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July 18, 2019

Executive Board, Association of Bay Area Governments  
375 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA 94105  
VIA E-MAIL: fcastro@bayareametro.gov, info-abag@bayareametro.gov; Contra Costa County delegation

To the ABAG Executive Board (Re: July 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Item 8.b. AB 1487)

I am opposed to AB 1487, as currently drafted, and believe that the ABAG Executive Board should oppose it. I am oppose to any “support” position by ABAG.

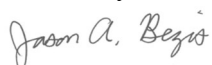
First, the current draft of AB 1487 is so extremely vague and ambiguous that any form of “support” would be akin to ABAG irresponsibly signing a blank check to Sacramento politicians.

Second, ABAG has long handled regional housing policy. The ABAG Executive Board would be acting irrationally if it ceded regional housing policy to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). ABAG has acted illegally concerning regional housing policies since MTC gained undue influence over ABAG in 2017. *Livable California et al. v. ABAG*, now pending in San Francisco Superior Court, challenges your illegal actions supporting the CASA Compact.

Third, ABAG should demand that MTC staff immediately disclose to the public all documents associated with MTC’s hiring of the consulting firm co-owned by State Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins’ spouse to assist with development of the CASA Compact. Journalist Zelda Bronstein of *48 Hills* and the *Los Angeles Times* (April 4, 2019) have exposed the potential, if not actual, conflicts of interest. Ms. Atkins removed “housing” matters from the Transportation and Housing Committee to create a new Housing Committee (an action taken mainly to bypass the Transportation Committee). ABAG should not remain willfully blind to this nefariousness.

Fourth, MTC and its staff are not constituted to handle regional housing policy. MTC has eighteen voting commissioners who “shall be selected for their special familiarity with the problems and issues in the field of transportation.” Government Code §66504. The Bay Area Transportation Working Group and TRANSDEF have demonstrated that the MTC commissioner appointment process is extremely flawed, akin to an incumbent protection racket, with serious irregularities found in eight of the Bay Area’s nine counties in 2018-19. MTC has a disastrous record overseeing regional transportation. MTC mishandled the Bay Bridge eastern span project, which was delivered years late, billions of dollars over budget and with serious design and construction flaws. MTC lost \$100 million in a failed Wall Street speculation. Despite spending billions on public transit projects and programs, per capita transit ridership in the Bay Area has declined since 1980. A complaint is now pending before the State Fair Political Practices Commission alleging that MTC engaged in illegal use of public resources to aid passage of Regional Measure 3 in 2018. MTC likely would engage in similar illegal practices to aid passage of the tax increase measures that AB 1487 would authorize. ABAG should not enable this.

Sincerely,



JASON A. BEZIS