



TA Board of Directors

Meeting of October 9, 2025

Correspondence as of September 19, 2025

Subject

1. Letter of Support from San Mateo County Local Elected Leaders re: SB63
2. Letter of Request re: AB 1014 (Rogers) – Request for Signature
3. Letter of Request from SamTrans and TA re: SB 71 (Wiener) CEQA Streamlining for Clean Transportation Projects – Request for Signature
4. Letter of Request from SamTrans and TA re: AB 476 (González) Metal Theft – Request for Signature
5. Letter of Request re: AB 1085 (Stefani): License plates: obstruction or alteration – Request for Signature

From: [James Coleman](#)
To: [Board \(@smcta.com\)](#)
Subject: SMC Local Elected Leaders Letter of Support for SB63
Date: Thursday, September 11, 2025 2:43:00 PM
Attachments: [SMC Electeds Letter to State Delegation on SB 63.pdf](#)

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Dear SMCTA Board of Directors ,

On behalf of over thirty local elected officials from across San Mateo County, please see the attached letter expressing our strong support for San Mateo County's continued inclusion in SB 63.

The regional transit revenue measure enabled by SB 63 is urgently needed for San Mateo County to preserve and improve our local transit service. The strong accountability provisions included in the most recent draft of SB 63 are tough, unprecedented, and responsive to prior input from San Mateo County elected officials and transit agency staff.

Sincerely,
James Coleman

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James Hsuchen Coleman (he/him/his)
South San Francisco City Council
City Business: james.coleman@ssf.net
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)
650.648.3232



Senator Scott Wiener
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Jesse Arreguín
1021 O Street, Suite 6710
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Josh Becker
1021 O Street, Suite 6250
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Diane Papan
1021 O Street, Suite 4220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Marc Berman
1021 O Street, Suite 8130
Sacramento CA 95814

Assemblymember Catherine Stefani
1021 O Street, Suite 5220
Sacramento CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 63 (Wiener, Arreguín) - Support for San Mateo County Opt-In Commitment

September 11, 2025

Dear Senators Wiener, Arreguín, and Becker and Assemblymembers Papan, Berman, and Stefani,

We write to express our support for San Mateo County's continued inclusion in Senate Bill 63 (Wiener, Arreguín). The regional transit revenue measure enabled by SB 63 is urgently needed for San Mateo County to preserve and improve our local transit service. The strong accountability provisions included in the most recent draft of SB 63 are tough, unprecedented, and responsive to prior input from San Mateo County elected officials and transit agency staff.

On August 6, 2025 the SamTrans Board of Directors voted 8-1 to support San Mateo County's inclusion in SB 63. The SamTrans Board's decision was informed by the urgent need for local transit funding in San Mateo County, by extensive polling information, and by prior votes by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) and City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) supporting an "opt-in" decision. **Included in the SamTrans motion was language directing the Bay Area Delegation to include strong accountability measures while "preserving San Mateo County's ability to participate in the measure."**

Thousands of San Mateo County residents rely on public transit to access their essential destinations, and there is strong support among likely voters for the approach contemplated in SB 63. [May 2025 polling](#) conducted on behalf of SamTrans and SMCTA showed that 57 percent of likely voters support a half-cent sales tax to fund public transit operations in San Mateo County. SB 63 authorizes a citizens' initiative which can pass with a simple majority. Polling showed that a local alternative structured around an increased local Measure A sales tax would not pass the necessary two-thirds margin. Thus, the regional transit measure enabled by SB 63 is the only viable path forward to meet the urgent transit funding needs of transit agencies serving San Mateo County residents.

County leaders and transit agency staff have engaged in months of constructive conversations with the authors of SB 63. We thank Assemblymember Diane Papan for her advocacy for robust accountability measures and SamTrans/SMCTA staff for their tireless work negotiating a strong deal for San Mateo County. **We thank the bill authors for including the following components in SB 63 that address San Mateo County's concerns and requests:**

- **Preserving opt-in decision:** The authors agreed to provide San Mateo County with the voluntary option to opt in or out of SB 63, which was not offered with SB 1031.
- **Protecting Measure A renewal:** SB 63 can only go on the November 3, 2026 ballot, and reduces pressure on Measure A renewal to provide funding for Caltrain. Without SB 63, San Mateo County would potentially have to cut millions in local funding to fund Caltrain through our planned 2028 Measure A renewal.
- **Increasing transparency:** San Mateo County requested that an independent consultant be contracted to review operator deficits. That independent review was conducted earlier this year, helping inform the expenditure plan.
- **Setting a fair BART contribution:** County leaders worked with the authors to negotiate a lower and fairer contribution to BART. This amount corresponds to a fair share of adjusted fare loss from the pandemic instead of adjusting for existing local commitments to operations from every county—reducing San Mateo’s BART funding obligation by tens of millions.
- **Maximizing Return to Source:** All funds in excess of the agreed-upon amounts to other operators and initiatives from the county in SB 63 will be returned to SamTrans, constituting roughly \$50 million each year in transformative funding for local transit projects in San Mateo County. There will be no ability for that funding to be withheld, conditioned, reduced, modified, or delayed by the newly established special district. Additionally, recent negotiations provided even more return-to-source funding for our county. SamTrans will receive these revenues and will have decisionmaking authority over these revenues - **this is taxation with direct representation on our return to source dollars.**
- **Requiring a robust fiscal efficiency review:** In large part due to advocacy by San Mateo County, SB 63 requires BART, Muni, Caltrain, and AC Transit to submit a two-phase comprehensive financial efficiency review and implementation plan overseen by an independent oversight committee. The committee will include an equal balance of operator representatives and independent experts, as well as a member of the commission from the geographic boundaries of the measure. Operators will have to maintain these efficiencies in order to continue receiving funding from the measure.
- **Strengthening accountability:** Significant accountability concessions were made as a direct result of Assemblymember Papan’s pressure and negotiations.
 - For each agency that receives funding from multiple counties in SB 63, there will be a new *ad hoc adjudication committee* composed of equal representatives from each county served by that agency (i.e. for Caltrain: San Mateo, San Francisco, and Santa Clara would each get two seats).
 - In San Mateo County, SamTrans or the Board of Supervisors will be able to petition these ad hoc adjudication committees if they believe an operator they are funding is unfairly or inconsistently applying adopted policies.
 - An ad hoc adjudication committee can withhold up to 3.5%, and then after 90 days if an operator has yet to comply, up to 7%, of an operator’s funding, as a result of a petition. This is an increase from the 5% withholding the authors had previously agreed to.
 - In the event of a tie, funds are withheld from the transit agency with the grievance against them.

- For these withheld funds to be released after an issue is resolved, at least one commissioner from each county on the ad hoc adjudication committee has to vote to release the funds, or a simple majority vote or tie after 180 days.
- **Clarifying the role of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission**
 - The measure is administered by MTC, which brings decades of financial and legal expertise and has successfully delivered two prior regional measures. This ensures professional, efficient administration and reliable delivery.
 - At the same time, the counties remain firmly in the driver's seat. The expenditure plan is prescriptive—counties determine how funds are allocated, and MTC's role is to carry out those decisions.
 - The measure also directs MTC to verify compliance with financial efficiency requirements and a maintenance of effort standard, while ensuring that counties—through the ad hoc committees—are the ones that have the final say if operators are meeting standards on cleanliness, safety, service, and fares.
 - Additionally, MTC has no ability to allocate or withhold SamTrans return-to-source funds.
 - This approach offers the best of both worlds: MTC's proven administrative capacity paired with county control over priorities and accountability.

This accountability structure is extremely strict not only in relation to earlier versions of SB 63, but in relation to other tax measures more broadly. It is highly responsive to San Mateo County's persistent advocacy and is the strongest possible accountability system that the authors were able to feasibly achieve in the legislature.

The benefits of SB 63 to San Mateo County are immense, and there is no feasible path to funding our County's urgent transit needs in the coming years without San Mateo County's inclusion in SB 63. Tens of thousands of residents in our county including our workers, youth, seniors, low-income families, and individuals with disabilities depend on our transit systems. Through the housing element process, cities across San Mateo County have planned for transit oriented development to both meet their affordable housing goals and create demand to sustain our transit systems long term. Letting transit fail is not an option, and SB 63 gives transit agencies serving San Mateo County residents the funding they need to adapt to new realities and bring ridership back to pre-pandemic levels. Caltrain's highly successful electrification project increased ridership 76 percent from June 2024 to June 2025, and BART's customer satisfaction rating is the highest it has been in years. While there is much more work ahead, SB 63 will allow transit agencies to avert catastrophic cuts and build on the progress that has already been made.

We urge you to support San Mateo County's continued inclusion in Senate Bill 63 and thank you for your continued leadership advocating for the needs of San Mateo County.

Sincerely,

David Canepa

President, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Commissioner, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Director, SamTrans Board
Director, Caltrain Board

Noelia Corzo

Vice President, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Director, San Mateo County Transportation Authority

Jeff Gee

Councilmember, City of Redwood City
Chair, SamTrans Board
Director, Caltrain Board

Carlos Romero

Councilmember, City of East Palo Alto
Chair, San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors
Vice Chair, Association of Bay Area Governments

Eddie Flores

Mayor, City of South San Francisco
President, League of California Cities, Peninsula Division
City/County Association of Governments Director

Elmer Martínez Saballos

Mayor, City of Redwood City
City/County Association of Governments Director

James Coleman

Councilmember, City of South San Francisco

Phoebe Shin Venkat

Councilmember, City of Foster City
Board Member, Commute.org
Board Member (alternate), Association of Bay Area Governments

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Councilmember, City of Daly City
City/County Association of Governments Director

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Councilmember, City of Redwood City

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Director, SamTrans Board

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Amy Koo

Board Vice-President, Sequoia Union High School District

Mark Dinan

Vice Mayor, City of East Palo Alto

Mary Bier

Councilmember, City of Pacifica

All titles for identification purposes only

CC:

San Mateo County Transit Authority Board of Directors
C/CAG Board of Directors
SamTrans Board of Directors
Caltrain Board of Directors
BART Board of Directors

Senator Josh Becker (SD-13)
Senator Jesse Arreguin (SD-07)
Senator Christopher Cabaldon (SD-03)
Senator Dave Cortese (SD-15)
Senator Tim Grayson (SD-09)
Senator Mike McGuire (SD-02)
Senator Jerry McNerney (SD-05)
Senator Aisha Wahab (SD-10)
Senator Scott Wiener (SD-11)

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (AD-14)
Assemblymember Cecilia M. Aguiar-Curry (AD-04)
Assemblymember Patrick J. Ahrens (AD-26)
Assemblymember Anamarie Ávila Fariás (AD-15)
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (AD-16)
Assemblymember Marc Berman (AD-23)
Assemblymember Mia Bonta (AD-18)
Assemblymember Damon Connolly (AD-12)
Assemblymember Matt Haney (AD-17)
Assemblymember Ash Kalra (AD-25)
Assemblymember Alex Lee (AD-24)
Assemblymember Liz Ortega (AD-20)
Assemblymember Diane Papan (AD-21)
Assemblymember Gail Pellerin (AD-28)
Assemblymember Robert Rivas (AD-29)
Assemblymember Chris Rogers (AD-02)
Assemblymember Catherine Stefani (AD-19)
Assemblymember Lori D. Wilson (AD-11)



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APRIL CHAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of the State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1014 (Rogers) – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), I write to respectfully request that you sign **AB 1014 (Rogers)**, which would broaden existing law by permitting the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) – not just local governments – to lower speed limits by five miles per hour on specified state highways.

SMCTA aims to improve mobility and safety, reduce congestion, and support economic vitality through strategic investment in transportation infrastructure in San Mateo County. While roadway design and enforcement are key aspects to protecting public safety, speed limits also have an impact on motorists' behavior. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, reducing speed limits on highways can impact driver behavior and improve road safety. Lower speed limits can reduce crash severity and frequency, particularly in urban corridors, school zones, and business districts.

San Mateo County is home to numerous state highways that run through the rural and urban downtowns of several cities, including State Route 82 (El Camino Real) and State Route 1 (Pacific Coast Highway). The SMCTA is funding projects along these highways to reduce speeds and improve safety for the most vulnerable roadway users such as people walking and biking. We support Caltrans having the flexibility to determine whether reducing speed limits on highways in San Mateo County will improve safety in our communities.

For these reasons, we request your signature on AB 1014 (Rogers). Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to the safety of all the traveling public. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact TA

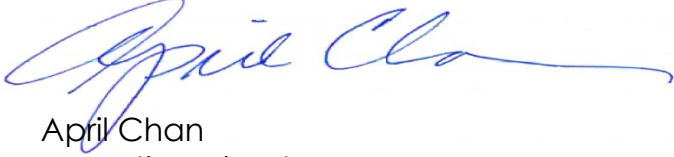
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

1250 San Carlos Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070 (650) 508-6200

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
September 12, 2025
Page 2 of 2

Government and Community Affairs Director, Jessica Epstein, at
EpsteinJ@samtrans.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



April Chan
Executive Director

CC: San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors
The Honorable Chris Rogers, California Assembly
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE
SAN CARLOS, CA 94070
(650) 508-6200

September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 71 (Wiener) CEQA Streamlining for Clean
Transportation Projects – Request for Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), I write to respectfully request you sign **SB 71 (Wiener)**. SB 71 would make clarifying changes to, and modify slightly, the existing statutory exemptions to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for clean transportation projects, established by SB 288 (Wiener) [Chapter 200, Statutes of 2020], while also extending the law's January 1, 2030 sunset date for most of the projects permitted by the statute to January 1, 2040. This bill would also add additional project-types to the list of exemptions, including ferry terminals, microtransit, paratransit, and more.

In 2020, SB 288 (Wiener) was signed into law, establishing a set of statutory exemptions from CEQA in the Public Resources Code for certain clean transportation projects, with the goal of accelerating clean transportation projects that reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Since the passage of SB 288 in 2020, over 90 projects statewide have moved forward more quickly and cost effectively, including transit priority projects, bicycle & pedestrian projects, bus rapid transit projects, traffic calming projects, zero-emission vehicle charging infrastructure, ADA curb and sidewalk repairs, and transit maintenance facility modernization. SMCTA may use the exemptions established for two upcoming projects, the El Camino Real Complete Streets projects and Fashion Island Blvd/19th Ave Complete Streets Project in the City of San Mateo.

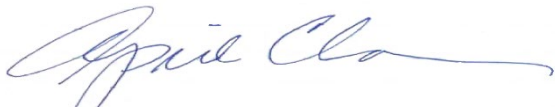
The Honorable Gavin Newsom
September 12, 2025
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Along with conversion of our fleet to zero emission technology, SamTrans has many projects that may benefit from this bill. The agency fully implemented the changes from the last transit operational analysis and plan. SamTrans is in the process of implementing a bus stop study and changing shelters and amenities across the county.

As such, we support SB 71 to create long-term certainty for local agencies as they continue to advance projects that further clean transportation options and make public transit more equitable and accessible.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact Government and Community Affairs Director Jessica Epstein at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



April Chan
General Manager/CEO/Executive Director

Cc: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transit District State Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Scott Wiener, California State Senate
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom

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SAN CARLOS, CA 94070
(650) 508-6200

September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 476 (González) Metal Theft – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), I write to respectfully request that you sign **AB 476 (González)**, to enhance enforcement measures against precious metal theft. This bill will help protect California's public infrastructure and ensure the safety and functionality of essential services that our communities rely on.

Metal theft has become an increasingly widespread and costly issue, severely affecting infrastructure, construction, and transit projects. Thieves often target these public assets due to the high value of precious metal, specifically copper, leaving behind significant damage that endangers public safety and imposes burdensome repair costs on local agencies.

AB 476 provides much-needed enforcement tools to deter copper wire theft and hold perpetrators accountable for the harm they cause to public safety and infrastructure reliability. The bill would require junk dealers and recyclers to collect more detailed transaction records and provide access to these records to law enforcement. AB 476 also updates restrictions on possessing materials from public agencies and increases the fine for junk dealers or recyclers who fail to follow the law.

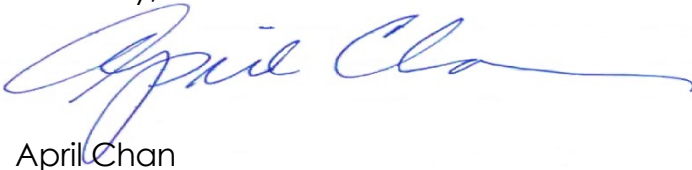
Given the significant impact of metal theft on Caltrain and the threat that this poses to the public safety and service reliability of Caltrain's newly electrified infrastructure, SamTrans and SMCTA believe that this bill will strengthen the legal framework needed to safeguard critical transit infrastructure in San Mateo County.

Furthermore, metal theft is a potential source of construction cost drivers for SMCTA due to copper thefts at construction sites.

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
September 12, 2025
Page 2 of 2

For these reasons, we request your signature on AB 476 (González). Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact Government and Community Affairs Director Jessica Epstein at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



April Chan
General Manager/CEO/Executive Director

Cc: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of
Directors San Mateo County Transit District State Legislative
Delegation
San Mateo County Transportation Authority Legislative Delegation



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September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1085 (Stefani): License plates: obstruction or alteration – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), I write to respectfully request that you sign **AB 1085 (Stefani)**, which would strengthen existing law by clarifying that license plate covers (e.g. shades, tints, and obstructions) that impair electronic or visual toll and law enforcement systems are prohibited, and increase penalties for manufacturing and selling such devices in California.

License plate covers – physical devices or materials designed to be placed over or around a vehicle's license plate – are specifically designed to obstruct or distort the plate's visibility. According to the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), nearly one million unpaid crossings occurred on state-owned bridges in Fiscal Year 2023–24 due to obstructed or altered plates – resulting in an estimated \$6.8 million in lost revenue. These figures do not include unpaid tolls on express lanes.

In the Bay Area, BATA uses bridge toll revenue to support pedestrian and bicycle upgrades, transit connectivity, congestion relief projects, and grade separations. In San Mateo County, toll revenues are used to fund transportation improvements along express lane corridors, and to support a Community Transportation Benefits Program to help cover transportation costs for qualified individuals.

By expanding the definition of prohibited devices, holding manufacturers accountable alongside sellers, and increasing fines to create meaningful deterrence, AB 1085 will help prevent toll evasion and help fund vital infrastructure improvements in San Mateo County and throughout the state.

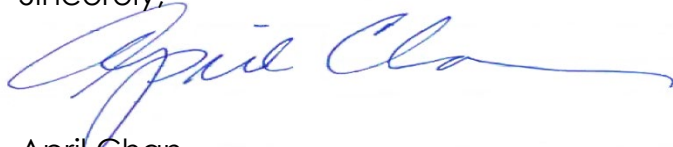
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The Honorable Gavin Newsom
September 12, 2025
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Sincerely,



April Chan
Executive Director

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The Honorable Catherine Stefani, California Assembly
Myles White, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom