



Board Report

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
APRIL 20, 2023

SUBJECT: STATE AND FEDERAL REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE April 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 April 7, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on April 20, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB Attachments/230404%20-%20April%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230404%20-%20April%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

**APTA Annual Legislative Conference**

Metro was pleased to be represented at the American Public Transportation Association's annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, this past March - with both our CEO in attendance and Director Dupont-Walker. Staff from the offices of Directors Barger, Hahn, and Solis also participated in the Conference and later went to Capitol Hill with our CEO for a series of meetings with professional staffers working for members of both the House and Senate - including U.S. Senator Alex Padilla, Congressman Robert Garcia, Congressman Mike Garcia, Congresswoman Kamlager-Dove, and Congressman Tony Cardenas.

During this trip to Washington, DC - Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins was pleased to hold a meeting at the U.S. Department of Transportation headquarters to provide a comprehensive update on our agency for the Federal Transit Administration's Administrator Nuria Fernandez and her top aides at the FTA. Following this meeting, our CEO conferred with the Deputy Director of the Office of

Management and Budget - which oversees the implementation of the President's vision across the Executive Branch. At this meeting, our CEO emphasized the importance of the FTA's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program and our agency's desire to keep strong funding levels for this program in future budgets released by the White House. Specifically, our CEO focused on the new rail projects Metro is advancing in the CIG pipeline as a compelling rationale to keep the program fully funded.

In addition to her meetings with the FTA Administrator and senior OMB officials, our CEO also conferred with senior aides for the new Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee - Congressman Sam Graves of Missouri - during this trip. Last but certainly not least - our CEO also had a productive meeting with the Deputy Secretary for the U.S. Department of Commerce - Don Graves - where our CEO discussed the agency's strong interest in partnering with the federal government on the Center for Transportation Excellence initiative.

### **LA Chamber ACCESS DC Trip**

In the latter part of March - the CEO was pleased to participate in the LA Chamber of Commerce's ACCESS DC trip with Chair Najarian. ACCESS DC brings together stakeholders from across Los Angeles County to travel to Washington, DC to advocate for various concerns - including transportation. Metro was pleased that Board-approved federal priorities were spelled out in the ACCESS DC materials distributed across Capitol Hill. This information included our request for federal support for our #1 New Starts priority project - the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project.

Chair Najarian and our CEO held several productive meetings - both on Capitol Hill and with Executive Branch officials. Notably, Chair Najarian led meetings with White House infrastructure advisor Mayor Mitch Landrieu, with Build America Bureau leaders at the U.S. Department of Transportation, with the Ranking Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee - Congressman Rick Larsen, and with U.S. Senator Alex Padilla. In addition to these meetings - our Chair and CEO held meetings with Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, Congressman Pete Aguilar, Congressman Brad Sherman, and with Congressman James Clyburn - who serves as the Assistant Democratic Leader - to discuss subjects related to our Board-approved Federal Legislative Program for 2023.

In addition to these content rich meetings - our CEO also had an opportunity to meet with the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation - Polly Trottenberg. This meeting, which included the participation of other key southern California stakeholders - focused on our agency's preparation for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the steps being taken by other important entities - like LA28, the Ports of Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles World Airports, and Metrolink.

Our CEO was also honored to participate in a meeting facilitated by Director Solis with White House infrastructure advisor - Mayor Mitch Landrieu. A range of topics was covered in this meeting - including the welcome opportunity to invite Mayor Landrieu to the future opening of the Regional Connector project - which was built with the assistance of a \$670 million Full Funding Grant Agreement from the Federal Transit Administration and a \$160 million TIFIA loan facilitated by the

U.S. Department of Transportation.

### **Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation**

Our CEO continues to reach out and hold briefings with members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation 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.

On April 5th, our CEO held a productive dialogue with Congressman Robert Garcia - who is among the newest members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation - but no stranger to the work of our agency - given that he is the former Mayor of Long Beach and a former Metro Board member.

The dialogue with Congressman Garcia focused on the work of our agency to advance the West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Transit Corridor Project. Our CEO shared with the Congressman that Metro is determined to bring the Final Environmental Impact Report for the WSAB Transit Corridor Project to our Board of Directors in the Spring of 2024. Likewise, our CEO emphasized Metro's full commitment to work with the FTA to ensure their favorable consideration of the Record of Decision (ROD) for this project by the Summer of 2024. Finally, our CEO emphasized that securing a ROD for the WSAB Project is a critical threshold issue - given the fact that all the proposed New Starts projects recommended for funding in the President's Fiscal Year 2024 Budget either had their ROD completed - or were months away from having their ROD completed.

Metro very much appreciates the strong working relationship we have with Congressman Robert Garcia and - more broadly - all members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation.

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

As has been consistently shared in reports over the last several months, staff continues working 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 CEO authored a letter on February 21, 2023, thanking Secretary Buttigieg and FTA Administrator Fernandez for their continued work updating CIG guidelines - with an eye on Justice40. Staff looks forward to keeping the Board apprised of progress on this front in the coming weeks and months.

### **Federal Transportation Grants**

Consistent with the clear direction of our CEO, 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 April 20, 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 Najarian 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 April 7th 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on April 20th, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB\\_Attachments/230404%20-%20April%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230404%20-%20April%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), updated monthly.

**State Budget Update**

The Legislature is wrapping up its first budget subcommittee hearings following the January release of the Governor's budget proposal. The next stage of the budget process will commence in early May, with the release of the Governor's May Revision to his January budget. Metro staff continue to work 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.

In addition to working with a coalition of transit providers around the state, Metro is coordinating its own advocacy activities regarding the budget. On March 30th, staff transmitted a state budget and priorities letter signed by the full Metro Board to leadership in the Senate and Assembly, along with the Budget Committee Chairs and the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation. The letter outlined five key priorities for Metro during this legislative session, including the need to allocate the full \$4 billion proposed in last year's budget agreement to the TIRCP. This letter will inform all budget-related advocacy for this legislative session and is crucial to our overall strategy, as it presents the Board as a strong, united voice working towards the same progress and priorities for Los Angeles County.

The Metro Board is also planning a state budget advocacy trip to Sacramento during the month of April to coincide with the beginning of the next phase of budget advocacy. Staff will accompany the Board members in attendance and base the messaging on the budget priorities letter issued last month. Staff will include a report back to the full Board in May in the regular state and federal update to include a summary of meetings, along with the next steps for budget advocacy.

## Legislative Update

On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Metro-sponsored Assembly Bill 499 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D - Sylmar) passed the Assembly Local Government Committee unanimously. AB 499 would allow Metro to utilize job order contracting as a project delivery method. Job order contracting allows for a more efficient procurement process and will enable Metro to rapidly and efficiently address smaller construction projects at our properties. This bill grants a similar job order contracting authority to Metro that exists at other agencies. The bill now moves to a vote by the full Assembly.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, Metro formally signed on as a sponsor of AB 1377 by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D - Burbank). AB 1377 would require that applicants for funding through the state Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention program include in their yearly reports 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 properties that operate in their jurisdiction. Metro is committed to working with the Legislature and local agencies, like Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and the County of Los Angeles, to ensure that the needs of people experiencing homelessness on the transit system are incorporated in the planning and delivery of the services funded by the State of California. AB 1377 would provide for the additional accountability measures needed to ensure that local agencies are closely coordinating with transit operators to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness in transit public spaces. Government Relations staff will be testifying at the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee on the bill at its first hearing, Wednesday, April 12.

Other Metro-supported bills are similarly moving along in the legislative process. AB 610 by Assemblymember Chris Holden (D - Pasadena) passed the Assembly Transportation Committee on a vote of 13-0 on March 13<sup>th</sup>. AB 610 would create a statewide Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program. The Department of Transportation would administer the Program to award grants to transit agencies to create and implement free youth transit pass programs. AB 610 is contingent upon an allocation of funds in the state budget. The bill now moves to the Appropriations Committee.

AB 610's proposed grant program would allow Metro to continue the GoPass program beyond its initial pilot phase. The GoPass Program recently passed the major milestone of providing more than 10 million free transit rides to students over the last eight months. The GoPass Pilot Program is phase one of Metro's Fareless System Initiative, which aims to use free transit as a tool to help LA County residents deal with high costs of living and to help recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, SB 434 by Senator Dave Min (D - Irvine) passed the Senate Transportation Committee on March 29<sup>th</sup> on a vote of 14-0. SB 434 would require California's ten largest transit operators to gather qualitative and quantitative ridership data regarding street harassment as riders wait at transit stops and ride transit vehicles, which is a critical first step in addressing and preventing street harassment of women and other vulnerable communities on public transit systems. SB 434 builds upon Senator Min's bill from last year, SB 1161, which required the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University to develop a survey tool that transit operators could use to gather data about street harassment on their systems. SB 1161 was sponsored by Metro, and staff has submitted a support letter for SB 434, which now moves to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

## State Equity Analysis

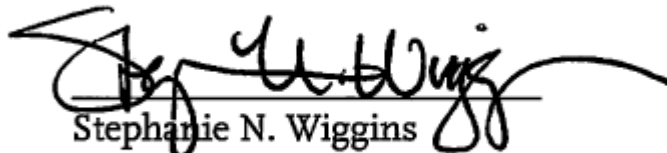
Government Relations will continue to work with the Office of Civil Rights, Racial Equity, and Inclusion in reviewing legislation introduced in Sacramento to address any equity issues in proposed bills and the budget process.

## Conclusion

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

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