

Date of Hearing: January 11, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

AB 378 (Mullin) – As Amended January 4, 2016

SUBJECT: State Highway 101 corridor

SUMMARY: Directs the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with others, to develop an integrated corridor management team to address traffic congestion in the State Route (SR) 101 corridor located within the County of San Mateo. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Makes legislative findings and declarations regarding the economic importance of the SR 101 corridor between San Jose and San Francisco, the inadequacy of the transportation capacity within the corridor, and the need for "swift and decisive" action by transportation agencies to relieve commuter congestion within the corridor.
- 2) Further finds and declares that the SR 101 corridor can operate more effectively with a coordinated response from transportation agencies within the corridor to integrate carpool or express lane development and operations, adaptive ramp metering technology and operations, and ridesharing.
- 3) Directs Caltrans to create an integrated corridor management team, along with the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority if these two agencies choose to participate, to consider transportation projects to address congestion relief in the SR 101 corridor, including connecting SRs 82, 92, and 380 within the County of San Mateo.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Vests Caltrans with the responsibility to design, construct, operate, and maintain the state highway system.
- 2) Prohibits the state budget from including specific appropriations for specific transportation projects, and provides that the Legislature should not enact legislation containing specific individual transportation projects.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: AB 378 is intended to focus transportation resources to address congestion on the SR 101 corridor and connecting corridors in San Mateo County. According to the author, the SR 101 corridor "is the most economically productive region in California, connecting the rapidly growing economies of San Mateo County, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley." Furthermore, the author states, "The growth in this region has generated significant tax receipts for the State budget, but is strained by an increasingly large number of commuters flooding the area's highways, roads, and transit systems."

Congestion in the region is, in fact, increasing. According to a just-release report by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) from its *Vital Signs* performance-monitoring

initiative, freeway congestion around the Bay Area is increasing faster than either population or employment. MTC reports that, since 2000, per-commuter congestion delay has risen by 23% while the region's population has grown by 10%.

SR 101 in San Mateo County may be congested; however, elsewhere in the region traffic congestion is much worse. According to MTC's *Vital Signs*, 40% of the all Bay Area freeway congestion is on the region's top ten congested corridors. SR 101 in San Mateo County is not among the top ten most congested corridors.

Still, the author believes the SR 101 corridor in San Mateo merits unique consideration given the economic prosperity the corridor brings to the state. AB 378 directs Caltrans to establish an integrated corridor management team, in coordination with the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, if those agencies choose to participate. The team would be expected to consider transportation projects on SR 101 and also on connecting routes SRs 82, 92, and 380, all located within San Mateo County.

The integrated corridor management approach is an emerging, collaborative approach to managing transportation corridors. Integrated corridor management looks comprehensively at an entire transportation network - including freeways, arterial streets, transit, parking, travel demand, agency collaboration, and more - and considers all opportunities to move people and goods in the most efficient and safest way possible. Rather than focusing on improving only specific elements such as freeways or transit, an integrated corridor management approach considers the corridor as a total *system* to be managed as an integrated and cohesive whole; it seeks to address the corridor's overall transportation needs rather than the needs of particular elements or agencies alone.

Caltrans has embarked on a pilot program to develop the integrated corridor management approach to manage traffic operations. Its Connected Corridors Program represents a significant departure from traditional transportation management practice and promises to fundamentally change the way the state manages its transportation corridors for years to come. The pilot is led by the Caltrans in partnership with Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology (PATH) at the University of California, Berkeley. Caltrans started pilot deployments within the Connected Corridor Program on Interstate 210 in the San Gabriel Valley near Los Angeles and on Interstate 80 between the Carquinez Bridge and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The department expects to expand the Connected Corridors Program to multiple corridors throughout California over the next ten years. (In addition to the two pilot corridors under Caltrans' Connected Corridor Program, the San Diego Association of Governments is piloting one of two integrated corridors chosen as part of a national pilot program to study the effectiveness of this traffic operations approach.)

When it began the Connected Corridor Program, Caltrans originally evaluated five corridors, including the SR 101 corridor in San Mateo County. Corridors were evaluated based on criteria such as levels of congestion, available alternative routes and travel modes through the corridor, willing partners, and available technology already in the corridor. In the end, Interstate 210 and Interstate 80 were thought to offer the greatest potential benefits of the corridors evaluated.

Some of the benefits that the Connected Corridors Program expects to realize include:

- 1) Reduced congestion and improved mobility, travel-time reliability, safety, and system efficiency.
- 2) Better use of existing capacities across all transportation modes (car, bus, train, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.) to increase the throughput of vehicles, people, and goods with minimal or no new infrastructure.
- 3) Improved availability and quality of data on travel conditions in the corridor to better understand corridor behavior and improve performance.
- 4) Timely, accurate information for corridor users so they can make informed choices about when, how, and by what route they travel.

By directing Caltrans to establish an integrated corridor management team for SR 101 in San Mateo County, the author seeks to expedite improved operations in the SR 101 corridor.

AB 378 is supported by the Bay Area Council and Google. Writing in support of the bill, Google suggests that AB 378 is necessary to address the "untenable" traffic congestion in the SR 101 corridor. Citing statistics from MTC's *Vital Signs*, Google notes that congestion has increased nearly 40% from 2010 levels, averaging 2.7 minutes per commuter in 2014. Google suggests AB 378 will "encourage and support the state-level initiative needed to help ensure the Peninsula continues to remain a dynamic driver of California's economy and a great place to live."

Committee concerns: The committee has the following concerns with the bill:

- 1) AB 378 is essentially a project bill, the likes of which are prohibited under existing law. The Legislature initiated this prohibition to ensure decisions regarding the use of transportation funds were made strategically, not politically, within the context of thoughtful planning, engineering, and prioritization. AB 378 essentially directs Caltrans to spend resources in San Mateo County, regardless the relative need, feasibility, cost, or priority of that effort.
- 2) This bill is not necessary. Caltrans could administratively choose to develop an integrated corridor management team for SR 101 in San Mateo County, just as it did for the two pilot projects within the Connected Corridor Program. However, integrated corridor management teams involve considerable staff and technology resources, among other things. To implement AB 378, the department would most likely have to pull resources from other corridors, projects, or programs or secure additional funds, as it did for the two pilot projects.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Bay Area Council
Google
San Mateo County Transportation Authority

Opposition

None on file

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