

Date of Hearing: June 22, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

SB 64 (Liu) – As Amended May 6, 2015

SENATE VOTE: 36-2

SUBJECT: California Transportation Plan.

SUMMARY: Directs the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to review recommendations in the California Transportation Plan (CTP) developed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and to make its own specific recommendations for transportation system improvements to the Legislature and the Governor.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Vests CTC with responsibility to advise and assist the Secretary of the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and the Legislature in formulating and evaluating state policies and plans for California's transportation programs.
- 2) Requires CTC to submit to the Legislature an annual report that, among other things, identifies timely and relevant transportation issues facing California and that may include a discussion of any significant upcoming transportation issues anticipated to be of concern to the public and the Legislature.
- 3) Requires Caltrans to prepare a long-range transportation plan, the CTP, and to update the plan every five years. The CTP is to include all of the following:
 - a) A policy element that describes the state's transportation policies and system performance objectives;
 - b) A strategies element that incorporates the broad system concepts and strategies synthesized from the adopted regional transportation plans; and
 - c) A recommendations element that includes economic forecasts and recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor to achieve the plan's broad system concepts, strategies, and performance objectives.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: SB 391 (Liu), Chapter 585, Statutes of 2009, directed Caltrans to develop the CTP, a long-range, statewide transportation plan intended to identify the integrated multi-modal transportation system needed to move people and freight and to achieve the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. SB 391 requires the CTP to be updated every five years.

Last session, the Legislature passed SB 486 (DeSaulnier), Chapter 917, Statutes of 2014, to link the CTP with Caltrans' other planning and programming processes. The linear process set forth in SB 486 is meant to ensure that only those transportation projects that support the state's broad policy objectives and strategies, as set forth in the CTP, are planned, environmentally reviewed,

designed, and funded. Consequently, the significance of the CTP should not be underestimated because it forms the basis for future investment decisions that will affect California's transportation system.

The next iteration of the updated CTP is due to be completed by December 31, 2015. Caltrans is circulating a draft version of the plan for comment and the draft has created quite a stir within the transportation community. For example, CTC, in its comments to Caltrans about the draft, asserts that "it is evident that Caltrans is planning for significant actions that will fundamentally alter how Californians will utilize our transportation system." CTC criticizes several aspects of the draft CTP, for example:

- 1) CTC suggests the CTP inappropriately lacks balance between California's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and the state's economic and mobility goals.
- 2) CTC argues that road capacity projects, in addition to other project types, "must be strategically planned to address California's growing population and promote a robust economy." CTC takes umbrage with statements made in the CTP such as the direction to "avoid projects that add road capacity" and "any transportation projects on the State Highway System or on local streets that are capacity increasing should not be supported for funding."

Others similarly voiced concerns regarding the draft CTP. For example, the California Association of Councils of Government (CalCOG) contends that the CTP makes assumptions about things like road pricing, electric vehicle market penetration, and more that would never survive the fiscal-constraint and environmental review restrictions that apply to regional transportation plans and sustainable communities strategies. CalCOG suggests that, "while the CTP may be a worthy vision--it does not have to address the hard questions of how the assumptions and strategies will materialize."

The author introduced SB 64 as a follow-up to her SB 391 of 2009 with the intent to solicit specific, *focused* recommendations for the Governor and the Legislature from CTC in response to each update of the plan.

Given the central role that the CTP now plays in the state's transportation planning and project selection processes and given the controversy surrounding current draft CTP, SB 64 makes good sense and is particularly timely. Strategies to provide a transportation system that can support and encourage a robust economy *and* meet the state's gas emission reduction goals will undoubtedly be aggressive and will require difficult policy trade-offs. CTC's specific recommendations, as required by this bill, will assist the Governor and the Legislature to better understand the implications of these trade-offs.

Suggested amendments: Transportation is a complex, often very technical subject matter and, because of this, the Legislature leans on the CTC for advice and counsel to guide transportation policies and to provide oversight. It would be helpful to get the sort of specific, action-oriented recommendations that author is seeking with regard to the CTP (every five years) in each of the CTC's annual report to the Legislature. The committee suggests that the bill be amended to add a requirement that CTC's annual report also include "specific action-oriented and pragmatic recommendations for transportation system improvements."

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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