



EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the text of Governor Gray Davis' letter informing members of the California Senate that he would sign SB-1101, a bill that provides contract protections to MTA employees affected by creation of a transit zone.



To the Members of the Senate:

I am signing Senate Bill 1101.

This bill provides a four-year period during which time the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, should it choose to reorganize into smaller units or "zones," must recognize collective bargaining agreements maintained by the MTA.

Last year when I vetoed Senate Bill 372, I indicated that this issue should be resolved locally through negotiated settlement, and that if the parties could not, or would not, find a resolution, I would revisit the issue.

Earlier this summer, when the contracts expired, the issue was still not resolved. I ordered a 60-day cooling off period and sent in the State Mediation Service to facilitate an agreement. In September when the issue was still unresolved and a strike was called, I sent in our top mediators and a member of my Cabinet to facilitate negotiations.

For two weeks, 450,000 Los Angeles residents that depend upon public transportation have suffered every day. Millions of dollars in economic damages have been experienced by businesses small and large throughout the southern California area. Children need to get to school. Seniors need to get to their doctor's office. People need to get to work. This cannot be allowed to continue.

In the interest of removing one of the major outstanding obstacles to an agreement, I am signing SB 1101. I expect both sides to return to the bargaining table immediately to resolve their remaining issues.

With this signature, I have done what is in my power to get Los Angeles back on the road. I am calling on the MTA and their employees to do the same.

Sincerely,
Gray Davis

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