

Date of Hearing: April 17, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

AB 1121 (Chiu) – As Amended March 28, 2017

SUBJECT: San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority

SUMMARY: Increases the membership of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Increases the Authority board from five members to nine members; as follows:
 - a) Increases from three to five the number of members to be appointed by the Governor;
 - b) Increases from one to two the number of members to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules;
 - c) Increases from one to two the number of members to be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
- 2) Deletes obsolete provisions.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Established WETA to provide comprehensive water transportation and emergency coordination services for the San Francisco Bay Area region.
- 2) Grants WETA the authority to plan, manage, operate, and coordinate the emergency activities of all water transportation and related facilities within the Bay Area region, except those provided or owned by the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District.
- 3) Directs WETA, during a state of war emergency, a state of emergency, or a local emergency and in cooperation with the Office of Emergency Services, the United States Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, to coordinate the emergency activities for all water transportation services in the Bay Area region.
- 4) Grants WETA the authority to study, plan, and implement any improvements, expansion, or enhancements of existing or future public transportation ferries and related facilities and services.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: The 2016 WETA Strategic Plan outlines a vision for the San Francisco Bay Ferry system over the next 20 years that responds to passenger demand, makes critical infrastructure investments, and increases WETA's ability to respond to emergencies and system disruptions. WETA's long-range plan calls for new terminals in Richmond, Treasure Island, Mission Bay, Berkeley, Redwood City, Seaplane Lagoon, the South Bay, and the Carquinez Strait, ultimately creating a 16-terminal regional water transport network. According to WETA, it has made significant progress toward this goal and ferry ridership is at an all-time high.

The author introduced this bill to make WETA more efficient and effective, particularly in light of the growing need for alternate transportation in the Bay Area. For example, ferry service in the region surged by 5 million passenger-trips in the last year, and to accommodate the most recent growth and anticipated development, WETA plans to double the number of ferry terminals it operates from 9 to 18 within the next 20 years.

This bill will update the WETA board to address changing Bay Area needs and to provide greater representation than the current five member board allows.

Double referral: This bill will be referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee should it pass out of this committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Janet Dawson / TRANS. /