



July 27, 2010

Scott Haggerty, Chair, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
Steve Kinsey, Chair, MTC Programming and Allocations Committee
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, California 94607

Dear Chairs Haggerty and Kinsey, and Commissioners:

Re: Funding for the Oakland Airport Connector

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area (LWVBA) is the inter-League Organization representing the Leagues in the Bay Area. We firmly support open government and policies that allow for public participation in major decisions by our elected representatives, and we know and respect MTC's commitment to these important standards of good governance.

We are concerned, however, that MTC's own standards have not been met in its recent actions to procure funding for the Oakland Airport Connector (OAC). In a process that included no public notice and no formal vote of the MTC Commission, funds programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) have been re-allocated to enable the OAC project to go forward.

The STIP itself, of course, including the allocation of the funds that were swapped for the OAC, was approved in a process that included public hearings and formal votes by both the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency, MTC's Program and Allocations Committee, and the MTC Commission. Neglecting to ensure transparency in the re-allocation has meant that the public has had no opportunity to comment on this major decision that involves 20 million dollars in public funds.

We understand the role of the California Transportation Commission in this reallocation, but California law is clear that MTC is responsible. California Code, Section 14531, requires that "the request for the amendment is made by the entity that submitted the project or projects that are in the program and are to be changed by the amendment."

The League strongly urges that you reconsider the decision to re-allocate STIP funds in this process that was inappropriate and in violation of MTC's standards for public participation, and that any future actions to amend the STIP will be done in full view of the public and Commissioners. Doing so will affirm your commitments to transparency in public planning and financing.

Sincerely,

Marion Taylor, President