



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Board of Supervisors



DATE: May 15, 2012
BOARD MEETING DATE: May 22, 2012
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING None
VOTE REQUIRED Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Adrienne J. Tissier, President of the Board
SUBJECT: Senate Bill 1149 (DeSaulnier) Bay Area Regional Commission Creation

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution in opposition to Senate Bill 1149 (DeSaulnier) to create a new regional commission with 15 directly elected members representing the nine Bay Area counties

BACKGROUND:

There are several single-purpose agencies serving the Bay Area: Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Bay Area Air Quality District (BAAQD), Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board (BARWQCB) and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). In 2003, MTC and ABAG voluntarily came together to form a Joint Policy Committee (JPC) to collaborate on regional planning efforts. As a result of Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg, Statutes of 2008), the nine Bay Area counties, 101 cities and the JPC are preparing climate change sustainable community's strategies.

Senate Bill 1149 (DeSaulnier) would mandate the creation of the Bay Area Regional Commission (BARC) coupled with the merging four regional agencies to integrate roles and expand duties. Beginning in 2014, the 15-member body would be directly elected from equal size districts. The BARC Board would be required to retain an executive director and a chief legal counsel. The executive director would be charged with preparing a regional reorganization plan, which would include the consolidation of specific functions currently shared among the other single-purpose regional bodies. Among other activities, BARC would be required to prepare a Bay Area Regional Economic Development Plan, involving an inclusive advisory committee composed of small business, public and private investors, economic sectors, labor, community colleges, universities, local governments and conduct public community outreach.

Additionally, this legislation would shift revenues from the Bay Area Toll Authority along with already programmed federal and state funds, which could jeopardize years of successful regional cooperation planning for and implementing critical transportation projects. This would be counterproductive to the economic vitality of the Bay Area region.

DISCUSSION:

Since the 1970's when MTC was created, the Bay Area's population has grown by 63 percent and some argue that despite the stable regional governance structure put in place four decades ago, it has not changed to meet today's challenges, including the need for stronger integration of housing, transportation, sustainability and regional economic development planning.

The 15-member directly elected, new regional commission would result in more populous counties losing their current voice. . Thus, voters in Gilroy would have an equal say as voters from Foster City regarding development along the San Francisco Bay. SB 1149 was amended on May 1, 2012 to establish the new regional commission. C/CAG, Solano County and MTC oppose the legislation.

In 2002, legislation was introduced to merge MTC and ABAG (Senate Bill 1243, Torlakson). This measure failed passage.

Approval of this resolution contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 of a Collaborative Communities by opposing policies that result in San Mateo County's unequal representation on regional agencies. The Resolution has been reviewed and approved as to form by County Counsel.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Could have an adverse impact on the regional funding San Mateo County receives for transportation and other regional issues.