

**TA**

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**as of 6-1-2023**

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May 31, 2023

The Honorable Anna Caballero  
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee  
State Capitol, Room 407  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 557 (Hart) Brown Act – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Caballero:

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA), I write today in **SUPPORT** of AB 557 (Hart), which would continue the Brown Act emergency teleconference procedure established by Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and by AB 361 (Rivas). The AB 361 emergency teleconference procedure allows for remote participation in meetings of legislative bodies during a declared state of emergency that requires social distancing or otherwise prevents an agency from safely meeting in person.

During the pandemic, local agencies needed flexibility to meet remotely when it was unsafe to meet in person. Like other public agencies, SamTrans and the TA continued to issue public meeting notices and agendas as required by the Brown Act, invite and consider public input, and make meetings accessible to the community and the larger public using various technological means when meeting remotely.

AB 361 is set to expire at the end of 2023, and AB 557 would extend the sunset on the emergency remote meeting procedures to January 1, 2026. The bill also would extend the timeframe from 30 days to 45 days for local legislative bodies to justify holding remote meetings. This extension is particularly helpful for regular meeting schedules tied to calendar months rather than weeks. Enactment of AB 557 would ensure that local agencies, including SamTrans and the TA, retain appropriate tools to address limitations imposed by future emergencies and enable them to react and respond effectively.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT** AB 557. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact Government and Community Affairs Manager Jessica Epstein at [epsteinj@samtrans.com](mailto:epsteinj@samtrans.com) if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

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