

April 16, 2024

Senator Scott Wiener
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Aisha Wahab
1021 O Street, Suite 7330
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1031 (Wiener, Wahab) – San Francisco Bay Area: local revenue measure: transportation improvements – Support and Seek Amendments

Dear Senators Wiener and Wahab,

SPUR strongly supports the development of new revenue sources to sustain and transform transit operations in the Bay Area. Last year SPUR played a leading role in organizing the “Survive and Thrive” coalition seeking one-time emergency operating funding for transit from the state. We also co-sponsored SB 532 (Wiener) to temporarily raise tolls on Bay Area bridges as a means of funding transit operations. We have engaged in these campaigns because we believe that we simply cannot have an equitable, prosperous and environmentally sustainable region without a robust and well funded transit system. **For this reason, we support SB 1031 and also seek the amendments described below.**

(1) Avoid using future revenues to fund highway expansions

Allowing revenues from a future regional transportation measure to fund highway expansions works directly against our state and regional climate goals, undercuts the long term viability of our investments in transit and will dampen enthusiasm and support for a future ballot measure among key voter groups. SPUR acknowledges the need for multi-modal investments as part of any 9-county transportation measure and we encourage the inclusion of language that prioritizes any road expenditures on improvements that do not expand vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Such expenditures could include addressing the region's significant backlog of paving and road

maintenance needs as well as the implementation of transit priority and complete streets projects that improve safety and usefulness of roadways for all users.

(2) Strengthen regional network management and provide simple and effective transit accountability provisions and guardrails

SPUR believes that a significant infusion of new transit operating funding should be accompanied by reforms that strengthen regional network management and ensure that riders and the public benefit from a coordinated and efficient regional transit system. Fundamentally, we believe that SB1031 can best achieve this by clearly tying any transit agency's receipt of new operating funding from a future measure to ongoing compliance with programs and policies defined by MTC's regional network management structure.

To this end, we support much of the existing language in SB 1031 as well as the "guardrail" language adopted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Legislation Committee on April 12. We believe that this language - combined with funding from a future measure - will significantly advance the Bay Area's efforts to deliver a more integrated regional transit experience for riders.

Finally, although SPUR supports studying transit operator consolidation, we also acknowledge that this is a complex and highly divisive topic. Consolidation of operators is a long term process that is unlikely to yield significant rider benefits or financial efficiencies for many years. Studying consolidation is not a substitute for adequately funding transit operations nor should it detract from ongoing efforts to improve regional coordination of transit services in the near term. To that end we support significantly simplifying and streamlining any references to a consolidation study in a manner that is consistent with the language adopted by the MTC Legislation Committee on April 12.

SPUR appreciates the ongoing efforts of Senators Wiener and Wahab as well as MTC staff and commissioners to address the transportation needs of the Bay Area. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support SB 1031 and other efforts to secure new funding to sustain and transform our region's transit system.

Sincerely,

Sebastian Petty
Senior Transportation Policy Advisor,

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