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## L.A. County Could Lose \$339 Mill. Under State Budget Proposal

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 31, 2004) During a hearing that drew testimony from a number of local leaders, March 26, CEO Roger Snoble told a joint panel of city and state lawmakers that Los Angeles County could lose more than \$339 million to proposed state budget cuts.

In his testimony, Snoble listed a number of measures MTA has taken in anticipation of a reduction in state funding.

They include canceling the 2004 Call for Projects, deferring more than \$1.7 billion in other projects and lending the state more than \$300 million to keep construction of the Eastside Extension and the Metro Orange Line on track.

The proposed state budget includes \$1.7 billion in transportation funding cuts. That comes on top of \$2 billion transferred in the past two years from the state's transportation fund to other uses.

Snoble said investing \$1 billion in transportation projects would create some 40,000 jobs in the county. He noted that curtailing funding for traffic congestion relief would risk the loss of federal funding for the Eastside Extension and the Alameda Corridor East project.

Among the recommendations MTA made were using transportation funds to spur the state economy and create jobs; preserving funding for vital traffic congestion relief projects; and reducing from two-thirds to 55 percent the percentage of voters who must approve an increase in transportation-related sales taxes.

The hearing, held in the MTA Board room, was conducted by Sen. Kevin Murray (D-Culver City), chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee; Sen. Joseph Dunn (D-Santa Ana), chairman of a Senate Budget Committee subcommittee; and City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa, chairman of the Council's Transportation Committee and also an MTA Board member.

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