



Item #12-5-8 Information

Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee

April 30, 2012

Federal Advocacy Update

Issue: Report on federal advocacy efforts.

Recommendation: None; this is for information only.

Discussion: SACOG participated in the Metro Chamber's annual Cap-to-Cap program April 21-25. The program afforded opportunity for public agencies, local elected officials, and business and community leaders to meet with members of Congress, federal agencies and administration staff on priority issues including: government reform, regulatory relief, and shared responsibility; regional cooperation; flood protection and water resources; and transportation. The Chamber's priority topics aligned with SACOG's interest in transportation authorization, integration of federal programs, updates on the HUD regional planning grant, and promotion of the recent Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy all bringing collaboration to the continued implementation of the region's Blueprint and the region's Next Economy project. SACOG staff and Board members participated in meetings with the Office of Management and Budget and US Department of Transportation staff for Secretary LaHood on transportation authorization, mobility and goods movement covering the larger regional planning efforts to the specific transportation projects of regional interest. Additionally, joint meetings with the Air Quality Team with staff from US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) allowed opportunity for a broader discussion on policies that promote mixed-use development.

This year, the Metro Chamber also launched a new Agriculture Team lead by Mary Kimball, Executive Director, Center for Land-Based Learning, and David Shabazian. This team met with staff from multiple federal agencies including US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency, and US Department of Commerce. The federal participants were eager to hear about rural economic development challenges the region faces and to offer suggestions on programs and funding that can help with the RUCS project and Next Economy efforts. Shabazian was also invited to present the RUCS project to the new Chief Information Officer for USDA and received a commitment from USDA staff to provide data and technical assistance.

Julia Burrows and Greenwise also provide opportunity for SACOG staff and Board members to meet with staff from the White House Jobs Council, Small Business Administration and Economic Development Administration in the context of relationship between infrastructure, integrated planning efficiencies, and economic development.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Chief Executive Officer

MM:RS:ef

Key Staff: Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs & Member Services, (916) 340-6224
David Shabazian, Senior Planner, (916) 340-6231

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