

ATTACHMENT A

BILL: AB 1889

AUTHOR: ASSEMBLYMEMBER KEVIN MULLIN
(D-SAN FRANCISCO)

SUBJECT: HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY: MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING PROJECTS

STATUS: SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

ACTION: SUPPORT

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors adopt a SUPPORT position on AB 1889 (Mullin). This bill would add clarifying language to the 2012 statute (SB 1029) that appropriated the \$8 billion federal and state funds to construct the high-speed rail segments in the Central Valley and provide “bookend” funding for the High Speed Rail project.

ISSUE

Existing law authorizes the High Speed Rail Authority to develop and implement a high speed rail system in California. Under Proposition 1A, \$9.95 billion in general obligation bond authority was programmed to fund the planning and construction of the high-speed rail system and provided allocations for “bookend” projects that would include rail system improvements that fed into the high-speed rail system. The High Speed Rail Authority has the mandate to administer funding for these “bookend” connectivity projects and AB 1889 (Mullin) adds clarifying language to the statute that would assist in securing the funding as specified.

This bill provides that upon approval of a funding plan for a specific corridor or usable segment by the High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA), the project(s) identified in the funding plan will be deemed suitable and ready for high-speed train operation, as specified.

DISCUSSION

In 2012, the California High Speed Rail Authority (SCHRA) released its business plan which included so called “bookend” investments. These investments are essential elements of the project in Northern and Southern California that while ultimately needed for the project would provide utility for rail services now. These improvements were memorialized in Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between Northern California transportation agencies and Southern California transportation agencies including

Metro. Metro is a signatory to the Southern California MOU. The Legislature subsequently approved legislation funding the High Speed Rail project which included funding for the bookend investments. Under that plan funding plan approved by the Legislature, funding was made available for the bookend projects in Southern and Northern California. In Northern California, this includes improvements to the Caltrain Corridor. In Southern California these projects include the required improvements to Union Station as well as grade separations and track improvements that are ultimately needed for the HSR project. The projects are ultimately needed for the HSR project and as an added benefit they do provide utility now for existing rail services.

The language in the original budget agreement needs to be clarified so that funding can be made available for these projects. These projects are not somehow separate from the HSR project; rather they are projects that are ultimately required for the completion of the HSR project. AB 1889 simply clarifies the language of the budget trailer bill and will ensure that these vital projects can be funded.

Staff recommends that the Board adopt a SUPPORT position on AB 1889 (Mullin).

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

There is no determined safety impact due to the enactment of the proposed legislation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The enactment of the provisions in this statute could result in securing accelerated funding for Metro's list of approved "bookend" projects. The estimated financial impact has yet to be determined.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Staff has considered adopting either an oppose or neutral position on the bill. An oppose or neutral position would be inconsistent with Metro's Board approved 2016 State Legislative Program Goal Number 10 which involves working to support efforts to implement the High Speed Rail project in Los Angeles and ensure timely implementation of Proposition 1A funding allocations as well as previous Board actions to support the MOU projects.

NEXT STEPS

Should the Board decide to adopt a SUPPORT position on this bill, staff will communicate the Board's position to the author and work to ensure its passage. Staff will continue to keep the Board informed as this issue is addressed throughout the legislative session.