



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 4c

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700
TEL 510.817.5700
TDD/TTY 510.817.5769
FAX 510.817.5848
E-MAIL info@mtc.ca.gov
WEB www.mtc.ca.gov

Memorandum

TO: Legislation Committee

DATE: May 1, 2009

FR: Executive Director

RE: ACA 9 (Huffman) – Lower Vote Threshold for Local Bonds & Special Taxes for Infrastructure

Description

ACA 9 by Assemblymember Jared Huffman of San Rafael changes the voter-approval requirement for certain bonded indebtedness and special taxes by cities, counties, a city and county, or special districts from two-thirds to 55 percent — the same vote threshold required for educational bonds.

Recommendation: Support and seek amendments

Discussion

This measure is consistent with MTC's 2009 Legislative Program. In fact, MTC has supported a number of bills similar to ACA 9 in prior years. This proposal applies to bonded debt or special taxes relating to construction or replacement of:

- Public improvements relating to transportation infrastructure, streets, highways, buildings, sewer systems, water systems, wastewater systems, and park and recreation facilities;
- Public safety agency facilities;
- Development of affordable housing; and
- Acquisition or lease of property for public improvements, public safety facilities, and affordable housing.

The bill includes various provisions that ensure accountability to voters, including a requirement for independent audits and public participation (See Attachment 1 for further details).

Recommendation

ACA 9 faces an uphill battle because a constitutional amendment from the Legislature requires two-thirds approval from each house; however, it would be welcomed by the transportation community in Napa and Solano counties, which have yet to achieve the two-thirds vote hurdle for their local sales tax proposals. Reducing the supermajority approval requirement would also assist in passing a special tax at the regional level. To ensure that regional measures, such as MTC's existing statutory authorization to seek voter approval for a regional gas tax, are covered under this proposal, we suggest including language to make measures sponsored by "regional commissions" eligible as well.

To keep a dialogue going on ways for the Bay Area transportation community to reinvest in our infrastructure independently of the chronic budget malaise in Sacramento, we recommend a “support and seek amendments” position on ACA 9.

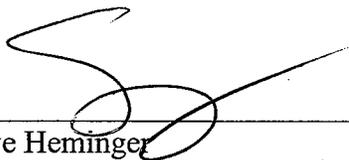
Known Positions

Support

Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs
California State Association of Counties
California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG)
California Professional Firefighters
California Public Securities Association
California Special Districts Association
California State Association of Counties
California Teachers Association
California Transit Association
City of Orinda
County of Marin
East Bay Municipal Utility District
Joint Legislative Advisory Committee of Marin County Schools
League of California Cities
Peace Officers Research Association of California
Regional Transit (Sacramento)
Riverside Sheriffs’ Association
Santa Clara Valley Water District
Santa Cruz County Regional Transit Commission
Solano Transportation Authority
Transportation Authority of Marin County

Oppose

California Association of Realtors



Steve Heminger