



S A C O G

Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee

Item #09-6-12
Information

May 28, 2009

SB 632 (Lowenthal) – Port Infrastructure and Air Quality Improvements

Issue: SB 632 (Lowenthal) would require the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland to assess their infrastructure and air quality improvement needs and identify funding options.

Recommendation: None; this item is for information only.

Discussion: SB 632 (Lowenthal) is the successor to SB 974 (Lowenthal) of the 2007-08 Session, which was vetoed by the Governor. SB 974 would have collected a \$30 fee for each cargo container entering the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland. The proceeds from these fees would have been used for congestion relief, air quality improvement and other measures at the ports as well as along the road and rail corridors between the port and the state border.

In its current form, SB 632 does not specify a specific funding method. Instead, it would require the specified ports to assess its infrastructure and air quality improvement needs as well as all of the possible funding options for those projects and report their findings to the Legislature by July 2010. The assessments would include: projects that improve the efficiency of the movement of cargo while reducing pollution associated with the movement of that cargo, and the replacement of the trucks, cargo handling equipment, locomotives, and ships that move that cargo.

For the portion of the bill impacting northern California, SB 632 was amended in March to require the Port of Oakland to consult with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission on air quality and infrastructure projects, respectively. In 2007, SACOG was successful in seeking an amendment to SB 974 to include the Sacramento region in the area being considered for investment, and SACOG and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) among the agencies consulted when determining where to spend the funds for congestion and air quality improvements.

In his veto statement for SB 974, the Governor called for legislation ensuring the San Joaquin Valley is eligible for funds to address port-related cargo pollution. As this bill is further defined, staff recommends working with Senator Lowenthal to seek amendments defining the area the Port of Oakland must assess to specifically include the Sacramento region, and requiring consultation with SACOG, the El Dorado County Transportation Commission and PCTPA, and the Yolo-Solano, Sacramento Metropolitan, and Placer County air quality management districts.

The bill passed the Senate on May 21 and is being held at the Assembly Desk. It passed the Senate committees on Environmental Quality and Transportation & Housing without objection. The bill is supported by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Breathe California.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

Attachment

MM:RS:EJ:pm

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