



September 26, 2023

Governor Newsom Acts on Key Legislation, Association-Sponsored and High-Priority Bills on the Governor's Desk

The Legislature adjourned for interim recess on September 14, 2023, and will return to Sacramento to begin the second year of the 2023-24 Legislative Session on January 3, 2024.

While legislative action has ceased for the calendar year, Governor Newsom has begun to act on key legislation and continues to review the bills that reached his desk in the final weeks of the first year of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, including the Association's sponsored and high-priority legislation. This year, Governor Newsom will have until October 14, 2023 to act on all remaining bills. Governor Newsom may choose to either sign, veto, or take no action on a measure, which passively allows it to become law.

Below we highlight the status of the Association's sponsored and high priority bills that reached Governor Newsom's desk.

Sponsored Legislation

SB 617 (Newman) Progressive Design-Build.

This bill would authorize a regional transportation agency to use progressive design-build procurement to design and construct projects on or adjacent to the state highway system. The Association is co-sponsoring this bill with the Self-Help Counties Coalition.

Status: On the Governor's desk.

A template Governor signature request letter can be found [here](#).

AB 719 (Boerner) Medi-Cal Benefits.

This bill would require Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCP) to reimburse public transit operators for nonmedical transportation (NMT) and nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) services. The Association will be co-sponsoring this bill with the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System.

Status: On the Governor's desk.

A template Governor signature request letter can be found [here](#).

High Priority Legislation

SB 410 (Becker) Powering Up Californians Act.

This bill would require the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to establish, by September 30, 2024, reasonable average and maximum target energization time periods to facilitate connecting new customers and upgrading the service of existing customers to the electrical grid.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

SB 434 (Min) Transit Operators: Street Harassment Survey.

This bill would require the top 10 transit agencies in California (by ridership) to survey their riders on their experience with street harassment on and around the agencies' transit service. This bill would require Caltrans to enter into funding agreements with each impacted agency to fund the survey.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

SB 747 (Caballero) Land Use: Economic Development: Surplus Lands Act.

This bill would amend the Surplus Lands Act (SLA) to address many of the concerns and comments raised by the California Transit Association, including amending the SLA to permit more economic development on transit properties and define disposal to include leases.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

SB 799 (Portantino) Unemployment Insurance: Trade Disputes: Eligibility for Benefits.

This bill would authorize employees who remain on strike for more than two weeks to collect unemployment insurance benefits.

Association Position: Watch

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 96 (Kalra) Public Employment: Local Public Transit Agencies: Autonomous Transit Vehicle Technology.

This bill would require public transit employers to provide notice to the appropriate authority, within 12 months of project planning or deployment, if they intend to arrange new autonomous transit vehicle technologies that introduce new products, services, or types of operation, or they eliminate jobs or job functions.

Association Position: Neutral

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 316 (Aguiar-Curry) Vehicles: Autonomous Vehicles.

This bill would prohibit the operation of an autonomous vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 pounds or more on public roads for testing purposes, transporting goods, or transporting passengers without a human safety operator physically present in the autonomous vehicle at the time of operation and to provide deactivation and collision reports to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Association Position: Watch

Association Position: Watch

Status: Vetoed by Governor Newsom

AB 400 (Rubio) Design-Build Projects.

This bill would extend the sunset date from January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2031 on allowing local agencies to use the design-build contracting method.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 557 (Hart) Open Meetings.

This bill would extend certain teleconferencing provisions indefinitely, which are currently in place only during a declared state of emergency through January 1, 2024. More specifically, this bill would provide an indefinite extension to allow local agencies to use teleconferencing without posting agendas at all teleconferencing locations, making public teleconferencing locations, and requiring the convening legislative body to have at least a quorum of its members to participate from locations within the boundaries of the local agency's jurisdiction as long as specified findings have been made by the legislative body.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 817 (Pacheco) Open Meetings.

This bill would provide a narrow exemption under the Brown Act for non-decision-making legislative bodies to participate in meetings via teleconferencing outside of a declared state of emergency without posting the physical location of members or requiring a quorum to be present at a meeting location.

Association Position: Support

Status: This is a 2-year bill.

AB 819 (Bryan) Crimes: Public Transportation: Fare Evasion.

This bill would reduce existing penalties from a misdemeanor and fine to only a maximum \$400 fine for fare evasion and unauthorized use of discount tickets.

Association Position: Watch

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 1377 (Friedman) Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program.

This bill would require an applicant for HHAP to report the steps taken to improve housing and homelessness resources for people experiencing homelessness on and around transit properties.

Association Position: Support

Status: On the Governor's desk.

AB 1379 (Papan) Open Meetings.

This bill would provide a broad interpretation of the Brown Act for all legislative bodies to participate in meetings via teleconferencing outside of a declared state of emergency without posting the physical location of members or requiring a quorum to be present at a meeting location, but would require a local agency to have a physical meeting location open to the public and follow certain notification procedures and meeting procedures.

Association Position: Support

Status: This is a 2-year bill.

AB 1484 (Zbur) Temporary Public Employees.

This bill would require that temporary employees of a public employer be automatically included in the same bargaining unit as the permanent employees, upon the request of the recognized employee organization.

Association Position: Oppose

Status: On the Governor's desk.

ACA 1 (Aguilar-Curry) Local Government Financing: Affordable Housing and Public Infrastructure: Voter Approval.

This bill would lower the voter threshold from 2/3 to 55 percent for the imposition, extension or increase of a special tax or general obligation bond to fund affordable housing and infrastructure projects, including public transit infrastructure.

Association Position: Support

Status: This measure does not require action by Governor Newsom and will appear on the November 2024 ballot.

In addition to these bills, the Association is tracking many other bills that impact transportation agencies, clean air programs, and employment. You can access our bill matrix [here](#) to learn more about the outcomes of these bills.

Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Advocate Alchemy Graham at 916-446-4656 or by email at alchemy@caltransit.org if you have any questions about this Legislative Bulletin.

