

MOTION

By Director LaBonge

On November 3, 1998, Los Angeles County voters passed Proposition A, "The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Reform and Accountability Act of 1998," which banned the MTA from spending sales tax revenues on subway projects. This measure was placed before the voters as a reaction to the large costs of subway construction, reduced federal funding, perceived mismanagement on the part of the MTA, and the availability of other less costly mass transit options.

Since that time, MTA has undertaken the construction of light rail lines and busways, such as the Gold Line to Pasadena and the Gold Line Eastside Extension, the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway and rapid bus services across the Valley and Mid-City to address continued congestion in the region. The expansion of the Red Line from Hollywood to North Hollywood was completed within budget, as construction became more efficient. Currently, there are over 100,000 weekday boardings on the Red Line, and it is projected that a small Westside expansion could add over 20,000 riders.

It is time to reconsider the ban on subways because it prohibits a thorough discussion of all transportation options when considering mass transit expansion. The problems leading to the 1998 and 1985 laws have been dealt with through numerous management changes at MTA. Furthermore, new technologies have been developed to vent gas, prevent fires, and improve the general safety associated with subway construction. All transportation options must be available to the region in order to address Los Angeles' continued population growth that has overwhelmed the region's already crowded highways and streets, increasing travel times and lowering air quality.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the MTA Board support an effort to overturn the 1998 prohibition on the use of Proposition A funds on subway construction in Los Angeles County to ensure that the option of constructing subways will be available to address the difficult transportation challenges in Southern California.