

TA

CORRESPONDENCE

as of 4-28-2023

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1250 SAN CARLOS AVE
SAN CARLOS, CA 94070
(650) 508-6200

April 25, 2023

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
Chair, Assembly Local Government Committee
1020 N Street, Room 157
Sacramento, CA

RE: AB 817 (Pacheco) Brown Act – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Aguiar-Curry,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA), I write today in **SUPPORT** of AB 817 (Pacheco), which would modify the Ralph M. Brown Act in a way that better serves our communities and recognizes the significant advancements to remote meeting technology happening today.

As currently constituted, the Brown Act casts a wide net when it comes to defining legislative bodies. This bill would provide the necessary flexibility for advisory bodies that can take no action or establish policy on behalf of a local elected body to continue to return to meeting remotely without having to follow quorum, location notification, and accessibility requirements required by the Brown Act and/or AB 2449 (Rubio). Our agencies have several advisory committees to help guide our work, such as the SamTrans and TA Citizens Advisory Committees, which consist of members of the public, most of whom work outside jobs unrelated to the effort they put in for our agencies.

Providing additional flexibility for these non-decision-making advisory bodies to meet remotely will incentivize and enable participation from well-qualified, interested individuals, while allowing them to maintain unrelated commitments for work, school, and their families. It will also improve the ability of members of historically underserved and underrepresented communities, and those who live and/or work far from their local government offices, to participate in advisory bodies. Recruitment for these committees is difficult and the ability for members to participate from home, without sacrificing their privacy by publishing their addresses and opening their doors to all who may wish to enter, dramatically reduces the burdens of serving.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT** AB 817. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact Government and Community Affairs Manager Jessica Epstein at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "April Chan".

April Chan
General Manager/CEO and Executive Director

Cc: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transit District State Legislative Delegation
San Mateo County Transportation Authority State Legislative Delegation

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April 25, 2023

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
1021 O Street, Suite 6350
Sacramento, CA 95814
Transmitted via Electronic Mail

RE: ACA 1 (Aguiar-Curry) Local Infrastructure Funding – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA), I write to you in **SUPPORT** of ACA 1. This measure would lower the voter-threshold for the imposition, extension or increase of a special tax by a local government for affordable housing and infrastructure (transportation, sea-level rise, etc.), from two-thirds to 55 percent.

As you know, the California Constitution conditions the imposition of a special tax by a city, county, or special district upon the approval of two-thirds of the voters of the city, county, or special district voting on that tax. In 2018, the Measure W ½ cent sales tax in San Mateo County passed by 66.87 percent of the vote, only .2 percent above the two-thirds requirement. San Mateo County was on the brink of losing out on an estimated \$2 billion in transit and transportation funding. In other jurisdictions, this supermajority requirement has resulted in several major local transportation sales tax proposals narrowly failing passage.

By lowering the voter-threshold for a special tax for local projects from two-thirds to 55 percent, this constitutional amendment would provide a city, county or special district with a renewed ability to generate new revenue to fund much-needed local infrastructure and housing projects that increase access to housing, jobs & schools, reduce traffic congestion, address climate change, and improve air quality.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT** ACA 1 and appreciate your efforts to make it easier for local agencies to access additional funding as the state and local agencies continue to face significant shortfalls. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact Government and Community Affairs Manager Jessica Epstein at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "April Chan".

April Chan
General Manager/CEO and Executive Director

Cc: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transit District State Legislative Delegation
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