



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 4c

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Memorandum

TO: Legislation Committee

DATE: March 7, 2014

FR: Executive Director

W. I. 1131

RE: AB 2013 (Muratsuchi): Expansion of Access to High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes by Low-Emission Vehicles

Background

Assembly Bill 2013 proposes to expand the number of vehicles allowed to use high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes without the required number of occupants and without payment. Specifically, the bill increases by an unspecified amount, the number of green stickers that DMV may issue to plug-in hybrid vehicles meeting the “enhanced advanced technology partial zero-emission vehicles (enhanced AT PZEV) standard or transitional zero-emission vehicle (TZEV)” standard, as determined by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). Under current law, up to 40,000 green stickers may be issued, providing access until January 1, 2019. For the 2014 model year, the ARB has validated seven plug-in hybrid models as qualifying. There are also qualifying vehicles in prior model years dating back to 2012. As of February 28, 2014, 33,637 "green" stickers have been issued. Additionally, an unlimited number of white stickers may be issued for pure electric vehicles and certain alternative fuel vehicles.

Recommendation: Oppose

Discussion

While it is unusual for staff to recommend a position on a bill that leaves blank its key policy change, in this case we believe it is important to express our concerns early in the legislative session before the bill is heard in committee. As a policy matter, we are concerned about further erosion of HOV lane capacity to vehicles that are neither reducing the number of trips on the road nor paying a toll. With congestion levels shooting up again, especially in the prosperous South Bay of the region where the purchase of such vehicles is more likely, we do not believe it is appropriate to give access to the region's HOV lanes or express lanes away for free. For these reasons, we recommend we oppose further expansion of this policy and oppose AB 2013.

Known Positions

Support
Pending

Oppose
Pending



Steve Heminger

SH: RL