

Davis OKs \$6.8 Billion Transportation Package with Funds for MTA Buses, LA Light-Rail Projects

(July 7) Gov. Gray Davis has signed a \$6.8 billion package of transportation measures that includes funding for hundreds of new buses and two light-rail projects in Los Angeles.

At a ceremony, Thursday, in San Francisco, Davis signed AB-2928 and SB-406, bills that authorize the six-year transportation improvement program.

Together, the bills provide funding for the purchase of 385 new buses for the MTA, as well as funding for the 13.7-mile Pasadena Blue Line and for a 10-mile light-rail line from Union Station through East LA to Monterey Park.

Drawing revenue from state gasoline sales taxes and funds from the state's budget surplus, the program will provide about \$2 billion the first year and about \$1 billion over the next five years for transportation improvements.

Southern California projects

Southern California transportation projects include \$5 million for an environmental report and expansion study of the Route 57 toll road in Orange County and the addition of high-speed ferry service between San Diego and Oceanside.

The governor also approved \$245 million for transit projects in the San Fernando Valley. The legislation calls for \$145 million to be earmarked for an east-west corridor Bus Rapid Transit project along the Chandler right-of-way, consistent with the MTA's request for this corridor. AB-2928 also sets aside \$100 million for a north-south Bus Rapid Transit project that interfaces with the Chandler corridor project.

Among other projects included in the funding are expanded service on BART and a \$4 billion project to extend the commuter rail line to San Jose. Plans also call for spending \$538 million to extend San Francisco's Muni light rail line to Chinatown.

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