

UPDATE

Transit Zone Bill Passes Senate, Sent to Governor

(September 10) The bill requiring newly created transit zones to honor labor agreements between the MTA and its unions passed the State Senate, Friday, by a vote of 22-13 and was sent to Governor Davis for signature. Davis has 30 days to act on the measure, now called SB-372.

Supporters of the transit zone union bill say the pay and benefits of MTA employees transferred to a transit zone must be protected. The MTA Board, which opposes the bill, has told lawmakers that the formation of transit zones is a local matter and that the legislature should not place conditions on how zones are formed.

The Board has adopted Local Transportation Zone Guidelines that require "adequate provision" for employees "who may be displaced, or whose wages, hours, place or conditions of employment are or may be adversely affected by zone implementation." The guidelines also cite state Public Utility Codes requiring protection for workers and labor agreements between the MTA and its unions.

Proposed transit zones in the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys want to operate a total of 27 percent of MTA service hours and 28 percent of peak hour buses. In late May, the MTA Board approved pre-applications filed by the Greater San Fernando Valley Transportation Zone and Foothill Transit.

In Other Assembly Action

Earlier, the Senate passed AB-923 a bill that would increase fines for violation of rail rights-of-way from the current \$101 to \$271. Sponsored by the MTA and SCRRA, the measure would direct a portion of the increased fines to rail transportation agencies for educational and safety purposes. The bill now must be approved by the Assembly before being sent to the governor.

Meanwhile, Assembly Republicans acted together to defeat a constitutional amendment proposed by Democrats that would have allowed many California counties to add a half-cent sales tax that would provide funds for transportation projects. It also would have extended existing transportation sales taxes for 20 years. The measure would not have affected Los Angeles County, which already has a permanent one-cent transportation sales tax.

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