

PRIORITY FOCUS



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SB 375 NEGOTIATIONS PROGRESS

SB 375 is a bill authored by Sen. Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) that seeks to minimize the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from cars and light trucks by linking transportation funding to a compact development pattern. The League has been very concerned with some of the language in the bill that seems to conflict with the land use authority of cities and counties.

For more, see Page 2.



DRACONIAN BILL WOULD SADDLE CITIES WITH MANDATED COSTS

League Needs Letters of Opposition on AB 2716, 'Paid Sick Leave' Bill

A bill that would force employers to provide paid sick leave to part-time employees is making its way through the Senate. The League of California Cities is working to defeat AB 2716 (Ma) because cities' policies on paid sick leave can vary widely based on the needs of the local government. *For more, see Page 2.*



U.S. CONGRESS MOVES FORWARD WITH LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNDING PROGRAM

The U.S. House passed legislation last week that would reauthorize a grant program which supports state and local law enforcement efforts by providing grants for drug task forces, community crime prevention programs and substance abuse treatment and prosecution initiatives. The bill provides \$1 billion annually for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne/JAG) through FY 2012. *For more, see Page 3.*

In recent weeks, however, negotiations on SB 375 have been very productive. Sen. Steinberg has personally led the negotiations and has invited several critical parties to the table, including developers, local agencies, environmentalists and housing advocates to review the bill and negotiate a conceptual framework. League staff is optimistic that deal points and even some language will be available to be shared by the end of the month.

Some of the ideas being discussed are:

- ***Mandatory Growth Designations to be Removed.*** Sen. Steinberg has committed to striking the provision that required transportation funds to be allocated according to a specified development pattern. (This was one of the League's biggest issues with the bill). Information related to environmental resources would still be gathered and considered as part of the planning process.
- ***GHG Goal Set Through Collaborative Process.*** Regional targets for reduced carbon from cars and light trucks would be set through a collaborative process between the State Air Resources Board (ARB), the regional transportation planning agency, and local governments. ARB would not be charged with oversight authority over plan details.
- ***New CEQA.*** To the extent that a specific project is consistent with a regional plan to reduce greenhouse gases, it would be entitled to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) benefits that would minimize the need to study the cumulative, alternative and growth-inducing analysis of GHG emissions and other the cumulative and growth inducing of impacts related to regional traffic. Project specific impacts, however, would still need to be including within the environmental review.
- ***Eight-Year RHNA; More Coordinated Regional Planning.*** The timeline for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment could be extended to eight years to align with two cycles of the regional transportation plan in order to assure that the same assumptions are used for distributing housing numbers and transportation dollars.

These represent significant improvements to the bill. It appears that a framework is emerging that can address the needs of all the stakeholders (with the caveat, of course, that nothing has been finalized). League staff estimates that bill language that reflects these concepts should start circulating within the next two to three weeks, subject to the agreement of all of those who are at the table.

League Advises Cities Delay Taking a Position

The League is aware that several cities may have been contacted recently by a coalition of opponents. The League is maintaining its oppose-unless-amended position and is prepared to follow through with that position if negotiations break down. Negotiations have been productive enough that League staff recommends that cities which are thinking about taking a position on SB 375 consider delaying that decision until new language is printed.

The bill mandates that all California employers – including public employers – provide paid sick leave for any employee who works seven or more days in a calendar year. The days shall accrue at a rate of no less than one hour for every 30 hours worked. The bill does not apply to employees in the construction industry covered by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) if the agreement expressly waives the requirements of the article in clear and unambiguous terms. In other words, if a city's current CBA does not have any of the mandated language to exempt the local agency, the city must adhere to the bill or to comply, or it must change its current CBA.

The author has identified more than 6 million workers who have not provided paid sick leave; however, the author has not cited a single city or county as a culprit or as an abuser of the current system. Local agencies have some of the most stringent rules covering paid sick leave.

AB 2716 passed out of the Senate Labor Committee last week. The League is working with all public and private agencies to defeat the bill when it reaches Senate Appropriations, tentatively set for July 14. The California Chamber of Commerce will rally its individual chambers in a collaborative effort with local cities.

City officials are urged to work with their staff to calculate cost impacts to their cities, and send letters of opposition on this bill. To view the League's letter, visit www.cacities.org/billsearch and plug in AB 2716 into the search function.

'Law Enforcement Program Funding' Continued from Page 1...

House and Senate Judiciary Committee leaders will now begin discussions on the measure with the aim of producing a bill for the President's signature before Congress breaks for its month-long August recess.

The House Appropriations Committee also approved its FY 2009 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill. This bill contains \$550 million for the Byrne/JAG program, which is \$380 million more than the amount enacted for the program last year. It also included \$627 million for the Citizens Options for Public Safety (COPS) program, which is \$40 million more than was enacted for the program last year.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the FY 2009 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations measure, which includes \$581 million for the Byrne/JAG program and \$600 million for COPS.

U.S. Senate Considers Funding for Energy, Water Efficiency

The House Appropriations Committee approved last week its version of a bill which would assist local governments to develop and implement a comprehensive energy efficiency strategy to help the nation meet its energy and climate protection goals.

The FY 2009 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which includes \$295 million for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG), was authorized at \$2 billion annually for five years in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (PL 110-140).

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water will consider its version of the spending measure on July 8. Cities are urged to contact U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein to urge support for full funding for EECBG in the bill.

The League has posted a draft letter on its Web site that cities can consider using, along with the letter the League is sending to the Senator this week on this issue. Links to the letters are posted in this story on the "Federal Priorities" page of the League's Web site, www.cacities.org.

Save the Date for Air Quality Workshops in July

This month, city officials will have a chance to weigh in on the future of the state's air quality. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is holding three public workshops in July in preparation for drafting a "scoping plan" to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as required by AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006.

The workshop dates and locations are:

July 8 – South Coast Air Quality Management District, Diamond Bar

July 14 – Fresno City Hall, Fresno

July 17 – California Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters, Sacramento

ARB is scheduled to consider the scoping plan in November 2008. For more information about the workshops and the draft scoping plan, visit www.arb.ca.gov, click on the "Events" tab and select "Workshops Only."

Sustainable Cities Feature: Yountville Turns Wastewater to Grape Water

What do the wineries of Chimney Rock, Clos du Val and Stags Leap have in common with Vintners' Golf Club and the California Veterans Home of Yountville? All are irrigated using recycled wastewater from Yountville's residents, businesses and the Veterans Home.

Using sedimentation and filtration process, the sewage from the city's 3,300 residents and businesses is essentially cleaned, removing all the solids. It's a chemical-free process except for sodium hypo-chloride (bleach) used at the end to disinfect. From flush to finish, on average it takes just 24 hours to turn the city's waste into usable water. Reclaimed water is treated to meet federal and state standards and can be used for irrigation. Although it's safe enough to drink, it's not being used for drinking or tap water.

By recycling wastewater, Yountville helps keep the treated water from running into the local creeks and river system. Water from wells and local reservoirs can be preserved by not pumping water out of the ground. When vineyards pump water from the wells they lower the aquifer. This is an especially critical issue with California's current drought. Customers of the reclaimed water save money because they don't have to pump water to irrigate.

Council Member Steven Rosa, the city's former waste water supervisor, believes reclaiming water is vitally important. "You are freeing up tap water for people instead of watering the fields."

Yountville's reclaimed water has become such a valuable commodity locally that Robert Mondavi and Silverado wineries are very interested in tapping into the pipeline that delivers the product to the other customers. Rosa says he expects this to happen in the next two years.

Currently, Yountville reclaims 45-60 percent of the city's sewage water. The city is working on expanding its storage capacity and is in the process of reviewing its plant modernization plan. The goal is to have a "zero discharge" system in place to be able to reclaim all wastewater in the next three years.

Yountville has been recycling water for nearly three decades. The small Napa County city began recycling water when the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implemented new water treatment standards in the 1970s. Today, the other four cities in Napa County (American Canyon, Calistoga, Napa and St. Helena) also treat their wastewater as well as some local businesses such as the Meadowood Resort and St. Helena Hospital.

Find a Bill, Legislators, Leg Committee, or Ask League Leg Staff

Visit (and bookmark!) the League's [Legislative Resources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources) Web page (www.cacities.org/legresources). You'll find a roster and contact information for the League's legislative staff; the online Bill Search program, background materials on lobbying your legislators, and more.
