

Date of Hearing: April 24, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

AB 673 (Chu) – As Amended April 18, 2017

SUBJECT: Public transit operators: bus procurement: safety considerations

SUMMARY: Requires a public transit operator, prior to procuring a new bus, to consider specific recommendations and best practice standards related to reducing the risk of assault on bus operators, preventing accidents caused by blind spots created by bus equipment or bus design, and enhancing the safety of passengers, bus operators, or other vehicles or pedestrians.

EXISTING LAW: Imposes various requirements on transit operators and provides funding for transit services and capital improvements.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: According to the Amalgamated Transit Union, one pedestrian is killed every 10 days in the United States due to blind spots on buses. Additionally, local transit operators, such as the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, have reported increased numbers of violent attacks against bus drivers. Although no official statistics exist on these attacks, the labor groups representing bus drivers believe this constitutes a significant danger to bus driver safety.

This bill would address these safety concerns by requiring transit operators to consult with labor representatives of the operator's bus drivers when procuring new buses. Operators would be required to take into consideration recommendations from the labor representatives on topics such as reducing the risk of assault on bus drivers, preventing accidents caused by bus blind spots, and enhancing the safety of passengers, bus drivers, or other vehicles and pedestrians that might come into contact with the bus. Transit operators would not be required to implement the recommendations made by the labor representative, and would be free to tailor their individual vehicle safety requirements to their own local transit needs, to the extent allowable by federal motor vehicle safety standards. By requiring transit operators to consider these safety concerns, the author intends to protect bus drivers and all those sharing the roads from unintended and possibly fatal accidents.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

AFSCME

Amalgamated Transit Union

California Labor Federation

California Professional Firefighters

California Teamsters Public Affairs Council

State Building and Construction Trades Council

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Justin Behrens / TRANS. /