



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 5b

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 6, 2011

FR: Executive Director

W. I. 1131

RE: AB 345 (Atkins) — Vehicle Traffic Control Devices: Consultation with Non-Motorized Users

Background

The goal of AB 345 (Atkins) is to ensure that California's streets are safe and convenient for all road users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, people with disabilities, seniors and users of public transportation. The text of the bill is straightforward. It simply requires that Caltrans 1) consult with groups representing the users of streets, roads and highways, prior to adopting rules and regulations for traffic control devices, which ultimately get incorporated into the Caltrans' traffic control standards, known as the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CMUTCD); and 2) ensure that an advisory committee organized for the purpose of such consultation includes representatives of non-motorized users.

Recommendation: Support

Discussion

Currently, Caltrans relies on the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC) to fulfill its consultation requirements prior to adopting new standards related to traffic control devices. According to the California Bicycle Coalition, the CTCDC often has been inflexible when local agencies have asked for exceptions to current standards in order to better address the needs of pedestrians or bicyclists. For instance, the City and County of San Francisco, which has a policy of frequent traffic light changes in order to better serve pedestrians, requested a waiver to the new requirement that all new traffic signals provide a "pedestrian pushbutton." The CTCDC rejected the request, and the city had to install the push buttons at significant extra expense.

Current law requires that Caltrans consult with local agencies and conduct a public hearing prior to adopting new standards. Accordingly, the CTCDC consists of eight members, including one Caltrans representative, one California Highway Patrol representative, two representatives of the American Automobile Association, two representatives of the California State Association of Counties, and two representatives of the California League of Cities. While AB 345 does not explicitly reference the CTCDC, the goal of the bill is to ensure that the interests of bicyclists are also represented on that committee.

In order to improve Caltrans' responsiveness to proposals from Bay Area cities and counties to encourage bicycling and walking and protect the safety of non-motorized roadway users, MTC recommends a support position on AB 345.

Known Positions

Support

California Bicycle Coalition

Oppose

None



Steve Heminger