

PRIORITY FOCUS



March 2, 2007

Issue #9-2007

LEAGUE-SPONSORED BILL PACKAGE INTRODUCED

With the legislative session in high gear and approximately 3,000 bills introduced, the League of California Cities will be active on a number of items in 2007. Of particular note to League members, however, are six League-sponsored bills. *For more, see Page 2.*



CALIFORNIA SUMMIT FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES SET FOR MARCH 19

Registration Information Now Available!

As reported in [last week's edition of Priority Focus](#), the California Summit for Safe Communities is set for March 19 at the Radisson Hotel in Sacramento. Registration and further information is now available online at www.cce.csus.edu/summit. *For more, see Page 2.*



OPEB COMMISSION SETS FIRST MEETING

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Commission has set its first meeting, which will take place on Friday, March 9. The meeting will be held at the State Capitol in Room 4203. This session will serve as the Commission's "organizational" meeting to explore future agenda items and hearing schedules. *For more, see Page 3.*

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A brief summary of these bills is below. Cities are encouraged to review them and send letters of support to the author. Copies of the League's support letters and sample letters for cities are available by looking up the bills at www.cacities.org/billsearch.

- **SB 286 (Dutton). Local Street and Road Transportation Funds.**

This measure contains a League-drafted formula for the accelerated distribution of \$2 billion in local street and road funds (contained in Proposition 1B) to cities and counties.

- **SB 934 (Lowenthal). Housing and Infrastructure Zones.**

SB 934 would establish a new financial tool to assist local governments seeking to develop high-density developments in infill areas through the use of tax increment financing.

- **AB 1256 (Caballero). Density Bonus Law.**

This bill would reward communities that have adopted local inclusionary housing requirements by relieving them from the conflicting and confusing requirements of the Density Bonus Law.

- **AB 1254 (Caballero). Property Tax Reward. Affordable Housing.**

AB 1254 would reward local governments that approve affordable housing units operated by non-profit entities through a reduction of their required ERAF payments.

- **SB 266 (Steinberg). Motor Vehicles. Speed Contests. Forfeiture.**

This bill is co-sponsored by the League of California Cities and the city of Elk Grove. It would strengthen the ability of local governments to impose penalties to those engaging in speed contests.

- **AB 411 (Emmerson)/SB 709 (Dutton). Over-Concentration of Residential Care Facilities.**

AB 411/SB 709 would require the Department of Social Services to solicit and consider local land use information prior to the siting of a facility in a single-family neighborhood.

The League's legislative staff is currently reviewing all of the other introduced bills and will provide updated information on those of interest to cities in future issues of *Priority Focus*.

California Summit Continued from Page 1...

The summit is the result of a recommendation from the Governor's High Risk Sex Offender and Sexually Violent Predator (HRSO/SVP) Task Force. On December 1, 2006, the task force recommended that the Governor, League of California Cities, and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) should sponsor a statewide summit to specifically address the placement and housing of sex offenders.

The League encourages mayors, council members, city managers, city attorneys, and city planners to attend this event. (Police chiefs will also attend the summit, with the California Police Chiefs Association designating who will represent their organization.)

There is limited seating for the summit, so please make sure to register as soon as possible. The registration cost for the summit is \$75, which includes the receipt of an informational binder, breakfast, and lunch.

If you have any questions regarding the California Summit for Safe Communities, please contact League Legislative Analyst Leticia Farris at lfarris@cacities.org.

OPEB Continued from Page 1...

The Commission intends to reach out to a broad range of stakeholders and other experts to gather information about the financial condition of public post-employment benefits in California. The Commission wants to hear from employers, employees and employee organizations, actuaries, investment houses, rating agencies, taxpayer groups and others to get a comprehensive look at the issue.

The Commission plans to hold hearings throughout the state to help facilitate input. A schedule for the hearings is being currently being developed. As soon as the schedule is available, the League s will forward the information to cities who may want to have officials attend.

The Commission's goal is two-fold - assess the current financial condition of state and local government retirement systems and other post-employment benefits as accurately as possible, and second, to make recommendations to address any problems that are identified in its research efforts.

The League, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC), the State Association for County Retirement Systems (SACRS) and special districts are forming a technical working group to both help our memberships follow this issue and to provide input to the Commission in its deliberations.

The chair of the Commission is Gerald Parsky. Mr. Parsky currently serves as chair of the Aurora Capital Group, a Los Angeles-based investment firm. He has been a senior partner with the Los Angeles law firm of Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher.

He is also a member of the California Board of Regents. In a meeting with local government organizations earlier this week, Parsky explained his intent to work together on the issue of post-employment benefits.

"The Governor and legislative leaders have given us an important charge - determining how to address one of the most significant budget issues that California will face in the coming years," Parsky said. "I look forward to sitting down with my fellow commissioners next week to begin the important work of building a bipartisan consensus on this issue."

The primary staff person to the Commission is Anne Sheehan, deputy director of the State Department of Finance. She will have other assistance from within the Department of Finance, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and the State Teachers Retirement System.

HCD Hosts Workshops and Stakeholder Meetings for Housing Bond-Funded Programs

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is hosting a slate of stakeholder meetings and workshops on the funding that is available through Proposition 1C, the housing bond measure passed in November 2006.

City officials are encouraged to attend some of these meetings, to have a say in how these funds are distributed.

Of particular note is the Transit-Oriented Development Program, which provides funding for housing and related infrastructure near transit stations. Six stakeholder meetings are planned for this program, which will ultimately distribute \$95 million. The locations and times of these meetings are as follows:

- March 6 – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. – Rancho Cordova
- March 9 – 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Oakland
- March 12 – 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. – San Diego
- March 13 – 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – Los Angeles
- March 14 – 10 a.m. to noon – Riverside
- March 20 – 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Modesto

Workshops and meetings have also been planned for all other bond-funded programs, including rental programs, homeownership programs and farmworker housing. Click [here](#) for a complete list of programs, including the dates, times, and specific locations of each meeting.

NLC 2007 Congressional City Conference: Events Scheduled for the League, California Delegates

The National League of Cities (NLC) 2007 Congressional City Conference is just over a week away, beginning on March 10, and running through March 14 in Washington D.C. The League of California Cities has a variety of important events scheduled during the conference, including a reception on March 12.

California City officials that are attending the NLC conference should mark their calendars for the following activities:

- **Monday, March 12 – League of California Cities Reception.** This event will take place from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Lincoln East, Washington Hilton – Concourse Level.
- **Tuesday, March 13 – Capitol Hill Reception for California Delegation and Membership.** A reception for California city officials and the California Congressional Delegation will be held at the Longworth Cafeteria from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Meeting with Sen. Barbara Boxer.** The time is yet to be determined and the location will be announced during the League's reception on March 12.
- **Wednesday, March 14 – Roundtable Discussion with California Congressional Delegation – Issue: Homeland Security.** This hour-long discussion will begin at 10 a.m. in Room HC-5 at the Capitol.

If you have any questions, please contact Genevieve Morelos at gmorelos@cacities.org or (916) 658-8254.

California Communities Considering Clean Renewable Energy Bond Pool Program

California Communities, the joint powers authority sponsored by the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties, is considering establishing a statewide bond financing program to assist successful Clean Renewable Energy Bond (CREB) applicants to acquire financing.

The CREB program was established by federal legislation in 2005 to facilitate the development of environmentally friendly power generating facilities by authorizing \$800 million of bonds to bear federal income tax credits instead of interest. Two hundred thirty-one California public agencies were granted CREB allocations in the \$1 million to \$2 million range.

A California Communities bond pool program would provide the following:

- CREB bonds could be issued on behalf of numerous CREB recipients by California Communities in a single issue.
- A pooled program would lower the overall transaction costs to each participant.
- Uniform program documents and consistent disclosure would be uniquely tailored to the CREBs program.

If you have received a CREBs allocation and are interested in a pooled program through California Communities, please email Terrence Murphy at tmurphy@cacommunities.org or James Hamill at jhamill@cacommunities.org no later than March 12.

If enough interest is expressed by cities and counties for a California Communities program, the interested parties will be notified and a program will be established.

March Edition of *Focus on Housing* Released

The March issue of *Focus on Housing*, the League of California Cities' monthly electronic newsletter that covers affordable housing issues was published on Wednesday, Feb. 28.

This month, feature articles include two pieces on manufactured housing and its use in affordable housing developments, housing news from around California, and much more! To read the current issue, visit www.imakenews.com/focusonhousing.

Do you have an affordable housing success story or an affordable housing issue you would like to write about? If so, we want to hear about it! Contact League Communications Specialist Brian Heaton at bheaton@cacities.org about how you can contribute to *Focus on Housing*.

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

Visit (and bookmark!) the League's [Legislative Resources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources) 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.
