



Contra
Costa
County

To: Board of Supervisors

From: TRANSPORTATION, WATER & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Date: January 10, 2017

Subject: Communication to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing regarding SB632 (Cannella - 2015)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

AUTHORIZE the Chair to sign a letter to Senator Jim Beall, Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing, regarding the California Traffic Control Device Committees review of Senate Bill 632 (2015-Cannella, Baker, Bonilla) regarding vehicle speed limits around schools.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No Impact.

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD

ADMINISTRATOR

COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **01/10/2017** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor

Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor

Diane Burgis, District III Supervisor

Karen Mitchoff, District IV
Supervisor

Federal D. Glover, District V
Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: January 10, 2017

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: Stephanie Mello, Deputy

Contact: John Cunningham,
925-674-7833

cc:

BACKGROUND:

Beginning in 2014 the County initiated an effort to reform or otherwise revise school zone statutes in order to increase safety around schools. This effort was a result of two related issues, 1) school siting practices in East Contra Costa County, and 2) the State's lack of progress in reforming or otherwise improving school siting policies and practices. Legislation was drafted and went through the County's annual platform development process. Additional background, support for, and need for the concept is documented in the *School Zone Enhancement Legislative Proposal* form which is attached: DCD 2015 Legislative Proposal Form Re School Zones.pdf

The County's efforts resulted in SB 632 (Cannella, Coauthors: Baker, Bonilla) being introduced in 2015. The bill would have allowed jurisdictions to expand school zones as determined by an engineering and traffic survey as well as revise the problematic "when children are present" language in the Vehicle Code.

Due to the technical nature of legislation, the Senate Committee on Transportation & Housing (Senate T&H) referred the legislation to the California Traffic Control Device Committee (CTCDC) for review. The CTCDC is the advisory committee that Caltrans uses to fulfill its obligation to consult with local agencies and the public, before adopting rules and regulations prescribing uniform standards and specifications for all official traffic control devices used in California.

The CTCDC formed a "School Zone Subcommittee" to respond to the Senate referral and invited Contra Costa County staff to participate. The subcommittee met numerous times during 2016 to discuss the issue. The work of the subcommittee resulted in the attached draft response to the Senate T&H. (CTCDC to Senate T&H ReSchool Zone-SB632.pdf)

County staff believes that there are numerous technical and procedural problems with the CTCDC's handling of the issue and proposed response to the Senate T&H. County staff went on record with the CTCDC on many occasions regarding the concerns. A substantial amount of data and evidence were provided by County staff during the deliberation of the legislation, the CTCDC consistently failed to discuss or even acknowledge the information. County input does not appear to have had any effect on the dialog or outcome.

Issues with the CTCDC Process/Recommendations

- **School Zone Size Recommendation is in Direct Conflict with the School Zone Subcommittee Stated Intent:** At the outset of the subcommittees work on the school zone issue the group unanimously agreed that **1)** the existing distances in the statutes were arbitrary, and **2)** whatever recommendations the CTCDC were to make would not be arbitrary. The recommended changes in the letter to the Senate remain arbitrary in conflict with the agreement of the subcommittee.
- **Local Authority Regarding School Zone Establishment is in Direct Conflict of**

CTCDC Agreement: Originally the subcommittee was in agreement that affording local jurisdictions flexibility to determine the size of the zone was a positive characteristic of the bill. Ultimately the recommendation did not support the flexibility afforded to the local jurisdictions in the bill.

- **"When Children Are Present" (WCP) Signage:** Discussions at previous CTCDC meetings have established that the the Committee is aware that there are substantial, fundamental problems with the WCP signage. Yet, in the letter to Senate T&H, no change is recommended in the statutes and no mention is made of the flaws the CTCDC finds with the the existing language.

In defense of the CTCDC, the issues in SB 632 are relatively complex. It appeared that the Committee did not have adequate resources to dedicate to the issues addressed by the bill. In discussions with Mark Watts (the County's legislative advocate for transportation issues) on December 8, 2016, the Transportation, Water, and Infrastructure Committee determined that a letter to the State from the County on the matter would be appropriate.

The attached letter to the Senate Committee requests that the input from the CTCDC be set aside and further requests that the issue be referred to Caltrans and the California Department of Public Health for a comprehensive review with appropriate resources, analysis and outreach. The numerous, fundamental changes in state transportation policy (complete streets, active transportation, safe routes to school, health in all policies, greenhouse gas reduction, smart mobility framework, vision zero/toward zero deaths) and public health data now available strongly suggest that the subject statutes be revisited in an appropriate manner.

The concepts in SB 632 are consistent with our 2016 Legislative Platform:

Transportation: 179: SUPPORT efforts to improve safety throughout the transportation system...the County also supports the expansion of school safety improvement programs such as crossing guards, revised school zone references in the vehicle code...

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Without approving transmittal of the letter, the Board will forgo an opportunity to advance its legislative platform.

CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

Promoting increased safety around schools and encouraging more walking and bicycling to school will better integrate our education facilities with their surrounding community. Anticipated outcomes are increased walk/bike rates to school and as a result healthier children.

ATTACHMENTS

DCD 2015 Legislative Proposal Form Re School Zones.pdf

SB 632 BILLTEXT

Letter from CTCDC to SenateT&H Regarding SB632

1-10-17 BOS to Sen Trans&Housing Chair re CTCDC-SB632

