

**Board Report**

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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MARCH 17, 2022**

**SUBJECT: STATE AND FEDERAL REPORT**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE March 2022 State and Federal Legislative Report.

**DISCUSSION**

**Executive Management Committee  
Remarks Prepared by Raffi Haig Hamparian  
Government Relations Senior Director, Federal Affairs**

Chair Solis and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on several federal matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on February 28, 2022, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on March 17, 2021. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB\\_Attachments/220311\\_March%202022%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/220311_March%202022%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

There are several federal matters I would like to focus on today - mindful that there are many other issues at play concerning our Board-approved federal legislative program.

**Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**

Metro is pleased that the U.S. Department of Transportation is moving with dispatch in releasing Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) tied to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Thanks to the strong, sure and steady leadership of our Chief Executive Officer, we have a dedicated team of individuals working on the Metro campus to ensure that we derive the maximum benefit for Los Angeles County residents from the BIL - a truly historic measure that promises to deliver enhanced mobility across Los Angeles County. We will continue to keep the Board closely informed as the Biden Administration moves forward on BIL related funding opportunities.

## **Justice40 Initiative**

As I mentioned last month, our agency has and continues to be in constant contact with the U.S. Department of Transportation on how they are working to embed their Justice40 initiative in the federal transportation programs - and grants - that will be issued as a result of the passage of the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law.

We are eagerly anticipating the Federal Transit Administration's ongoing work in updating their guidelines for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program - with a keen eye on including the aims of the Administration's Justice40 initiative. Specifically, we believe many of our mobility enhancing projects - especially the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project will benefit from having the CIG program modified to reflect the goals of the Justice40 initiative.

## **Build Back Better Bill**

As I have mentioned a number of times to the Board, our agency is working with key Senate stakeholders - including California's two Senators - to ensure that language providing funding for fare-free and reduced-fare transit services be included in any future Build Back Better Bill considered by the U.S. Senate. Despite the dim outlook at present, it is my hope that a revised version of this legislation will be considered in the second session of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress and that this revised bill will maintain the language which our agency - and specifically our Board Chair Hilda Solis - worked so hard to embed in the original Build Back Better reconciliation bill adopted by the House last year.

## **Fiscal Year 2022 Transportation Spending Bill**

As of the writing of this update, the U.S. Congress was poised to pass an omnibus spending bill to cover the balance of Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (through September 30, 2022). The benefit of passing such a measure is many-fold - including the fact that it would permit the U.S. Department of Transportation to issue NOFOs for the full amount of the grants authorized and appropriated in the BIL.

## **APTA Legislative Conference and ACCESS DC**

I am pleased to share that our Chief Executive Officer will be participating in both the upcoming APTA Legislative Conference and the LA Chamber's Access DC trip in March.

During this trip, our CEO will be meeting with several key federal stakeholders from the White House, U.S. Department of Transportation, the House, and the Senate. We look forward to advancing the Board's 2022 Federal Legislative Program during this trip and future trips.

## **Conclusion:**

Chair Solis - I look forward to expanding on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting with any new developments that may occur over the next several weeks.

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## **Executive Management Committee**

**State Remarks Prepared by Michael Turner  
Deputy Executive Officer, Government Relations**

Chair Solis and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on several state matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on February 28, 2022, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on March 17, 2022. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix, updated monthly.

### **State Budget**

Following the release of the Governor's budget proposal on January 10<sup>th</sup>, the legislature began holding hearings in February to consider each portion of the proposal. Staff continues to be engaged with the members of budget subcommittees in the Senate and Assembly to ensure that the board-endorsed Golden Opportunity Package is considered. Over the past month, Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins has met with key members of the legislature to explain the importance of increasing State investment in transit infrastructure. Metro staff also provided public comment at the Senate Budget Subcommittee #5 and Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3, asking the legislature to consider the Golden Opportunity Package as part of the larger transportation budget.

The budget proposal will likely change after the Governor issues his revision in May, which takes actual revenues into account. In a February 2022 update, the Legislative Analyst's Office predicted that the budget surplus could be even higher than initially estimated, owing to larger than anticipated revenues from personal income, sales, and corporation taxes. Metro will continue to stress that the surplus provides the state with a unique opportunity to make an investment in transportation that will have an outsized impact on the future of California.

The legislature continues to hold budget hearings in March and has until June 15<sup>th</sup> to pass a state budget for the next fiscal year.

### **Equity Impact Analysis - State Budget**

The State Budget surplus provides an excellent opportunity to address many historic inequities in Los Angeles County. The Board's Golden Opportunity Package identifies specific funding recommendations that would support these efforts.

### **Sponsored Bills and Key Legislative Deadlines**

The deadline for new bills to be introduced in the state legislature for the current session was February 18, 2022. Between the Senate and the Assembly, there was a total of 2,020 bills introduced during the 2022 session, including 1,461 bills introduced during the final week. This number does not include constitutional amendments or resolutions but does include 181 intent and 458 spot bills, which do not have substantial legislative language yet. The deadline for new bills to be introduced

also does not apply to bills that may be introduced by committees throughout the legislative session.

Metro is the primary sponsor of two bills this year. AB 2039 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D-Arleta) was introduced on February 14<sup>th</sup> and would allow Metro to utilize job order contracting. This bill may be first heard on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Consistent with Board direction, Metro is also sponsoring AB 2271 by Assemblymember Mike Gipson (D- Carson), a bill that would allow Metro to exercise local business preferences in competitive low-bid contracting. Metro is also joining an additional bill as a co-sponsor. SB 922 by Senator Scott Wiener (D- San Francisco) would extend the CEQA exemptions for certain transportation projects in the public right-of-way that were established by the Senator's 2020 bill, SB 288, which was strongly supported by Metro.

### **Other State Legislation**

Government Relations monitors all newly-introduced legislation for bills that may impact Metro's projects, programs, and funding. Metro is currently monitoring several other recent bill introductions and proposals. Staff will continue to monitor all newly introduced legislation, work with the affected internal departments and work with the Board to determine the appropriate Metro position as bills are introduced.

Other monitored bills include:

- SB 114 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) - On February 9<sup>th</sup>, Governor Newsom signed SB 114, which extends previous COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave through September 30, 2022, for organizations with more than 25 employees. The law is retroactive to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- AB 2622 (Mullin) - On February 18<sup>th</sup>, Assemblymember Mullin introduced AB 2622, which would extend the Assemblymember's 2019 legislation (AB 784) that created a sales and use tax exemption for zero-emission buses (ZEBs) purchased by California's public transit agencies.
- AB 1919 (Holden) - Introduced on February 9<sup>th</sup>, this legislation is currently in intent bill form. It seeks to ensure that students attending the California State University, the University of California, and the California Community Colleges have free access to student transit passes. We will be monitoring AB 1919 and any other fare-free transit bills as the session continues.
- AB 1993 (Wicks) - Introduced on February 10<sup>th</sup>, this bill would require an employer to require each employee or independent contractor who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, to show proof of vaccination.

### **Project Briefings and Statewide Coordination**

Metro Government Relations staff continues to host virtual legislative roundtable briefings to update state and federal offices on the status of key Metro projects and programs and the agency's response to the pandemic. These briefings are both an opportunity to brief staff from elected offices, as well as to hear comments and concerns directly from their constituents. The legislative roundtables, as well as district-specific briefings, will continue virtually to ensure that the members of the LA delegation have access to Metro's most up-to-date project and program information.

## State Equity Analysis

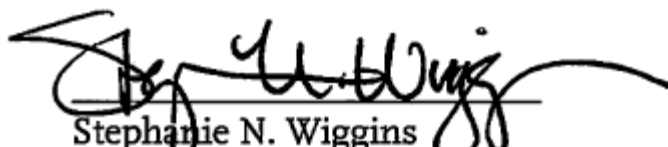
Government Relations will continue to work with the Office of Equity and Race in reviewing legislation introduced in Sacramento to address any issues of equity in proposed bills.

### Conclusion

Staff will expand on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting with any new developments that occur over the next several weeks.

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