

The attached document is an attempt to fairly and accurately disclose recent actions by the North American Mission Board concerning its relationship with California Southern Baptist Convention.

CSBC administration believes the “NAMB ACTIONS” included in this document are accurate and fair representations of mandates by NAMB which are documented in direct correspondence or from minutes of meetings with NAMB personnel.

This document is intended to clearly communicate what we (CSBC) now understand as actions taken by NAMB and their impact on CSBC and its ministries. This document is not intended to be adversarial, but seeks to inform California Southern Baptists about the current state of the relationship which exists between the two entities.

CSBC administration requests you prayerfully read and consider the information in this document.

Pray for us as we seek God’s leadership for our strategic response as California Southern Baptists take the gospel to every Californian.

# North American Mission Board's Strategic Shifts and the Impact on California Southern Baptist Convention

January 2012

This document attempts to objectively and clearly describe the decisions and strategic initiatives made by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and the impact these decisions have/will have on California Southern Baptist Convention's ability to carry out the strategic initiatives given to it by the churches. This document was compiled by Dr. Fermín A Whittaker, CSBC Executive Director, with assistance from his administrative staff.

**NAMB ACTION 1:** At some point during 2011, NAMB unilaterally decided to break the Cooperative Agreement with CSBC. In early 2011 NAMB attempted to change all state Cooperative Agreements, but withdrew the process. The Cooperative Agreement has established the relationship between the two entities for decades. CSBC was not notified by NAMB of this decision (the document requires one year notice by either party to cancel the Cooperative Agreement). NAMB simply began taking actions outside the historic Cooperative Agreement.

## **IMPACT ON CSBC:**

CSBC is now functioning in an unknown relationship with NAMB that, in many ways, has abandoned cooperation. The current relationship with NAMB is now a top-down decision-making relationship where NAMB dictates its mandates, strategy and financial support outside a formal, cooperative understanding of relationship.

**NAMB Response:** *On several occasions NAMB informed state convention executive directors that NAMB and the state conventions would begin to work on new cooperative agreements. This process was communicated to and agreed upon by the executive directors. It was also understood that the executive directors would be completely involved in the process of drafting a new template that would outline the NAMB-state convention working relationship and would be customized with each convention as NAMB's regional vice president and the state executive director met.*

*It was also clearly communicated that the old cooperative agreements would continue to be operational until the new template was presented. To date, a new template is still being formulated with three western state executives—Rob Lee, Lynn Nikkei and Bill Crews—at the table. Only one representative from NAMB is on this team: Steve Davis, a former state executive director who is working to gain consensus on this new template.*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** CSBC does not dispute that NAMB has discussed its desire and attempt to develop a new Cooperative Agreement with conventions. Our statement is that the EXISTING signed Cooperative Agreement between CSBC and NAMB has in significant ways been ignored by NAMB in their attempt to quickly implement new initiatives, leaving CSBC unsure of its current relationship with NAMB.

**NAMB ACTION 2:** In March 2011 NAMB unilaterally eliminated from the jointly-funded budget all missionary positions in California that were vacant and frozen by NAMB. CSBC had no voice in the decision eliminating these vital missionary positions.

**IMPACT ON CSBC:**

NAMB's decision led to the loss of three church planter catalyst positions (two full-time, one part-time), three evangelism positions and five associational directors of missions positions in California. These were all important ministries in CSBC's strategy to reach California for Christ.

**NAMB Response:** *NAMB's only decision in 2011 was to freeze funding. We do not control CSBC's missionary positions. That is a decision the state convention leadership makes in California.*

*NAMB's budget decisions were made across-the-board, beginning with a reduction of more than 100 staff positions in Alpharetta. These reductions were needed due to a decrease in receipts from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Cooperative Program offering over multiple years.*

*This reduction was a one time cut that every state convention was asked to make and as stated above, it began in Alpharetta. When it came time to communicate the dollar amount for each state convention, it was done so as a "dollar amount cut." The decision to eliminate positions that were vacant was made, in all cases, by the state conventions and not NAMB.*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** On March 21, 2011 Frank Shope, who was at that time the strategy coordinator with NAMB, clearly gave CSBC a goal to cut our jointly funded budget with NAMB by \$400,000. We were clearly told that jointly-funded vacant positions that had been frozen by NAMB would be eliminated. CSBC would then decide where to cut the remainder from the budget in order to reach the \$400,000 goal. CSBC was NOT given an option to keep any of the frozen positions. This is reflected in NAMB approved minutes from that meeting.

**NAMB ACTION 3:** NAMB unilaterally altered the ratio for matching dollars in the jointly-funded budget. With a phase-down schedule yet to be determined, NAMB will require CSBC to adjust matching NAMB funding from 78%/22% to 65%/35% by January 2018.

**IMPACT ON CSBC:**

Currently CSBC is able to match NAMB mission dollars at about a 1-to-3 ratio (our \$1 buys \$3 from NAMB). The new ratio of 65%/35% will mean CSBC will only be able to match at a 1-to-2 ratio (our \$1 buys \$2 from NAMB). The current ratio of 78%/22% requires 23.4% of Cooperative Program gifts received by CSBC Executive Board in the 2012 budget to fulfill the jointly-funded budget with NAMB. Using the 2012 budget, the newly mandated ratio would require 37.3% of CP gifts to fulfill CSBC's matching for the jointly-funded budget.

**NAMB Response:** *Again, NAMB's president placed on the agenda in his meetings with the state executive directors (on at least two occasions) the need to systematize the current funding ratios that NAMB has with state conventions. The current ratios are wide and varied with no specific rationale as to their ratio percentage. Thus, we placed all state conventions together within a region and looked at four criteria: 1. Age of the state convention; 2. Number of churches in the convention; 3. Cooperative Program receipts; and 4. Current NAMB-State ratio.*

*As a result, four broad categories emerged as natural breakdowns for growth. Those categories are: 20/80 (20 percent state funding, 80 percent NAMB), 35/65, 50/50 and 65/35. None of our western states fell into the 50/50 or 65/35 range. Only the bottom two apply to Western states: 20/80, which includes Hawaii, Alaska, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Northwest, Utah/Idaho and Wyoming, and 35/65, which includes Arizona, California and New Mexico.*

*Also, it is important to note that we are working toward the new categories over a five-year transition with each state convention.*

**CSBC Reply to NAMB's Response:** The need for NAMB to make changes to the ratio may have been discussed in group meetings with executive directors, but the Cooperative Agreement states that the matching ratio is negotiated with conventions at our regular meetings. No negotiations were held with CSBC. The new formula was decided by NAMB and announced to CSBC.

**NAMB ACTION 4:** NAMB unilaterally decided to cease funding three church starting positions currently part of the CSBC staff. NAMB also chose to stop funding two evangelism positions that are currently part of the CSBC staff. The schedule for these eliminations has not yet been determined, but all positions are to be eliminated no later than January 2018.

## **IMPACT ON CSBC:**

### On Church Starting:

CSBC will lose three church starting specialist positions deemed vital in addressing the unique church starting needs in California. The positions NAMB will no longer support in the jointly-funded budget are:

- English-speaking church starting specialist (now vacant - formerly Ross Shepherd)
- African American church starting specialist (Joshua Smith)
- Language/ethnic church starting specialist (Tony Ahaev)

NAMB will jointly fund only one church planting position (state director of missions) on the CSBC staff in the future. This staff person will be required to give strategic oversight and supervision to all church starting ministries and missionaries in California, ministry now accomplished by four staff positions. The losses of the African-American and language church starting positions are especially harmful, since those two groups represent 66% of CSBC churches and more than 60% of California's population.

### On Evangelism/Ministry Evangelism:

CSBC will lose two evangelism specialist positions that NAMB will no longer support in the jointly-funded budget. They are:

- Youth evangelism specialist (Sherann Kim)
- Multi-ethnic evangelism specialist (now vacant – formerly Richard Vera)

In the future, NAMB will jointly fund only two evangelism positions as part of the CSBC staff:

- State Evangelism Director. This person will be given a position description by NAMB that directs their ministry to assist existing churches with evangelism needs and to assist new church starters with evangelism strategies.
- Love Loud Evangelism Specialist (currently Ministry Evangelism Specialist). This specialist will assist churches in developing community ministries, such as resort missions, migrant missions, etc. This position will be responsible to give oversight to ministries currently staffed by 13 jointly-funded missionaries/contract workers in California whose positions are being eliminated by NAMB (see number 5).

**NAMB Response:** *Once again, NAMB does not make decisions on current state staff positions. We only disclose the amount of support we will give and what types of positions we are willing to jointly fund in the future. In an effort to give full disclosure, here are the major categories that will allow us to fulfill our major priority of "penetrating lostness through evangelistic church planting." By January 1, 2018, we will join with the CSBC to jointly fund the following major categories:*

*1. Church Planters and Church Plants: This is our major priority in the future for funding and resources.*

*2. Church Planter Catalysts (CPCs) scattered throughout California: It is expected that there will be various persons in these roles who represent all kinds of people groups residing in California. Our goal is to have one CPC per million people in a state. With*

*California's current population of 37 million, this means 37 CPCs in California. These CPCs will each be expected to help start four churches each year. These CPC roles can be filled by current CSBC church planting strategists, or current DOMs/CPCs in the local associations, or any combination thereof*

*3. In order to support the Church Planters and CPC's, we believe each state convention needs a jointly funded SDOM, an SDOE and a Love Loud Staff member.*

*This plan, beginning in 2018, will allow us to place up to \$1.2 million dollars in church plants in California, up from the current CGA funds of \$686,000.*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** NAMB's decision to fund only three state staff positions had the practical effect of defunding five other state staff positions that were previously jointly funded. These five personnel line items will be eliminated from the jointly-funded budget. True, NAMB does not make decisions on state staff positions. However, by making the decision NOT to FUND them in the future essentially means the elimination of the positions.

**NAMB ACTION 5:** NAMB unilaterally decided to stop jointly funding all ministry evangelism field positions (a total of 13 full-time, part-time and contract workers). All positions are to be eliminated from the jointly-funded budget by January 2018.

**IMPACT ON CSBC:**

CSBC already has determined the schedule for eliminating these positions, as follows:

Eliminated by January 2013:

- Tammy Cookson (full-time) – San Diego Association (CCM)
- Fred Weatherly (full-time) – Mammoth Lake (RM)
- Dorothy Rowell (part-time) – Redwood Empire (CCM)
- Julie Shockey (full-time) – Kern County & Sequoia Associations (CCM)

Eliminated by January 2014

- Eric Bergquist (full-time) – Costa Meda Association (CCM)
- Charlie Corum (full-time) – LA, Long Beach, and San Fernando Valley Associations (CCM)

Eliminated by January 2015

- Ron Climer (full-time) – Mid Valley Association (CCM)
- Debbie Wohler (full-time) – Lake Tahoe (RM)
- Kenny Dean (full-time) – LAX Association (CCM)

Decisions not yet made on the date these positions will be eliminated:

- Jim Thomas (part-time) – Chaplain's liaison
- Chris Watson (full-time) – Telegraph Center Director, Oakland
- Oscar Sanchez (full-time) – Migrant Ministries Missionary
- Monta Jo Erikson (part-time) – Literacy Missions

During 2011 these missionaries reported 9,032 professions of faith, 1,637 baptisms and 15,591 volunteers from CSBC congregations engaged in ministry. All of these ministries/results will be lost to California Southern Baptist churches unless CSBC, associations or churches are able to fund these positions without NAMB assistance.

**NAMB Response:** *True. Our goal is to move a greater percentage of our funding to the church plant. If a local church is developing a strategy to connect with their neighborhood through community ministry, we are certainly open to assisting local churches by being a part of joint funding for their strategies. The focus will be on field money for local churches to impact their community, and not on state staff*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** NAMB unilaterally eliminated all CSBC ministry evangelism field missionary positions. These North American missionaries were already in place directly assisting churches with community ministries. The greatest resource we can deploy is not just money, but missionaries to assist and serve churches, as illustrated by the 2011 accomplishments of these eliminated staff (see two paragraphs above).

**NAMB ACTION 6:** NAMB has unilaterally decided to transfer all funds from eliminated positions to the church starting portion of the jointly funded budget.

**IMPACT ON CSBC:**

NAMB has decided to no longer fund strategically vital ministry positions in California, including evangelism, ministry evangelism and specialized church starting state staff positions. NAMB wants to transfer funds from eliminated positions to church planting line items in the jointly funded budget. This would require CSBC to also transfer its matching dollars into church starting.

When NAMB's decision to eliminate state staff church starting positions for English-speaking, language and African-American church starting comes to fruition, CSBC will have to decide if any of the eliminated positions are strategically important enough to keep through self funding. The only way CSBC could fund one or more of those positions would be to use CSBC's matching dollars from the eliminated positions. NAMB's unilateral decision to move funds from eliminated positions into church starting accounts will force CSBC to either:

- 1) accept the transfer of NAMB's 65% and then match them with our 35%, or
- 2) decline NAMB's offer to transfer those funds into church starting in order for CSBC to use its 35% to fund state convention church starting positions that CSBC deems vitally strategic in reaching California for Christ.

The same scenario applies to evangelism positions. NAMB's decision to eliminate the student and multi-ethnic evangelism positions means NAMB wants to transfer its 65% to church starting, requiring CSBC to move its 35% away from evangelism into the church starting jointly funded budget. This would eliminate CSBC from choosing to fund one of these two positions with its portion of matching funds.

Yet again, the same applies to ministry evangelism, where NAMB is eliminating 13 positions/contract workers. NAMB wants to transfer all those funds into church starting, forcing CSBC to transfer its matching funds to church starting. This would prevent CSBC from using matching dollars to fund some of the eliminated ministry evangelism positions, such as Feeding Those Who Feed Us migrant ministry.

**NAMB Response:** *True. We are simply following our priority of "penetrating lostness through evangelistic church planting" in North America. If we have 37 CPC's catalyzing 148 new works per year, we must have more funds in order to support the church plants/church planters. Remember, that is our new priority.*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** No response is needed.

**NAMB ACTION 7:** According to NAMB there are 64 NAMB missionary positions in the CSBC budget for 2012. In December 2011 NAMB announced they would fund only one NAMB missionary position in California for every one million unchurched in the state. By NAMB's calculations this mandated decision means that by January 2018 NAMB will support only 32 jointly-funded missionaries for California. This number includes NAMB appointed associational directors of missions.

#### **IMPACT ON CSBC:**

NAMB's decision to fund only 32 missionary positions will damage CSBC and associational missions.

Earlier in 2011 NAMB informed associational directors of missions they would be given a new title (church planter catalyst) with church starting quotas to be met in order to remain NAMB missionaries. Currently 18 DOMs are in the jointly-funded budget. None receive sufficient funding to represent more than half of their remuneration.

Within broad parameters established by NAMB and based on our needs and strategy, CSBC administration must decide which 32 positions to keep. To have the greatest impact on church starting, CSBC will need the maximum number of full-time church starting missionaries. A NAMB appointed DOM would be free to fulfill his church planter catalyst responsibilities as well as other duties, but would not be able to devote 100 percent of his efforts to church starting.

After informing DOMs they would be classified as church planting catalysts, NAMB unilaterally reduced the number of approved jointly-funded missionary positions, forcing CSBC's administration to make the decision of which positions will be funded. NAMB

has placed a great burden on CSBC through these actions. CSBC believes that our current partnership/relationship with local associations is a vital link in our efforts to reach the lost in California. However, with just 32 positions approved by NAMB, deciding where to place priority for these positions will place great strain on CSBC/association relationships.

(Note: NAMB already has decided anyone not receiving at least half of their salary from NAMB will no longer be eligible for NAMB benefits. All jointly-funded DOMs in California will be impacted by this decision. If DOMs are to be provided health insurance benefits, the local association will be required to cover the full cost of benefits by January 2018.)

**NAMB Response:** *We can make public the 2012 Cooperative Budget if so desired. Each of those 64 jointly funded positions are listed for all to see. It was communicated to the CSBC executive director that we are going to provide a CPC count of 37 and not 32 as first disclosed. This disclosure was made to the CSBC executive director as the western state executive director's meeting in Mill Valley on Jan 11 of 2012. Having 37 CPC's will allow California to retain all 21 current DOM jointly funded positions and then to add 15 additional CPC's from the CSBC staff. We believe this to be a great solution that will assist both local associations in church planting as well as provide for many of the current CSBC state staff who are doing a wonderful job in catalyzing new work.*

**CSBC REPLY TO NAMB's RESPONSE:** We are grateful for the increase in the number of CPC positions NAMB will jointly fund.

**CONCLUSION BY CSBC ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:**

Having reviewed NAMB's response to our original document and having answered their responses brings to conclusion this exchange of information and affirms the original CSBC document.