



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 21.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MARCH 16, 2023

SUBJECT: STATE AND FEDERAL REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE March 2023 State and Federal Legislative Report.

DISCUSSION

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

Chair Najarian 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 February 27, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on March 16, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB\\_Attachments/230303-%20March%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230303-%20March%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), updated monthly.

**White House Budget Federal Fiscal Year 2024**

As of this federal update's writing, President Biden is anticipated to announce his Administration's Budget for Federal Fiscal Year 2024 on or around March 9, 2023. As noted last month, the Budget is a non-binding document, including the Biden Administration's proposed spending levels for transportation programs and projects managed by the U.S. Department of Transportation. We are particularly focused on the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts Report - released in tandem with the Budget - because it will outline the U.S. Department of Transportation's recommended funding levels for our transit projects in the New Starts pipeline.

We will also be carefully reviewing the Budget to learn what funding is being recommended for the CHIPS bill - to understand how this funding might benefit our efforts related to our agency's Center

for Transportation Excellence initiative.

### **Funding for New Starts Transit Projects**

Metro eagerly anticipates the release of the Federal Transit Administration's annual New Starts Report, which will be issued concurrently with the President's Federal Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. We anticipate this document will include information on funding recommendations for a variety of our Board-approved transit projects.

### **Members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation:**

Consistent with our Board-approved Federal Legislative Program, our Government Relations Department is in constant contact with Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation members and their senior professional aides. During the past month, we have been in touch with professional aides at a variety of offices to discuss the earmark process for Federal Fiscal Year 2024. As we have in past years - we look forward to working with Board members to solicit their support for our congressionally directed funding requests.

### **Capital Investment Grant Program - Justice40**

As was shared last month, we are continuing to work with the USDOT and the FTA, in particular, to ensure that future updates to the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program include the Justice40 initiative.

Most recently, our Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins authored a letter on February 21, 2023, thanking Secretary Buttigieg and FTA Administrator Fernandez for their continued work on updating CIG guidelines - with an eye on Justice40. We look forward to keeping the Board apprised of our progress on this front in the coming weeks and months.

### **Federal Transportation Grants**

Consistent with the direction of Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins, our government relations team is working to advocate for all grant applications submitted by our agency to the U.S. Department of Transportation and other relevant Executive Branch agencies. This advocacy includes soliciting support from Board members and securing the strong backing of members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation. This partnership has - and I believe will continue to generate positive results for the grant applications submitted by our Planning Department to various federal agencies.

### **Conclusion**

Chair Najarian - I look forward to expanding on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting slated for March 16, 2023, with any new developments that may occur over the next several

weeks.

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

Chair Najarian and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on a number of state matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on February 27, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on March 16, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB\\_Attachments/230303-%20March%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230303-%20March%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), updated monthly.

### **Legislative Update**

The deadline to introduce new bills for the current session was Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>. As of that deadline, 1,751 Assembly Bills and 881 Senate Bills have been introduced, for a total of 2,632 bills. There are also six special session bills. These numbers represent the highest total of bills introduced in a year in over a decade. Many bills are still currently in spot or intent form and lack specific legislative language. The deadlines for substantive amendments for spot bills are March 13<sup>th</sup> in the Assembly and March 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Senate.

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D - San Fernando Valley) introduced AB 499, which would allow Metro to utilize job order contracting as a procurement method. This new bill, which Metro is sponsoring, is identical to legislation introduced last year regarding Metro's authority to utilize job order contracting, but which stalled in the legislature for reasons unrelated to the policy Metro was pursuing. As of this writing, AB 499 is awaiting its first scheduled hearing.

Also of note is AB 610, introduced on February 9<sup>th</sup> by Assemblymember Chris Holden (D - Pasadena), which would create a statewide Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program. AB 610 builds upon the Assemblymember's similar bill from last year, AB 1919, which passed the legislature and was formally supported by Metro but was ultimately vetoed by the Governor for not having an associated appropriation. AB 610 is contingent upon allocating funds in the state budget and would be repealed on January 1, 2029.

### **Joint Assembly and Senate Transportation Hearing**

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the Senate and Assembly Transportation Committees, chaired respectively by Senator Lena Gonzalez (D - Long Beach) and Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D - Glendale), held a joint informational hearing titled "Short Term Crisis and Long Term Transformation: How to Bring Back and Build Transit Ridership in California". Three panels consisting of representatives from

transit agencies, planning organizations, academia, labor, and transit advocacy groups testified on the fiscal cliffs facing agencies around the state, as well as the operational challenges to recovering ridership lost before and during the pandemic. Metro staff testified regarding the agency's current ridership status, the agency's financial outlook, and strategies for ensuring a robust recovery going forward.

### **State Budget Update**

The Legislature has begun holding its first budget subcommittee hearings following the January release of the Governor's budget proposal. These budget hearings will continue throughout the spring, in advance of the Governor's May Revision to the budget, which will consider actual state revenues. Metro staff have been working through the California Transit Association with other transit operators around the state on advocating for more permanent funding solutions as agencies begin facing a fiscal cliff in both the short and long term.

### **LA Delegation Engagement**

Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins has begun meeting with new members of the LA County legislative delegation on both trips to Sacramento such as the January Mobility 21 board trip, as well as one-on-one briefings with legislators here in LA. For example, on February 10<sup>th</sup>, CEO Wiggins hosted Senator Caroline Menjivar (D - San Fernando Valley) on a tour of the transportation projects in District 20, which include the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Corridor Project, the North San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project, the North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Project, and improvements to the Antelope Valley Line. Metro staff also continue to debrief with members of the Los Angeles County Legislative delegation following the January 31<sup>st</sup> announcement of grant awards in the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program.

### **State Equity Analysis**

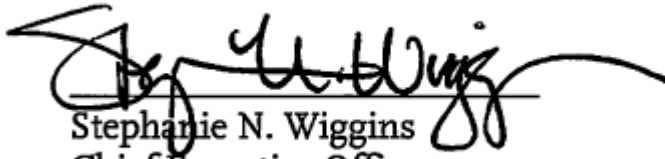
Government Relations will continue to work with the Office of Civil Rights, Racial Equity, and Inclusion in reviewing legislation introduced in Sacramento to address any issues of equity in proposed bills and the budget process.

### **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, Executive Officer, Government Relations, (213) 922-2122  
Raffi Hamparian, Senior Director, Government Relations, (213) 922-3769

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



Stephanie N. Wiggins  
Chief Executive Officer