

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Briefing & Breakfast with Legislative District Staff July 11, 2019 Meeting Notes

SBCCOG Chair & Redondo Beach Councilmember Christian Horvath called the meeting to order at 9:09 am and proceeded with the flag salute. The following individuals introduced themselves:

Elected Officials and Board Members

Christian Horvath, Redondo Beach
Laura Emdee, Redondo Beach
Olivia Valentine, Hawthorne
Alex Monteiro, Hawthorne
Kenneth Kao, Palos Verdes Estates
Milton Herring, Torrance
George Chen, Torrance
Jennifer La Marque, LA County D-4

Legislative Staff Representatives

Brent Robinson, U.S. Senator Harris
Jeannette Christian,
U.S. Senator Feinstein
Joey Apodaca, Congressman Lieu
Nicolas Rodriguez, Congressman Lieu
Daryl Sweeney, State Senator Bradford
Brandon Stansell, Assemblymember Burke

City/County Staff

Eleanor Jones, Torrance
Greg Grammar Rolling Hills Estates
George Gabriel, Manhattan Beach

Other Agencies

Lisa Bergland, Carson
Patricia Donaldson, Hawthorne
Chamber/SBACC
Jeff Kiernan, League of CA Cities
Sharon Green, Sanitation Districts
Natalie Champion, SBCCOG
David Leger, SBCCOG
Steve Lantz, SBCCOG

SBCCOG Program Update

SBCCOG Transportation Director Steve Lantz highlighted the activities of the SBCCOG since the April meeting. Homelessness has been a focus of the SBCCOG, specifically working with LA County Board Supervisor Janice Hahn's office to make mobile showers available on a monthly basis among other resources for homeless in the South Bay. Steve cited the Access Center in Santa Monica, operated through The People Concern, which serves approximately 200 people daily with supportive services, medical and case management, showers and laundry, food among other services. The South Bay is considering this as a model. Additionally, the SBCCOG Homeless Task Force met and discussed grant-funding opportunities for a homeless coordinator and other staff and showcased the Beach cities homeless programs. Steve referenced that the SBCCOG hosts Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi's Homeless Action Group meetings and that information regarding homeless services in the South Bay are available on the webpage <http://southbaycities.org/programs/homeless-services-south-bay>. He shared that the biggest problem is that there are a shortage of homes for the homeless and that this will be an increasing issue focus moving forward.

Regarding the Fiber Network, the SBCCOG did receive funding from Metro and there is funding in the State budget thanks to Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi and there are projects currently underway funded through Measure R and Measure M. American Dark Fiber is the firm that will implementing this program throughout the South Bay and all 15 cities, the Beach Cities Health District, LA Bio Med, South Bay Workforce Investment Board, LA Metro and LA County Department

of Public Works will be linked to this fiber network. Local jurisdictions will have access to regional data and local jurisdiction connectivity. The Fiber Optic Network costs \$1,000 a month for gigabyte services to expand cities bandwidth and provide secure transfer to regional databases. Moreover, each city connects to the fiber ring and can use that to eventually provide high bandwidth to residents and businesses should they so choose. Steve shared that construction begins in September and that by June or July 2020, the fiber network will be operational. He thanked Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi and Senator Ben Allen for securing the \$1.2 million allocation for creating applications to utilize the fiber network.

Steve identified 13 new Measure R projects approved by Metro, totaling over \$37 million and 37 Measure M projects totaling over \$125 million that will go to the Metro Board in September, with Metro staff approving of the majority of the projects. Lastly, Steve noted the SBCCOG is attempting to designate the South Bay region as Age Friendly. Staff is in conversations with AARP since there is currently a city age friendly designation and a possibility to create a new designation for an age friendly region. The SBCCOG relocation to a new facility will take place after December 1 and Board meetings will take place at the Redondo Beach or Torrance Library for the remainder of the year. The General Assembly will take place on March 19, 2020 with a working title, "Intersections: Housing, Mobility, Tech/Access, Commerce and the Importance of Data."

Torrance Councilman George Chen asked about the gigabyte per node and Steve confirmed that each city determines how many nodes they want, with 1 gigabyte per node minimum. Hawthorne Councilwoman Olivia Valentine asked how difficult it is to add gigabytes and Steve stated that cities could add and change at any time, since the fiber network is a government, purchasing program that is scalable through a private company.

The PowerPoint presentation is accessible via the following link:

http://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/legislative_staff/PRESENTATION_SBCCOG%207.19%20Legislative%20Briefing%20Update.pdf

City Issues Identified for Discussion and Dialogue

Chair Horvath opened the meeting up for dialogue with Hawthorne Councilman Alex Monteiro asking if legislative representatives could provide information regarding provision for more funding from the state and federal level for more mental health service accessibility for the homeless, especially since cities depend on the County for such services. Chair Horvath mentioned that at the SBCCOG Homeless Task Force meeting, discussion focused on the need for substance abuse services and mental health services since there are a number of residents that are responding out of fear and anger and directing frustration to frontline providers such as the faith based organizations that cities rely on to help address the gaps in services for the homeless.

Federal Offices

Representatives U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein Jeanette Christian discussed how homelessness is a priority and that S.923 - Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act has bipartisan and bicameral support and would designate approximately \$750 million through a grant program within the Health Resources and Services Administration for housing programs that offer comprehensive services and intensive case management for homeless individuals and families. Another focus for the Senator is immigration, with the recent introduction of the Protecting Immigrant Families and Improving Immigration Procedures Act, designed to help protect immigrant children while providing the resources

necessary for the immigration system to work more efficiently. The Senator sent a letter to Department of Homeland Security to address the social media groups that have harmful messages around immigrants. Locally, the City of Torrance brought to the Senator's attention issues regarding the 5G network and the Senator introduced S. 2012: Restoring Local Control Over Public Infrastructure Act which nullifies rules issued by the Federal Communications Commission that revoke state and local authority to regulate telecommunications equipment deployment and to determine the amount of payment for the use of such equipment. Additionally, Jeanette mentioned that the Senator introduced S. 2083: Athletics Fair Pay Act to equalize pay for Olympic athletes. Torrance Councilman Milton Herring asked about the status of the aforementioned immigration bill and Jeanette said they are looking for more sponsors.

Representatives U.S. Senator Kamala Harris Brent Robinson discussed the Senator's focus on middle class economics, specifically citing the LIFT (*Livable Incomes for Families Today*) the Middle Class Act, which would provide middle class and working families with a tax credit of up to \$6,000 a year—or up to \$500 a month—to address the rising cost of living. Brent also mentioned the Rent Relief Act, designed to create a new, refundable tax credit for families since renters' wages have remained stagnant and housing costs have increased. Brent mentioned the Fair Housing Act and the need to protect federal assistance by removing barriers to access. The Senator introduced the Safe Housing for Families Act that would require that HUD provide carbon monoxide detectors in public housing units. It would protect low-income residents from carbon monoxide poisoning and help prevent deaths in millions of homes across the country. Brent noted that the bill will be coming to the House floor and that the Senator supports H.R.301 Ensuring Equal Access to Shelter Act which protects the LGBTQ community by prohibiting HUD from implementing a proposed rule that would allow shelter providers to deny transgender and gender non-conforming people equal access to homeless shelters. Additionally, Brent reviewed the Ensuring Quality Access to Legal Defense (EQUAL Defense) Act, a new \$250 million grant program to fund public defense and provide pay parity between prosecutors and public defenders in addition to limiting the workload for public defenders. This bill would also increase opportunities for public servants, providing student loans and cumulative limits to minimize private loan student debt. Lastly, Brent highlighted the Climate Emergency Resolution, which the Senator introduced with Senator Bernie Sanders to address the threat of climate change. Redondo Beach Councilwoman Laura Emdee commented on student and work visas and the need to keep talent here. Joey Apodaca of Congressman Ted Lieu's office shared that their office could assist individuals in processing these types of applications. Torrance Councilman George Chen identified Proposition 47 and the need to understand the root cause of homelessness. Brent responded by sharing Senator Kamala Harris' focus on elementary school truancy, reducing high school dropout rates, criminal justice reform and emphasized the need for restorative justice efforts in order to not leave people on the wayside.

Representative Nicolas Rodriguez of Congressman Ted Lieu similarly discussed S.923 - Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act and detailed how this bill is funded for 5 years with \$750 million for grants that would provide assistance for wrap around services to cities, counties and regional authorities like LAHSA. Moreover, the bill would provide housing and mandate requirements around case management load limitation for manageability. The bill also includes provisions for mental health resources and support services, specifically mental health services for children. Nicolas stated the Congressman is working with the County of Los Angeles to get an amendment to the

H.R.2500 - National Defense Authorization Act to allow LA County to build a new homeless shelter at the West Los Angeles Armory, south of the West VA campus. This shelter would provide permanent housing for homeless residents in general. Lastly, Nicolas detailed the progress with the West LA Master Plan and how the Congressman is working with Senator Feinstein and Harris to make it a community for veterans that would include wrap around services, permanent supportive and temporary transitional housing and new medical facilities. The VA has finalized its programmatic environmental impact statement and should be finalizing the master plan, which would include 1200 – 2000 housing units for veterans and families on campus. Construction should begin by the end of 2019 and could last for approximately 10 to 13 years. The VA decided to put out an RFQ for a master developer to streamline the construction, and the developer is Thomas Safran & Associates and Century Housing, who helped develop The Villages Of Cabrio Long Beach VA. There are 4,000 veterans that are homeless in LA County and despite the bad news, LA County's veteran homelessness has gone down.

Congressman Ted Lieu Representative Joey Apodaca mentioned the new House majority and noted the disastrous Woolsey Fire that burned in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, prompting the House to pass H.R.2157 - Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, which was signed by the President, a bill that would provide \$17.2 billion in FY 2019 supplemental appropriations to several federal departments and agencies for expenses related to the consequences of recent wildfires, hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes, typhoons, and other natural disasters. Moreover, Joey mentioned the House passed H.R. 2476: Securing American Nonprofit Against Terrorism Act to help religious institutions and schools to secure themselves. Congressman Lieu is calling on the Foreign Relations Committee to introduce a bipartisan bill to encourage state and international diplomacy by establishing Office of Subnational Diplomacy at the State Department and coordinate U.S. policy and engagement for subnational diplomacy and provide advisory support. The Congressman, in his capacity on the Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a ban on “low-yield” nuclear weapons to lower the prospect of nuclear war. Moreover, the Congressman is working to introduce a bill for Directed Energy Defense Technology with the United Kingdom to share information to develop directed energy technology to stop potential adversarial missiles. Regarding civil rights, the Congressman celebrated the passage of the historic Equality Act, which would make it illegal to discriminate in housing and employment based on sexual orientation; this was only available in 21 states and if this passes into law, such discrimination would be illegal across the nation. The Congressman also introduced a federal ban on LGBTQ conversion therapy due to its correlations with increased rates of teen suicides; he similarly introduced and got legislation passed as a state senator in California around the same issue making the state the first to implement such a ban. Lastly, Congressman Lieu introduced the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Detector Dog Program to combat illegal wildlife trafficking. Participating dogs are trained to detect the scents of a variety of wildlife products that may be illegal to import or sell in the United States such as elephant ivories, sea turtle skins, dried seahorses, python skins, and rhino horns.

State Offices

Representative Daryl Sweeney from State Senator Steven Bradford's office noted the passage of California's \$250 billion state budget, which specifically includes an allocation of \$1 billion for homelessness and \$1.4 billion for affordable housing finance and redevelopment. He referenced the Senator's 2019 Legislation Package, specifically detailing SB 747: Banking Development Districts, which seeks to establish a Banking Development District Program

within the Department of Business Oversight to meet the needs of financially disenfranchised Californians who are currently unbanked. Lastly, he shared that during the summer recess, the Senator will be in the district and participating in the Legislative Black Caucus retreat.

Brandon Stansell of Assemblywoman Autumn Burke's office noted the 15 bills introduced by the Assemblymember and thanked the SBCCOG for providing support to ensure the passage of AB 147: The Wayfair Implementation and Small Business Relief Act, which codified a Supreme Court decision that would require states to collect online sales taxes from out-of-state retailers. Additionally, Brandon highlighted another chaptered bill AB 91: Small Business Development Center Program-Loophole Closure and Small Business and Working Families Tax Relief which conforms state tax to federal tax policies, bringing in an estimated \$1 billion to the state general fund. AB 91 also expands the Earned Income Tax Credit, providing a major tax relief for working families. The Assemblywoman also supported AB 1054 Public utilities: wildfires and employee protection designed to help utilities cover wildfire damage liabilities through a new \$21 billion liquidity fund. Lastly, Brandon discussed AB 23 Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development: Business Workforce Coordination Unit that would establish the Business Workforce Coordination Unit in the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development to engage industry and business on alignment of career technical education courses, workforce training programs, and pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs with regional and local labor market demand. Brandon welcomed those in attendance to the Back to School Health Fair on August 3 where the Assemblywoman plans to give out over 500 backpacks, as well as health screenings to kids in need.

League of California Cities Update

Jeff Kiernan of the League of CA Cities provided a handout focusing on SB 102 and AB 101 which both deal with increasing housing production in California and information on Funding and Programs dealing with Homelessness. The Governor will most likely sign the aforementioned budget trailer bill next week, which will provide due process to cities in front of the judge for approved housing elements and assist with infrastructure. There is an overall budget of \$275 million for homelessness for the state's 13 big cities, with Los Angeles earmarked to receive \$130 million; \$175 million for counties and \$190 million to the continuums of care homelessness service providers. The League opposes SB 330, which is in Appropriations. Jeff identified SB 592 was amended yesterday and dropped the need for cities to pay damages and legal fees for project compliance with general plans. The League supports SB 5 that would provide tax increment financing for the education portion of the property tax, giving cities additional funds for housing and infrastructure. AB 516 restricts when cities can tow vehicles based on the number of parking citations and would prohibit booting vehicles. Cities that receive a complaint about abandoned vehicles for 72 hours must wait an additional 10 business days to tow the vehicle. Jeff cited that the amendments to this bill could lower the additional wait time and the status of the bill in the Senate Appropriations Committee and the need for opposition letters on this bill. The League is working on SB 54 for single use plastic and opposing SB 266 dealing with CalPERS. He noted the e-scooter 2 year-bills and how the SBCCOG and the League both support AB 1286. Lastly, he invited those in attendance to join a webinar next week to review all the bills on July 16th from 10 am to 11:30 am.

Discussion and Public Comment

George Gabriel of Manhattan Beach inquired about the e-scooters bill that Jeff referenced and Jeff outlined that the scooter company must have a contract with a city prior to placing e-scooters and that said companies cannot waive all the liability to the scooter operator. Jeff also noted AB 1112 would restrict cities use of data collected by e-scooter companies.

LA County District 4 representative Jennifer La Marque mentioned the LA Opera will provide a live simulcast at Columbia Park in Torrance on September 28 at 7:30 pm. Supervisor Hahn is working with the city on the logistics in order to bring opera into communities throughout the Los Angeles County.

Lastly, George Gabriel thanked LA County Supervisor Hahn and the City of Manhattan Beach for their work in incorporating mental health services into the homeless outreach, especially by funding a mental health clinician to assist cities in the South Bay.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 am until Thursday, October 10, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Champion
South Bay Cities Council of Governments