peterson Consulting, and Karen joined Paul Yoder to form what has become a dynamic duo for counties in California.

Karen holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of California, Berkeley. She is married to Alan Lange, and they have one son. In their free time, they enjoy water sports, house projects and cheering on their beloved Cal Bears.

Examples of Karen's successes for Sonoma County include:

- Disaster tax credits allocated through the California Debt Limitation Advisory Committee (CDLAC) – ensured that a proportional share of credits came to Sonoma, so much so that Journey's End will be included, per an announcement recently from Treasurer Ma.
- At the beginning of the pandemic, ensured that the Governor did not act to allow the postponement of all April 10 property tax payments. This averted what would have been devastating consequences to all local governments in California.
- Lead lobbyist regarding the dispensation of the Sonoma Developmental Center closure process and property disposal.
- Part of the team that defeated PG&E's proposed change to inverse condemnation law that would have greatly harmed fire victims as well as the County's ability to recover future costs of disaster caused by utility equipment. We co-quarterbacked the opposition along with insurers and trial attorneys.
- Helped ensure a second year of reimbursement for lost property taxes in the enacted budget, continued funding for debris removal post-fires.
- Adoption of a state budget with hundreds of millions for recovery, mitigation, and resilience; appropriation of Cap and Trade funds for similar purposes.
- Assistance with the enactment of dozens of bills (related to everything from insurance to resilience to garage door batteries) that were introduced in the wake of the fires and were intended to reduce the loss of life and property in any future disasters.