

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: 2019 Legislative Update

FROM: Jennifer Yeamans, Senior Grants & Management Specialist

DATE: September 24, 2019

Action Requested

Receive an informational update on results of the 2019 legislative session, including LAVTA priority bills LAVTA.

Background

In February 2019, the Board of Directors approved LAVTA's 2019 Legislative Program, built upon the following four principles in support of LAVTA's mission:

1. Protect existing and enhance future transportation funding sources.
2. Enhance operating conditions to support safety and performance goals.
3. Enhance public transit's role in addressing climate change and air quality issues.
4. Leverage support from and with partners to promote mobility, improve service productivity, and enhance regional leadership.

During the course of 2019, LAVTA staff has used these principles to monitor emergent legislative issues to support, watch, stay neutral, or oppose. This report provides a summary of major legislative outcomes of 2019 to date of interest to LAVTA.

2019 Legislative Overview

Federal

The current five-year federal surface-transportation authorization, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, expires September 30, 2020. Kicking off the reauthorization process, in July the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019 (ATIA), a five-year, \$287 billion highway transportation reauthorization proposal, which includes a new focus on climate change and resiliency activities as well as a new program to address metropolitan highway congestion. It is expected that the Senate's transit and revenue policies will be developed later and then merged with the highway proposal into a single Senate bill, after which the House will likely develop their own comprehensive surface-transportation package, with differences between the two resolved via a conference committee. LAVTA staff is collaborating with regional legislative advocacy partners on advancing regional transit priorities for the next surface transportation bill and will bring future updates to the Committee and/or the Board as may be appropriate.

State

September 13 was the last year for bills to be enacted next year to be passed out of the Legislature. The Governor has until October 13 to either sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature in 2019. Attachment 1 provides an update on the current status of LAVTA priority bills. This list adds AB 784 (Mullin), which would exempt public transit agencies from state sales tax on the purchase of specified zero-emission buses, which received broad support from California's public transit industry and as of this writing is awaiting the Governor's signature.

Of the bills LAVTA supported in 2019, one (AB 1350 related to the Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program) was held over to be a two-year bill. The other (SB 152, related to the state's Active Transportation Program) died in the Senate. SB 336 (Dodd) related to Shared Autonomous Vehicles, for which LAVTA adopted a Watch position, was held in the Assembly as a two-year bill. Staff will provide updates on the two-year bills as may be appropriate as part of next year's Legislative Program.

Regional

During 2019, regional business groups and other interested transportation advocacy groups began early planning and outreach activities for a regional "mega-measure" of tax-funded improvements intended to substantially overhaul and improve the Bay Area's transit infrastructure and services. These efforts are being modeled after recent successful campaigns passed in Los Angeles and Seattle. Backers are currently conducting outreach to the region's transit agencies, including LAVTA, to develop a project list that they hope might garner the required two-thirds support of Bay Area voters should it be placed on the ballot as early as 2020. Staff will provide further updates on the Faster Bay Area measure at your meeting.

Next Steps

Staff will return to the Finance and Administration Committee in early 2020 with a draft 2020 Legislative Program for Committee input prior to advancing to the Board of Directors for approval.

Recommendation

None — information only.

Attachments:

1. State Priority Legislation Update

**State Priority Legislation Update
2019–20 Session
September 19, 2019**

Bill	Current Text	Status	Description	Related LAVTA Legislative Agenda Goal or Principle	LAVTA Position
AB 784 (Mullin)	Amended 8/30/2019	Enrolled	Sales and use taxes: exemption: California Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project: transit buses. This bill would, until January 1, 2024, provide an exemption from state sales and use taxes with respect to the sale in this state of, and the storage, use, or other consumption in this state of, specified zero-emission technology transit buses sold to specified public agencies. This exemption would not apply to specified state sales and use taxes from which the proceeds are deposited into the Local Revenue Fund, the Local Revenue Fund 2011, or the Local Public Safety Fund. This bill would specify that this exemption does not apply to local sales and use taxes or transactions and use taxes.	Protect existing and enhance future transportation funding sources	
AB 1350 (Gonzalez)	Amended 3/26/2019	Assembly Two-Year	Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program. Would create the Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program upon the appropriation of moneys from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund by the Legislature, and would require the department to administer the program. The bill would require the department to award available moneys to eligible participants, as defined, to provide free transit passes to persons under the age of 25 through new or existing transit pass programs, as specified.	Protect existing and enhance future transportation funding sources	Support

SB 152 (Beall)	Amended 4/25/2019	Senate Appropriations	<p>Active Transportation Program. Would require that 60% of available funds be awarded to projects selected by MPOs in urban areas with populations greater than 200,000, with the available funds distributed to each MPO based on its relative share of the population, 15% to fund projects in small urban and rural regions, and 25% to projects of a transformative nature competitively awarded by the commission on a statewide basis. The bill would require, rather than authorize, the commission to adopt separate guidelines for the MPOs to ensure that they have sufficient discretion to adopt regional guidelines.</p>	Protect existing and enhance future transportation funding sources	Support
SB 336 (Dodd)	Amended 4/29/2019	Assembly Two- Year	<p>Transportation: fully-automated transit vehicles. Would require a transit operator, as defined, until January 1, 2025, to ensure each of its fully-automated transit vehicles, as defined, is staffed by at least one of its employees, who has had specified training, while the vehicle is in service. The bill would require a transit operator that deploys a fully automated transit vehicle to report the results of that deployment to the Legislature on or before March 31, 2025. The measure would be repealed entirely January 1, 2026.</p>	Enhance operating conditions to support safety and performance goals	Watch