

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

## **Breakfast with Legislative District Staff MINUTES**

Thursday, October 9, 2014

Chair Jim Goodhart called the meeting to order at 8:14 a.m.

**Flag Salute & Call to Order & Introductions** - The Flag Salute and Call to Order was conducted by Chair Jim Goodhart.

The following individuals introduced themselves and were in attendance:

### Elected Officials and Board Members

Janice Hahn, Congresswoman  
Maxine Waters, Congresswoman  
Steve Napolitano, LA County, D4  
Michael Dugan, El Segundo  
Suzanne Fuentes, El Segundo  
Marie Fellhauer, El Segundo  
Dan Medina, Gardena  
Olivia Valentine, Hawthorne  
Hany Fangary, Hermosa Beach  
Ralph Franklin, Inglewood  
Mark Waronek, Lomita  
Joe Buscaino, Los Angeles, D15  
Jim Goodhart, Palos Verdes Estates  
Jim Knight, Rancho Palos Verdes  
Britt Huff, Rolling Hills Estates  
Heidi Ashcraft, Torrance  
Patrick Furey, Torrance

### City Staff

Greg Carpenter, El Segundo  
Caroline Velarde, Hawthorne  
Michael Goodson, Hawthorne  
Alexander Gurfinkel, Hawthorne  
Michael Rock, Lomita  
Jacob Haik, Los Angeles, D15  
Raymond Cruz, Rolling Hills

Eleanor Jones, Torrance

### Legislative Representatives

Maurice Lyles, Senator Boxer  
Joey Apodaca, Congressman Waxman  
Jennifer Zivkovic, Senator Lieu  
Anita Lee, Assembly Member Muratsuchi  
Lara Larramendi, Congresswoman  
Hahn  
Elizabeth Odendane, Congresswoman  
Hahn  
Annette McDonald, Congresswoman  
Hahn  
Hamilton Cloud, Congresswoman  
Waters  
Sidney Williams, Congresswoman  
Waters

### Other Agencies

Jeff Kiernan, League of CA Cities  
Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG  
Natalie Champion, SBCCOG  
Rosemary Lackow, SBCCOG  
Steve Lantz, SBCCOG  
Chris Cagle, South Bay Workforce  
Investment Board

### **SBCCOG Work Program Update**

Jacki Bacharach provided an update, via a PowerPoint presentation, on the activities of the SBCCOG since the last Legislative Briefing, including SBCCOG transportation,

conserving resources, sustainability, special projects, special events and the General Assembly.

### *Transportation*

Ms. Bacharach updated the South Bay's Measure R Highway program: five completed projects and 55 projects currently in the pipeline through the collaboration of cities and Caltrans. Metro is working with the sub regions to complete a Mobility Matrix, which will focus on quality-of-life projects such as slow speed lanes and electric vehicle conversions to include in the long-range transportation plan. Metro is also looking at a possible Los Angeles County sales tax and Ms. Bacharach shared that the SBCCOG is participating in those conversations without taking a position on the sales tax, advocating for more funding for local streets and roads, if the measure is approved. Additionally, Ms. Bacharach discussed the I-110 Express Lanes and whether there needs to be extensions on the north and south ends. Moreover, Ms. Bacharach said that the SBCCOG is looking at the potential for a countywide system of Expresslanes, some of which could be single or double lanes and whether such expansion would be good for the region. Ms. Bacharach mentioned the Harbor Gateway Transit Center, which is owned by Caltrans, and the SBCCOG's desire for Caltrans to transfer it to Metro in order for substantial improvements to be made. This is taking a very long time since all parties seem to want it to happen.

### *SBESC*

Ms. Bacharach discussed the Direct Install Program, which provides free equipment from Southern California Edison to cities, churches and middle-income families. As of September, the SBCCOG assisted cities with the acquisition and installation of \$725,000 of equipment, with savings of \$210,000 for the cities of the South Bay. For participating churches, \$40,000 worth of equipment has been installed with the annual savings of \$18,000. The Direct Install Program for the middle-income families is currently being developed to ensure that families can take advantage of this program in the South Bay. Ms. Bacharach discussed the installation of energy management systems to assist cities, which include trainings and certification for city staff to become green building professionals. The SBCCOG is applying for an energy grant from the California Energy Commission to do plug-in readiness for electric vehicles for multi-family dwellings, which house 50 percent of the population in the South Bay. Ms. Bacharach shared that the SBCCOG was awarded a Strategic Growth Council Grant for approximately \$1 million to complete the climate action plans for each of the South Bay cities. The SBCCOG recently formed a Senior Services Working Group to address the needs of cities in the South Bay. Some of the cities have a senior population of over 25 percent. The focus now is on transportation; the SBCCOG is working on the potential to receive a grant from Los Angeles County for better coordination of South Bay transportation services for seniors. Regarding economic development, Ms. Bacharach shared the potential for foreign investment into the South Bay and discussions underway to alleviate the burden of cities solely facilitating such delegations, by forming a coordinated sub regional effort to show investors all the potential investments in the South Bay. Ms. Bacharach also mentioned that in the Social Media Working Group best practices for cities are being shared.

### *Special Projects*

Ms. Bacharach discussed that the SBCCOG is still looking for permanent funding sources for SoCal Regional Occupational Center (SoCal ROC), who's dedicated funding was removed from the Governor's budget last year. Ms. Bacharach mentioned that the Board would be discussing on the helicopter noise issue and Southern California Edison (SCE) and reliability issues, in addition to complaints regarding SCE subcontractors not respecting city rules.

### *Special Events*

Ms. Bacharach announced the Holiday Light Exchange, which has been mostly funded by SCE, and that this year for the first time, the SBCCOG asked for private donations which have amounted to \$3750 to help pay for holiday lights and with non SCE funds we can include Los Angeles city residents. The event will take place on November 13th and 14th at the SBESC/SBCCOG office. Ms. Bacharach invited everyone to the Annual Thank You Reception for Volunteers to be held on November 20 and discussed the Tour of the Gas Company Playa Del Rey Storage Field on December 1 in Playa Del Rey. Ms. Bacharach shared that there is a new law, SB 743, which is changing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines and transportation rules; the SBCCOG will host expert presenters to talk to South Bay planners and public works directors at the "How the Legislature Changed the Way We Do Business: SB 743 & Other New Laws" workshop on December 4 at the SBCCOG office. Additionally, Ms. Bacharach provided information on the December 11 SBCCOG City Energy Staff Luncheon to thank staff for their contributions to energy efficiency in the South Bay and mentioned that California Public Utilities Commissioner Michael Florio would be attending. Lastly, Ms. Bacharach discussed the General Assembly to be held on February 27. Chair Goodhart thanked Ms. Bacharach and introduced Congresswoman Janice Hahn.

### **Federal Offices**

Congresswoman Janice Hahn thanked Ms. Bacharach on her leadership role and the impact of the work of the SBCCOG on quality-of-life, which will impact generations to come. Congresswoman Hahn discussed the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports, and the jobs that are available through the ports, which also serve as an asset to local businesses. Congresswoman Hahn stated that 44 percent of all the trade for the nation comes through the aforementioned ports, which supports many jobs and businesses in the region. Congresswoman Hahn shared that there is an infrastructure problem due to a lack of investment in highways, roads and bridges. Congresswoman Hahn also discussed issues of congestion, particularly exemplified through the I-710 freeway and Western Avenue, which is occurring on a larger scale across the country, specifically as it pertains to freight network congestion and inefficiency. Congresswoman Hahn provided an example of traffic congestion's impact on diminishing profit margins in the blueberry industry, which travel from Chile to LA and Long Beach ports, before being loaded on trucks and moved across the country. The lack of investment in improving local roads and highways increases transporting time for blueberries to reach grocery

shelves, resulting in damaged blueberries and decreasing profits. Due to such complications, blueberries could soon be shipped to the East Coast, which would allow for produce to reach its destination quicker, thereby diverting such business from LA and Long Beach ports. Additionally, Congresswoman Hahn shared that land-side congestion is the biggest threat to cargo diversion and stated that the Highway Trust Fund, which is funded through the gas tax, should seek alternative ways to fund improving infrastructure. Congresswoman Hahn detailed how the national freight network is critical, yet lacks a revenue stream and that President Obama has called for \$2 billion to help fund the national freight network. Congresswoman Hahn has proposed H.R. 5101 “National Freight Network Trust Fund Act of 2014” that would create a dedicated funding source for vital projects that move goods across the country without raising taxes and requiring additional fees on containers coming through the ports. Congresswoman Hahn also mentioned that the U.S. Treasury collects \$39 billion a year on the imports that come through the ports and that said monies are directed into the general fund that is not a dedicated source of funds. H.R. 5101 proposes that 5 percent of existing fees from imports be used to create a national freight network trust fund, which would allocate \$2 billion annually to repair roads, highways and bridges that move the nation’s goods. Through the trust fund, grants would also be available through the U.S. Department of Transportation, especially for cities impacted by such transit. The City of Los Angeles, under the leadership of Councilman Joe Buscaino, supports this project for improving the freight network, and Congresswoman Hahn requested the support of cities in attendance and the SBCCOG, since it provides additional credibility to the measure and assists in garnering bipartisan support in Congress. Councilwoman Suzanne Fuentes of El Segundo stated that the ports are critical to national security and shared that there would be severe consequences if products and imports stopped moving through the ports. Congresswoman Hahn shared that the ports were shut down during the last labor dispute in 2002, which lasted for 10 days, costing the economy \$2 billion a day, which also negatively impacted the global economy, resulting in a few businesses in Asia dissolving. Congresswoman Hahn further detailed that she is proposing legislation to Congress that would require scanning of all cargo containers coming into the ports as a matter of national security and to prevent terrorist attacks through a pilot program providing grants for ports to access for a six-month trial period. Councilman Joe Buscaino of Los Angeles re-iterated his support for the national freight bill and his focus on looking for ways for the ports to stay competitive, especially in lieu of port developments at the Panama Canal; Councilman Buscaino further stated that the intermodal connectors for on-dock/near-dock rail are key components to the proposed legislation to help reduce emissions at the ports. Councilman Buscaino also mentioned the SCAPE project, which is complementary to the Congresswoman’s proposed legislation, to move freight more environmentally efficiently by reducing truck traffic on regional highways; Councilman Buscaino inquired about how soon funds would be available to the ports if the Congresswoman’s proposed legislation is passed. Congresswoman Hahn discussed the passing of the Water Bill and the Harbor Maintenance Tax within that bill, which is collected separately from the aforementioned import tax, and how said funds were also directed into the general fund, including a \$9 billion surplus in the money that the ports collect for harbor maintenance, dredging and modernization; Congresswoman Hahn’s efforts would provide 60 percent for said funds

to go towards the ports. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach collect approximately \$270 million for the Harbor Maintenance Tax, but only receive back less than approximately one percent back to maintain the respective ports; through Congresswoman's Hahn's legislation proposal, an additional \$57 million will be diverted back to said ports. Congresswoman Hahn also stated that the federal government looks at municipalities and counties that are willing to tax themselves for transportation improvements more favorably. Chair Goodhart referenced the handout distributed by Congresswoman Hahn, which provided further information on the legislation.

### **City Issues Identified for Discussion & Dialogue**

City Manager Michael Rock of Lomita provided an update summarizing the actions taken over the past year regarding helicopter noise. The South Bay and the Southern California region have suffered from an increase in helicopter noise. Mr. Rock shared that there is no database of helicopters or helicopter owners and that there is a lack of a centralized complaint system and best management practices for helicopter operators flying over residential areas. In 2012, a coalition of residents came together to form the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition, and with the help of Congress through H.R. 456 and S.208 entitled, "Los Angeles Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act of 2013," the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is required to work with helicopter operators and community stakeholders on methods to reduce helicopter noise, through a voluntary set of agreements between residents and helicopter operators and pilots. According to Mr. Rock, the FAA has not facilitated the meetings bringing stakeholders together, nor forged any agreements at this point, which is critical since the legislation lapses in November. Mr. Rock is requesting Congress have direct conversations with the FAA to enforce the legislation in order to approve voluntary agreements prior to November. Mr. Rock stated that the greatest impact of the helicopter noise is on the City of Lomita due to the proximity of the Torrance Airport and the minimum of three test-drives of each helicopter produced by the largest manufacturer of helicopters in the world, Robinson Helicopter Co. Congresswoman Hahn stated that she would work with the LA County delegation to generate a letter to the FAA addressing this issue. Councilman Patrick Furey of Torrance stated Robinson Helicopter Co. has been responsive to the inquiries of the FAA, the coalition and members of the community and that other helicopter companies also operate through the airport. Mr. Furey requested inclusion in the coalition and future discussions. Councilman Jim Knight of Rancho Palos Verdes shared that his city has also been impacted by helicopter noise, specifically the flight path over Crenshaw Boulevard, which impacts the nature reserves and stated the importance of getting the constituent perspective in the discussions. Chair Goodhart shared that the City of Palos Verdes Estates participates in the LAX Roundtable in the context of over-flights of commercial jets to LAX and inquired with Mr. Rock if the LAX Roundtable is involved in said discussions. Mr. Rock replied that the LAX Roundtable does participate in the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition. Congresswoman Hahn inquired if law enforcement was involved in the discussion with Mr. Rock stating that the Coast Guard has been cooperative in assisting in reducing helicopter noise, as well as the LA County Sheriff's Department. Chris Cagle of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board inquired if the helicopters could conduct testing

over the ocean versus in residential areas; Mr. Rock shared that due to the possibility of mechanical failure manufacturers prefer to do testing over land.

### **Federal Offices Continued**

Maurice Lyles from U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer's Office shared two pending bills - the "Survivor Outreach and Support Campus Act" (S.O.S. Campus Act) to address the issue of sexual assault on college campuses, which was also supported by the University of California (UC) administration. Mr. Lyles stated the legislation would require federally funded colleges and universities to establish an independent, on-campus advocate to support survivors of sexual assault. Furthermore, Mr. Lyles shared that "W21: Water in the 21st Century" legislation, introduced by Senator Boxer, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and U.S. Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR), would assist communities nationwide through incentives and investments for residents, businesses and local water agencies to conserve, recycle and better manage water supplies. Mr. Lyles shared that the legislation would expand rebates and grants for water conservation and efficiency, support local investments in water recycling and improved groundwater management and storage, invest in research into water-saving technologies and desalination and establish an open water data system. The measure would also help local communities take steps to become better prepared for drought.

Joey Apodaca from Congressman Henry Waxman's Office discussed a letter sent on behalf of the Congressman to the FAA regarding the issue of helicopter noise and shared that an interim report identified the South Bay and the coastline as a region of interest and a hot spot for noise. Mr. Apodaca further stated that the FAA announced in September the creation of the Noise Complaint Monitoring System, which has a \$250,000 budget for a one-year operation to commence next year to identify and map noise complaints with geo-information data about helicopter routes and noise. The FAA is also in negotiations with pilots regarding creating a beacon system to identify problematic flight paths and Mr. Apodaca will provide additional information once available. Congresswoman Hahn commended Congressman Waxman's leadership and keen insights and that he will be missed.

Congresswoman Maxine Waters thanked the SBCCOG for its work and shared that as ranking member of the House Committee on Financial Services, which is responsible for oversight for the nation's housing market, financial regulatory agencies and institutions, and Wall Street, her focus is on policies that create jobs, promote consumer protection and protect small businesses. Congresswoman Waters stated she has been working closely with the Chambers of Commerce to do reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank to increase subsidies for the export industry for the sale of goods and services. Congresswoman Waters shared that the Export-Import Bank supports the Boeing Company and SpaceX, both of which utilize numerous suppliers and small contractors in the region, and further stated that if reauthorization does not occur, there will be a loss of businesses to the South Bay. Congresswoman Waters also discussed the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA), which was introduced

after 9/11 as a response to insurance companies not wanting to take on risks for major venues across the nation such as stadiums, universities, etc. because they could not afford to model the insurance risk for terrorism. The federal government created TRIA requiring insurance companies to pool risk, a portion of which the government would support once such risk exceeded \$100 million. Congresswoman Waters emphasized that such coverage would allow communities to recover more quickly in the case of terrorist attacks and stressed the importance of reauthorizing both to save jobs and provide security. Furthermore, Congresswoman Waters shared that her office receives constituent calls regarding credit-reporting agencies sharing undisclosed, negative information with employers, impacting job access and how victims of predatory mortgage lending have a difficult time clearing a negative credit history through no fault of their own. Congresswoman Waters reiterated the need for credit report cleanups, especially for those victims of fraud and medical debt, which remains on record for seven years. Congressman Waters discussed medical debt and how defaulting on medical payments can result in having a negative credit record for seven years, even if the individual pays outstanding bills within one year. Congressman Waters' legislation proposes to erase the negative credit record, in such cases, within 45 days after payment is rendered. Congressman Waters also mentioned that at a later date, she would like to discuss student loan debt and the difficulty faced by graduates who cannot afford to buy a car, a house or get married due to large sums of debt.

Councilman Ralph Franklin from Inglewood inquired about homeland security in the recent cases of Ebola. Congresswoman Hahn stated that U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Johnson will focus on more extensive screening at major airports. Congresswoman Maxine Waters shared the importance of training medical personnel to recognize symptoms of Ebola and commended Doctors Without Borders on their efforts and the need for re-staffing airports using medical personnel to assist in screening Ebola more effectively.

Councilwoman Fuentes stated that the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) has been active in the Export-Import Bank discussions and mobilizing support. Congresswoman Waters thanked Councilwoman Fuentes and emphasized the need for support letters to build a consensus coalition on both the Export-Import Bank and TRIA reauthorization. Councilman Buscaino offered to extend his support on both issues; Chair Goodhart recommended the SBCCOG support both issues as well.

## **State Office**

Anita Lee from Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi's Office shared that the Assemblymember chairs the Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance and discussed his advocacy for districts by holding multiple hearings regarding the loss of dedicated funding to SoCal ROC. Ms. Lee discussed the Assemblymember's success with getting passage of AB 2013 "Vehicles: High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes" and AB 1147 "Massage Therapy". Anita Lee also shared the Assemblymember's chairmanship in establishing an advisory council/commission as part of the Select Committee on

Aerospace to address property tax discrepancies and legislation to address aerospace issues.

Jennifer Zivkovic from Senator Ted Lieu's Office discussed \$45 million available in tax credits for businesses to grow or relocate to California. Chair Goodhart stated that aerospace is the second largest industry in the state. Congresswoman Waters emphasized the need to prioritize business retention through tax incentives and active leadership. Councilman Buscaino commended state legislators on passing legislation dealing with runway production in the film industry that also impacts cities. Ms. Bacharach provided background on the SoCal ROC issue and how there is a need for additional funding and mentioned that SoCal ROC would have a meeting on Thursday, October 16 at 6 pm to discuss the matter further. Ms. Zivkovic shared that SB 511 was held in Senate Appropriations Committee and that SB 315 and 1388 were signed.

### **Agency and Public Comment**

Raymond Cruz of Rolling Hills discussed unfunded mandates for clean water and storm water management and the difficulties of cities to comply. Councilman Knight and Chair Goodhart echoed those concern and the increasing costs of compliance. Congresswoman Waters discussed how the removal of earmarks, which could address such issues, makes it increasingly difficult for cities to compete with other national needs in order to receive funding for such unfunded mandates.

Councilwoman Fuentes shared the salute to military personnel and Congressman Waxman's attendance and his emphasis on the importance of the U.S. remaining a military superpower. Councilwoman Fuentes also shared information on Mission K-9 Rescue and asked for support from Congresswoman Hahn and Waters and U.S. Senator Boxer on legislation to support military dogs.

Councilman Buscaino discussed traveling to work without a car and using public transportation and the delayed arrival (over 2 hours) to reach Los Angeles City Hall and the need for more transit opportunities.

### **Adjourn**

Being no further business, Chair Goodhart thanked attendees and adjourned the meeting at 9:42 a.m. until the next Legislative Briefing on January 8, 2015.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Natalie Champion  
South Bay Cities Council of Governments