

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 11/12/2020

Staff Report No. 20-434

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Monthly Legislative Report

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving the monthly legislative report.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Strong Public and Policymaker Support
Initiative - Financial Efficiency and Revenue Maximization

The Monthly Legislative Report helps the District track state, regional and federal legislation to ensure alignment with the District's Strategic Plan and the specific goal of having strong public and policy maker support. Policy decisions at all levels of government can positively or negatively affect District operations and revenues and as such, are important to track and influence as needed.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no budgetary or fiscal impact associated with this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Federal Update

On October 21, the Senate fell short of the 60 votes needed to pass a \$500 billion federal relief bill that included:

- \$258 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program and other small business aid
- \$105 billion for Education Stabilization Fund to help schools adapt to COVID (either remote or in-person)
- \$47 billion for COVID testing, diagnostics, vaccines, PPE, and contact tracing
- \$15 billion for federal programs to provide childcare services, including Child Care Development Block Grant
- Unemployment benefits enhanced by \$300 per week
- Liability protections for businesses, health care providers, schools, and other entities against COVID-related personal injury claims
- \$10 billion in Postal Service aid

- Tax benefits for charitable giving, schooling, and childcare services
- Improvements to the Strategic National Stockpile of medical supplies and equipment
- Nine-month extension of the deadline for state and local government aid under the Coronavirus Relief Fund

The vote was 51-44, with nearly all Democrats opposed over concerns that more money was needed to combat the virus and help Americans. Meanwhile, at the time of writing, talks continue between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to strike a deal on a significantly larger coronavirus bill - between \$1.8 trillion to \$2.2 trillion, although President Trump has signaled he wants even more funding.

While the schedule could change based on the call of House and Senate leaders, the House is in recess and will be until November 16th; the Senate is in session, but solely focused on the Supreme Court Justice confirmation process. No transportation-activities are expected during this time.

State Update

Governor Gavin Newsom wrapped up action on legislation for the 2019-20 legislative session on September 30th. Due to the COVID-truncated session, only 428 bills were sent to the Governor's desk - a 53% decline to the average passage rate for legislation. Of those measures that made it to his desk 56 bills were vetoed, which matches the average veto rate of 13%. Governor Newsom has issued 59 Executive Orders so far this year - most dealing with issues arising from the pandemic and stay-at-home orders.

It is highly unlikely a special session will be called this year. While a number of unfinished discussions could be revisited, including the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, reopening the economy, cap-and-trade funding and more, it is unlikely that the Governor will call a special session prior to the election, particularly if a federal relief bill has not been enacted.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

This report is provided to inform the Board of monthly legislative activities. Ensuring favorable legislation is adopted by policymakers helps further the District's goal of having strong public and policymaker support.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

There were no alternatives considered as this report provides an update of monthly legislative activities.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Staff Report 20-011: 2020 Federal and State Legislative Advocacy Programs.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Federal Update from Van Scoyoc Associates
2. State Update from Platinum Advisors
3. State Matrix
4. 2020 Federal Legislative Program

5. 2020 State Legislative Program

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