

Bohn Appointed Chairman of Rural County Coalition

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First District Humboldt County Supervisor Rex Bohn on Wednesday was appointed chairman of the Rural County Representatives of California, which he said makes him the first Humboldt County representative to hold the position.

Rural County Representatives of California is a coalition of 35 rural counties that promotes policy interests at the state and national level. Bohn's appointment comes shortly after 4th District Humboldt County Supervisor Virginia Bass was appointed as the vice president of the California State Association of Counties this month.

"It's kind of a one-two punch," Bohn said Wednesday of the appointments. "For both of us to serve at the same time from little Humboldt County it just shows we're being recognized in Sacramento and that both Virginia and I can stand up for the county's rights in Sacramento and also double up for rural county rights."

Bohn said he will now be taking a much more active role in attending state Legislature hearings about topics important to rural counties and will be traveling to Washington, D.C., twice a year to do the same at the federal level. After taking the new position in January, Bohn said he will work to address issues such as job creation, human trafficking legislation, return of property tax revenues from counties by the state and federal governments, wildfire protection planning, protection of oak woodlands and forestry resource issues.

"There are so much legislation that people have to realize that one size does not fit all. What works for the urban Los Angeles, Bay Area counties does not work for us here" Bohn said. "We have to fight for our road dollars, our [Department of Health and Human Services] funding. As a group of rural counties, we can come together and work for some equality on the finance issues that sometimes we are left out of the mix of."

The rural county coalition's CEO and President Greg Norton issued a statement to the Times-Standard on Wednesday about Bohn's appointment.

"We appreciate Supervisor Bohn's energy and enthusiasm, and are excited to have him serve as Chair of our organization in 2018," Norton wrote. "His leadership, experience and commitment to rural California will serve our 35-member counties well as we head into another tough legislative session."

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