



## California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Position Fact Sheet

### Chief Legislative Advocate

*"The California State Association of Counties serves as the effective advocate and unified voice of California's 58 counties."*

#### THE ORGANIZATION

Our client, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), is seeking an exceptional **Chief Legislative Advocate** — a leadership role designed to elevate the Association's advocacy to new levels of influence and effectiveness. This position will serve as a driving force in shaping CSAC's strategic voice, strengthening its impact, and ensuring California's counties remain a formidable presence in state and federal policymaking.

Representing all 58 counties, CSAC is the unified voice of county government across California and is a recognized national leader. The Association is defined by a bold, political, and policy-centered approach to advancing its priorities and amplifying the county perspective in statewide and national dialogues. Current top priorities include housing and homelessness, disaster preparedness and recovery, and safeguarding counties from the impacts of federal funding cuts. With a comprehensive portfolio of advocacy, services, partnerships, and leadership development initiatives, CSAC is committed to strengthening communities throughout the state so that each community can thrive with the resources, authority, and flexibility to do things in a way that best works for them.

Advocacy is at the heart of CSAC's mission. Through direct advocacy and communication with the Governor's Office, Administration, and legislative leaders, coalition-building, and collaboration with advocacy partners, the Association ensures counties' interests are not only represented but advanced with clarity and conviction. Headquartered in Sacramento, CSAC employs a highly skilled and mission-driven staff of 51 professionals and is governed by a Board of Directors, which includes one representative from each of California's 58 counties. The organization is led by its Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

#### THE POSITION

The **Chief Legislative Advocate (CLA)** is a senior executive role and a pivotal force in driving CSAC's advocacy agenda. This position is charged with providing strategic leadership and operational excellence across all facets of the Association's legislative and policy work.

The CLA will lead a 15-member advocacy team, setting vision and direction while ensuring the highest standards of performance and impact. The advocacy focus will be strategically targeted and relationship based, with significant influence directed toward a select set of bills. Core responsibilities include developing and executing advocacy strategies, engaging directly in high-level lobbying, coordinating with CSAC affiliates and county legislative advocates, and building broad-based coalitions and relationships to



advance county priorities. The CLA will also work in close partnership with the Chief Operations Officer to align advocacy with communications, media, and public engagement strategies.

As a member of CSAC's executive leadership team, the CLA works closely with the Board and Executive Committee, as well as provides broad support to county leaders, contributes to the development and management of the annual budget, and plays a central role in organizational decision making. Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer, the CLA serves as a trusted thought partner and advisor, ensuring CSAC's advocacy is strategic, visible, and effective at the highest levels of government.

#### **Essential Duties:**

- Advocate county interests to state and federal legislative and administrative bodies.
- Develop strategy, provide direction, and guide legislative matters for the association.
- Build political coalitions to improve the effectiveness of advocacy efforts.
- Consult with the CEO on matters related to legislative advocacy and association effectiveness.
- Lead, develop, evaluate, and guide all staff involved in legislative advocacy and related matters.
- Build relationships with County Supervisors, county leaders, and other elected officials and senior staff.
- Coordinate with the Board, Executive Committee, and county leaders to accomplish county advocacy priorities and provide the exceptional value of the association to its members.
- Participate in the development and management of the budget with the Chief Operations Officer.
- Represent CSAC to the media, other associations, and county partners.
- Coordinate with the Chief Operations Officer on media and public affairs impacting advocacy.
- Coordinate with the Chief Operations Officer to ensure collaboration between the advocacy program and other divisions.
- Travel significantly in and out of state as required.

#### **EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FIRST YEAR**

##### **Within the first 3 months:**

- Within the first 30 days, will have met individually with each staff member, executive team peers, selected board members, stakeholders, and elected officials to begin developing relationships.
- Within the first 45 days, will have conducted an informal "audit" of the department and advocacy agenda and discussed the results with the CEO.
- Within the first 60 days, will have presented to the CEO a plan to build coalitions and strategies to effectively implement the policy agenda.

##### **Within the first year:**

- Will have successfully advanced at least one key priority to CSAC's policy agenda, advanced bills that are aligned, and redirected bills that are counter to the policy agenda.
- Will be seen as an integral, strongly networked power player at the Capitol.
- Will have aggressively implemented CSAC's policy agenda in coordination with public affairs and member engagement.
- Will have supported the success and growth of CSAC staff involved in direct or indirect advocacy.



- Will have developed strong relationships with county leaders and increased their engagement on advocacy efforts.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (in priority order)**

- A track record of success at the State Capitol in advancing favorable bills and redirecting or stopping unfavorable ones
- Known for building direct relationships with partners, stakeholders, and elected officials
- Experience as a strong leader, managing a team of high-performing professionals
- Familiarity with a member-driven association, working with elected officials and balancing competing interests

### **PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES (in priority order)**

- A “politics first” mindset
- Politically savvy; can see the “full chessboard”
- Adaptability and foresight (capacity to anticipate technological trends that may affect governance, county operations, and advocacy approaches)
- Data-informed strategy approach (ability to analyze and apply legislative, demographic, and political data to shape lobbying strategies)
- Strategic communication (skill in tailoring messaging to reach diverse audiences)
- A quick study
- A thought partner to the CEO and county lobbying partners
- A strong manager and leader to CSAC staff involved in direct or indirect advocacy.
- Inspirational to the staff, membership and external groups

### **EDUCATION / CREDENTIALS**

- Bachelor’s degree and equivalent 10 years of experience

### **CULTURE: VALUES, WORK STYLE (in priority order)**

- Laser-focus on advancing CSAC’s policy agenda
- Accountable and effective, with a sense of urgency
- One where intelligent and successful people interact
- Integrity
- Purpose-driven value of public service
- Team mindset

### **THE COMMUNITY**

This position is located in Sacramento, the capital of California and the county seat of Sacramento County. Sacramento is located at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers and is connected to the San Francisco Bay by a channel through the Sacramento River Delta. The Mediterranean climate is characterized by damp, mild winters and hot, dry summers.



The city of Sacramento is the cultural and economic center of the Sacramento metropolitan area; with nearly 2.5 million people, it's the fifth largest in California and the 28th largest in the United States. Local universities include California State University, University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law, and the University of California in nearby Davis. The UC Davis Medical Center, a world-renowned research hospital, is one of 20 hospitals in the Sacramento region. University of the Pacific is opening new schools to train dentists and physician assistants, as well as nursing and pharmacy students. And the private California Northstate University Medical Center is planning to open a 350-bed teaching hospital and campus north of downtown.

Sacramento has been recognized as a great place to live, earning top rankings from various publications. Forbes named Sacramento the best place to live in California in 2023. Money Magazine included Sacramento in its list of the 50 best places to live in the United States. Forbes highlighted Sacramento's low unemployment rate, family-friendly environment, and access to outdoor activities and cultural attractions. Money Magazine emphasized Sacramento's vibrant cultural scene, including the Farm-to-Fork Festival, the Crocker Art Museum, and Broadway Sacramento.

As part of the agriculturally rich Central Valley, Sacramento is considered at the forefront of the Farm-to-Fork food movement and is home to more than 40 local farmers' markets. Sacramento is also home to a growing technology startup community, whose innovative nature is being quickly embraced by businesses and nonprofits alike.

The city hosts the NBA Sacramento Kings, the Sacramento River Cats (San Francisco's AAA baseball team), the Sacramento Republic FC (a USL Professional soccer team), and, for the next 2-3 years, the Major League Baseball Athletics. Downtown, the Golden 1 Center, a basketball and entertainment arena, is considered the most technologically advanced stadium in the NBA and a new soccer stadium is in the planning stages.

The Crocker Art Museum was the first public art museum founded in the Western United States and is now one of the leading art museums in California. The metropolitan area boasts more than 200 parks and four public golf courses. Sacramento has long been known as the "City of Trees," owing to its abundant urban forest. The city has more trees per capita than any other city in the world. To enjoy the 250 days of sunshine each year, one can bike or walk along the scenic American River Parkway, kayak or paddleboard at Lake Natoma, or stroll along the Sacramento River.

San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, and more than a dozen ski resorts are less than a two-hour drive from Sacramento and the world-renowned Napa Valley is less than an hour away. Sacramento International Airport handles non-stop flights to and from thirty-nine North American destinations including Hawaii, Mexico, and Canada.

## **COMPENSATION AND INTERVIEW PROCESS**

The compensation package includes a base salary of \$275,000 to \$300,000 depending upon experience, plus excellent benefits. Pre-screened, selected candidates will be invited to interview in Sacramento, CA with the Search Committee on October 27, 2025, with second interviews with the CEO and selected Search Committee members on October 28, 2025.



## PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

For confidential consideration, at your earliest convenience and no later than COB September 30, 2025, please email your chronological resume (to include description and size of current/prior organizations and responsibilities) and compensation expectations to: [CSAC-CLA@wilcoxcareer.com](mailto:CSAC-CLA@wilcoxcareer.com)

## WILCOX MILLER & NELSON CONTACT

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