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Background Report for the Hearing on

**REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN THE BAY AREA:  
ENSURING EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH  
AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Tuesday, December 13, 2011  
Oakland City Hall**

The December 13, 2011 hearing in Oakland is the third of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee's three hearings on Regional Governance in the Bay Area. Currently, there are four regional agencies in the Bay Area: the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). State statute creates a fifth entity, the Joint Policy Committee, to coordinate the efforts of these four.

The general objective of this series of hearings is to evaluate the Bay Area's current regional structure and to identify options to enhance regional decision-making. This is especially important with the enactment of SB 375 (Steinberg), Chapter 728, Statutes of 2007, which puts a premium on coordinated regional land use and transportation planning in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This third hearing in the series will focus on the question of how best to ensure effective community outreach and public participation both now and as the responsibilities and need for coordination of regional institutions grow. Continuing the discussion from the previous hearings, the committee will also hear Oakland's position on the issue of regional representation on the governing board of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which is the subject of AB 57 (Beall).

## **BACKGROUND ON AB 57**

AB 57 (Beall), currently pending in the committee, increases the membership of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) from 19 to 21 members by adding the mayors of the City of San José and the City of Oakland. State statute established MTC in 1971 and statute governing the structure of local government representation on its board has not changed since. The bill's sponsor, MTC, argues that a change in the representation structure is needed to implement the requirements of SB 375, which seeks to focus new development within the existing urban core and near public transit stations. To achieve this goal, MTC writes that "a strong partnership with the cities of San Francisco, Oakland, and San José is essential." In light of this need, MTC argues, "The time has come to modify the Commission's structure so that it ensures representation for the Bay area's three largest cities."

MTC's existing arrangement for selecting board members seeks to balance population and jurisdictional representation between the five large counties and the four small ones. To meet this goal, state law assigns the larger counties, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara, two members, one representing the board of supervisors and one selected by a city selection committee. San Francisco presented a unique problem because it is a consolidated city and county. To resolve the issue of representation for San Francisco, state law gives both the mayor and the board of supervisors an appointment. In remaining smaller counties—Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma—to balance city and county representation, the cities nominate slates for an appointment to MTC, and each board of supervisors selects an appointee from its cities' slate. The representation scheme balances large and small jurisdictions.

This committee did not hear AB 57 in 2011 so that it could host a more in depth discussion of regional issues.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

This hearing will focus on how best to ensure effective community outreach and public participation both now and as the responsibilities and need for coordination of Bay Area regional institutions grow. What principles underlie an effective public and community outreach strategy? What suggestions are there for improving current public participation processes? How should these processes change as regional governance becomes more integrated?

SB 878 (DeSaulnier), among other things, seeks to require the member agencies of the Joint Policy Committee to submit to the Legislature by January 31, 2013 a report identifying the public outreach and community outreach efforts that they individually or jointly perform under federal and state law when carrying out the respective missions of their agencies. The report must identify the criteria these agencies use to determine the communities and groups that will be the subject of outreach. The report must also identify the actions and methods that the agencies employ to ensure that policy decisions are made in a transparent and accessible fashion. The Senate Transportation and Housing Committee will hear SB 878 on January 10.