

**Board Report**

File #: 2023-0590, **File Type:** Informational Report**Agenda Number:** 27.

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 19, 2023****SUBJECT: STATE AND FEDERAL REPORT****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE October 2023 State and Federal Legislative Report.

DISCUSSION

**Executive Management Committee
Remarks Prepared by Raffi Haig Hamparian
Government Relations Deputy Executive Officer, Federal Affairs**

Chair Bass and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on several key federal matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on October 3, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on October 19, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB Attachments/231013%20-%20October%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/231013%20-%20October%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

Federal Government - Funding Bill Status

Over the weekend, a last-minute deal was secured to keep the Federal Government operational for another 45 days - past the end of the current fiscal year (September 30, 2023).

Metro was closely tracking the status of federal spending bills.

Should Congress be able to agree on a funding bill for transportation projects and programs that honors the spending levels agreed to in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - Metro can expect to receive the following funding for a number of our transit capital projects - including \$478 million for the Westside Purple Line Extension Section 3, \$165 million for the Westside Purple Line Extension Section 2 Project and \$166 million for the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project.

In addition to this funding for Metro's transit projects in the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant Program - the agency would also receive funding from several federal formula programs - that deliver more than \$600 million to our agency on an annual basis - should Congress adopt a fully funded transportation spending measure.

With an eye towards the future and consistent with the Board-approved Federal Legislative Program, we will seek federal funding for our agency's number one priority with respect to the Capital Investment Grant Program - our West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project. Specifically, Metro is asking the Biden Administration to recommend funding for this worthwhile project in their Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - which will be issued by the White House early next year.

Passing of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein

Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins issued the following statement to the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation last week on the passing of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein. Metro has had a strong and enduring relationship with Senator Feinstein and her professional staff - a relationship that helped to advance Metro's Board-approved Federal Legislative Programs over the years.

"The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) expresses our sincere condolences to the family of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein on her passing. Since her election to the U.S. Senate in 1992, Senator Feinstein has been a staunch and effective advocate for Metro -- often quietly and without fanfare -- facilitating the flow of billions of federal dollars to our agency to improve transportation infrastructure and create new opportunities for millions of people throughout Los Angeles County.

From her post as a senior member of the powerful Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Feinstein worked tirelessly to ensure that Los Angeles County taxpayer dollars were smartly matched with federal dollars needed to restore rail to the region. These projects included the Red Line, the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Line, and the Regional Connector. Today, all these projects are serving tens of thousands of people daily. Feinstein was also critical to improving bus infrastructure and successfully secured funding to build dedicated bus lanes on Wilshire Boulevard.

Senator Feinstein also fought to ensure that the federal government directed over \$3.5 billion in federal grants and over \$1 billion in low-interest U.S. Department of Transportation loans to extend the Purple Line from downtown Los Angeles to the Westside. This visionary Metro project, currently under construction, will soon provide a high capacity, high speed, and dependable alternative for the millions of commuters who move across LA to the Westside every year. Most recently, in 2021, Senator Feinstein championed the adoption of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which will deliver record federal funding for Metro for many years to come.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein has left a legacy as a supporter of a modern transit system across LA County. We are grateful for her vision, dedication, and tenacity in backing Metro's many projects and initiatives on Capitol Hill. She will be greatly missed."

Governor Newsom Appoints New U.S. Senator

With the passing of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, Governor Newsom moved to appoint Laphonza Butler to serve the balance of her term in the U.S. Senate. Vice-President Kamala Harris was slated to swear in Laphonza Butler at the U.S. Capitol on October 3, 2023. Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins issued a congratulatory letter to U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler - expressing our agency's willingness to work with her on matters of mutual concern.

Metro / 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Metro is pleased to work with a broad and diverse array of stakeholders to ensure that we can work cooperatively with the Biden Administration to ensure that the Federal Government provides robust support for the surface transportation projects necessary for a successful 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This work has and will continue to include consistent interactions with senior officials in the Office of the Secretary at the USDOT and senior officials at the Federal Transit Administration. Specifically, this work involves matters related to the President's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget and our interests in working with the USDOT on a broad array of non-monetary items - including but not limited to - issues related to charter service rules and spare ratio matters related to our rolling stock.

Federal Railroad Administration

We are working cooperatively with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to host a press conference on October 11, 2023, that would highlight the \$38.3 million Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant for the Doran Street Grade Separation Project issued by the FRA to our agency in June of this year.

This much needed project will support construction activities to eliminate the at-grade crossing at Doran Street, which manages up to 90 daily train trips. The project would construct a grade-separated structure that links Los Angeles and Glendale by connecting West San Fernando Road to the Fairmont Avenue bridge. According to the State of California, the Doran Street Crossing has one of the highest numbers of safety incidents (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) in Los Angeles County.

Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation

As we noted last month, our CEO and Government Relations team continue to stay in close touch with members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation (and other federal officials) to ensure that our agency is providing timely and accurate information on Metro's projects and programs in their respective districts - and, more broadly - our efforts to enhance mobility and equity for the 10 million people who live, work, and play in Los Angeles County.

Over the last month - we have been engaged with members of the Los Angeles County

Congressional Delegation on a range of matters - including but not limited to - grant requests we have made with the U.S. Department of Transportation and issues related to funding levels being set for transportation programs in the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 spending bills, among other issues.

In addition to these meetings - we have held several other policy briefings for congressional staffers to keep them updated on our Board-approved Federal Legislative Program and the projects we are planning and building across Los Angeles County.

Capital Investment Grant Program-Justice40

Consistent with our Board-approved Federal Legislative Program - Metro has and will continue to work with the U.S. Department of Transportation - and the FTA in particular - to ensure that future updates to the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program include the Justice40 initiative. As I have noted previously, our CEO authored a letter thanking Secretary Buttigieg and Federal Transit Administration Administrator Fernandez for their continued work updating CIG guidelines - with an eye on Justice40. Metro's government relations team looks forward to keeping the Board apprised of progress on this front in the coming weeks and months.

Federal Transportation Grants

Metro is seeking federal funding through several grant programs - including for the following projects and initiatives:

Metro is seeking \$144 million for the SR-71 Gap Closure Project through the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program.

Metro is seeking \$139 million through the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood Grant Program for Metro's Removing Barriers by Creating Legacy - A Multimodal Approach for Los Angeles County. This Project will enhance and expand affordable, equitable, and safe multi-modal connections through investments into bikeshare, bus only lanes, first/last mile improvements, and mobility hubs throughout LA County.

Metro is also seeking Reconnecting Communities grants for two other 710-related grant applications - one for the Humphries Avenue Crossing Project and the other for Long Beach to East LA: Reconnecting the I-710 Divide Project.

In addition to these grant requests - we are seeking funding through the U.S. Department of Commerce and their Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs Grant Program for our Center for Transportation Excellence Initiative. As we always do, Metro will work with a broad and diverse number of stakeholders to secure robust support for our federal grant applications.

Conclusion

Chair Bass - I look forward to expanding on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting slated for October 19, 2023, with any new developments that may occur over the next several weeks.

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

Chair Bass 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 October 3, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on October 19, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/231013%20-%20October%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/231013%20-%20October%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

Budget Update

Metro has been engaged in the SB 125 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) guidelines process through the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) throughout August and September. On September 14, Metro submitted comments on the draft guidelines to suggest edits that create greater clarity on the SB 125 TIRCP grant process. Staff have also worked through the California Transit Association to provide an LA County perspective to statewide partners. The final SB 125 TIRCP guidelines were released on Friday, September 29. Staff are appreciative of the internal and external collaboration that led to this inclusive process and look forward to the next steps in our partnership with the state to provide funding for the Board-approved priorities of the Foothill Gold Line Extension Project and the West Santa Ana Branch Project.

Legislative Update - Sponsored and Supported Bills

The first year of this legislative session ended on September 14. Metro sponsored two pieces of legislation this year. As previously updated, AB 499 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D - Sylmar), a bill that would allow Metro to utilize job order contracting, has been signed by the Governor and will go into effect on January 1, 2024. AB 1377 by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D - Burbank) is still awaiting a signing decision by the Governor. AB 1377 is a bill that would require Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HAPP) applications or planning materials for additional state funding appropriated on or after July 1, 2024, to include data and a narrative summary of steps that the applicant has taken to improve the delivery of housing and services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness on transit facilities owned and operated by a transit agency.

Also on the Governor's desk is SB 434 by Senator Dave Min (D - Irvine). SB 434 would allow the ten largest transit operators in California to collect and publish qualitative and quantitative data related to the harassment of diverse groups of riders using the survey developed by the Mineta Transportation

Institute pursuant to last year's SB 1161, which was sponsored by Metro. If either of these bills are signed, they will also go into effect on January 1, 2024.

Mobility 21 Summit

On September 29, the Mobility 21 Coalition held their annual Summit, bringing together hundreds of professionals from the southern California region for a full day of speakers and panels on the future of transportation in the region and state. CEO Stephanie Wiggins is currently the Chair of the Mobility 21 Board and was pleased to welcome state leaders to the Summit, including Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, Assemblymember Laura Friedman, CalSTA Secretary Toks Omishakin, and Caltrans Director Tony Tavares. CEO Wiggins and Metro staff participated in robust discussions with industry partners around the future of transportation in Southern California.

LA County Legislative Delegation Engagement

The Government Relations department continues to prioritize robust engagement with our local legislative representation in Sacramento. This includes quarterly legislative roundtables briefings with staff, subregional project briefings, and tours with individual legislators. The legislature will reconvene for the second year of the legislative session on January 3, 2024. Government Relations staff will continue to brief staff and elected officials on Metro priorities and projects during the legislative recess.

State Equity Analysis

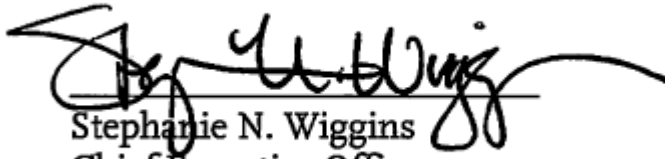
Government Relations will continue to work with the Office of Civil Rights, Racial Equity, and Inclusion in reviewing legislation introduced in Sacramento to address any issues of equity in proposed bills and the budget process.

Conclusion

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

Prepared by: Michael Turner, EO, Government Relations, (213) 922-2122
Raffi Hamparian, DEO, Government Relations, (213) 922-3769

Reviewed by: Nicole Englund, Chief of Staff, (213) 922-7950



Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer