



Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee

March 26, 2009

Center of Excellence Legislation (Matsui)

Issue: Inform Committee on recently introduced legislation to establish Centers of Excellence for Regional Smart Growth Planning.

Recommendation: None, this is for information only.

Discussion: This legislation is intended to establish centers of excellence for regional smart growth planning with state-of-the-art data and modeling tools that accurately estimate travel, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and other impacts from regional land use patterns and transportation systems. These centers would serve as resource centers for regional smart growth planning supported with as much as \$5 million in funding to assist centers in carrying out this function, including collecting information and best practices associated with regional smart growth planning, transit-oriented, mixed-use and infill development, use of data and models to develop smart growth plans, and effective civic engagement. The centers would work with higher education institutions along with state and federal agencies in providing technical assistance for grant recipients from regions seeking to do regional smart growth planning. Legislation includes funding for grants to regions in years 2010 through 2015.

SACOG staff worked with Congresswoman Matsui's staff to advocate for bill language supportive of smart growth planning efforts, consistent with the federal advocacy principal for Blueprint Implementation and Board comments directing the Executive Director to seek opportunities to be entrepreneurial and maximize resources to the agency. This legislation is crafted on the Blueprint work SACOG has done, including the work with the Caltrans Blueprint Learning Network. It would potentially increase agency capacity to continue Blueprint and MTP implementation and serve as a model to other regions in the state and country to further regional smart growth planning policy and application.

Staff will provide draft language to the committee as soon as it is available. This item is intended to provide opportunity for committee input. The item can come back to the committee at a future meeting for action.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

MM:RS:pm

Key Staff: Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs & Member Services, (916) 340-6224
Gordon Garry, Director of Research & Analysis, (916) 340-6230