



Western Riverside Council of Governments 2010 Legislative Platform Adopted 12/7/09

INTRODUCTION

The Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) 2010 Legislative Program is designed to provide guidance to WRCOG and member jurisdictions on legislation that focuses on issues of mutual concern to WRCOG members. Positions, once adopted by the WRCOG Executive Committee, will be forwarded to Sacramento, Washington D.C., and interested parties as appropriate. By adopting this program, the WRCOG Executive Committee provides guidance to WRCOG staff in expressing member jurisdictions' interests to State and Federal legislators.

WRCOG staff will be responsible for monitoring legislation that falls within the scope of the adopted Legislative Program. Staff will also provide information on the impacts of such legislation to local jurisdictions through WRCOG's existing committee structure and will discuss a variety of legislative issues at its Legislative Discussion Group, which meets bi-monthly.

As in past years, if urgent action is needed, the WRCOG Executive Director and/or the WRCOG Executive Committee Chair may submit letters of support/opposition and/or undertake other tasks that may be necessary on proposed legislative subjects that are consistent with the areas identified in this Program. These actions will be reported at the subsequent meetings of the WRCOG Technical Advisory and Executive Committees.

GENERAL/OVERARCHING

- Oppose any legislation that seeks to limit local control, reduce funding opportunities to local jurisdictions, or increases fees and taxes on residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Habitat

- Support legislation that changes environmental laws to assist local jurisdictions in the acquisition of habitat for sensitive, listed, and endangered species.
- Support legislation that would reduce the cost of compliance with environmental regulations.

Air Quality

- Support legislation that would assist or encourage the development of alternative fuel filling station facilities throughout the State.
- Support legislation that would assist or encourage school districts with converting school buses to cleaner burning fuels.
- Support legislation that would promote technology advancements for fuels that will assist the Basin with meeting State and Federal standards.
- Support legislation which would encourage voluntary contributions by the ports to provide for air quality management for goods movement projects.

- Support legislation which would encourage railroad emission reductions and increased emissions monitoring methods.
- Support the continuation of air quality management at the air basin level rather than at the statewide or individual county level.
- Support legislation to have NAFTA and other Federal sources provide their fair share of emission reductions.
- Support protection of AB 2766 funding to local jurisdictions.
- Oppose legislation that would weaken existing air quality regulations when working to achieve AB 32 compliance, or create excessive costs absent funding.
- Support legislation that would permanently extend the Federal Alternative Fuel Tax Credit and Alternative Fuel Motor Vehicle Tax Credit for natural gas vehicles.
- Support legislation that would leverage a container fee on goods transported from the ports for the purpose of air quality mitigation related infrastructure projects.

Waste Management

- Support legislation that would encourage expansion of conversion technologies.
- Support legislation that would increase markets for recyclable, or compostable materials.
- Support legislation which would encourage school districts to implement recycling programs.
- Support legislation that would require actual diversion activities at State and Federal facilities.
- Support a surcharge and/or statewide deposits and refunds, for the disposal of targeted waste products, including oil, electronics, and latex paints.
- Support the implementation and funding of programs to reduce litter and illegal dumping.
- Support the increase of fines and/or confiscation of vehicles for individuals and companies caught in the act of illegal dumping.
- Support State loans, grants, and loan guarantees for businesses implementing source reduction programs and utilizing post consumer recycled materials in the manufacture of new products.
- Support legislation that encourages the proper disposal of household hazardous waste.
- Oppose waste management requirements that would put local jurisdictions at risk of not meeting their AB 939 requirements, or create excessive costs absent funding.

FINANCE AND BUDGET

- Support legislation that would provide funding and/or incentives for the implementation of AB 811/AB 474 loan repayment programs.
- Support legislation that would give priority to “Super Self-Help” counties when considering transportation funding allocation.
- Monitor State budget-related bills that could affect a local jurisdiction’s ability to provide appropriate and customary services.
- Support reducing the current 2/3-majority requirement to a simple majority vote on proposed bonds.
- Support Constitutional amendments and other efforts to reorganize statewide financing to achieve equity among, and to provide a broad tax base for, cities and counties.
- Support legislation that redirects State and Federal tax dollars to member jurisdictions, and efforts that protect the ability of local governments to responsibly raise revenues.
- Oppose measures that would reduce the amount of vehicle licensing revenue that the State shares with local governments.
- Oppose legislation that imposes Federal or State mandates on cities and/or counties that do not provide sufficient funding for their implementation.
- Oppose legislation, or legislative actions, that would reduce revenue intended for local jurisdictions that would be redirected to the State General Fund for the purposes of balancing the State budget.

HOUSING, LAND USE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing

- Support legislation that would establish programs to retrofit the existing housing stock with new energy efficient technologies and materials in an effort to conserve resources.
- Support legislation that would create permanent funding sources for the planning, development and construction of workforce housing.
- Support legislative amendments to SB 375 that would eliminate the schedule conflicts with RHNA updates in the SCAG region.
- Support legislation which would encourage the creation of jobs near housing to improve the jobs housing balance.
- Support legislation to increase funding of incentives to construct affordable housing.
- Support legislation that will more equitably allocate affordable housing targets across the SCAG region by using regional, rather than county-level controls.
- Support reforms to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process that provides for use of growth forecasts generated locally and provides for equitable allocations that incorporate local socio-economic, transportation, and environmental factors.
- Support legislation that would provide ongoing State funding for mandated planning projects such as the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, Regional Blueprint Planning process, Sustainable Communities Strategies, and General Plan Housing Element updates.
- Support reform measures to housing law that: 1) streamlines the process for State approval of Housing Elements; and 2) maintains local control over land use decisions and/or state-mandated housing programs.
- Support legislation that would further define the trade and transfer process for RHNA allocation.
- Oppose reform measures that penalize jurisdictions in any manner for non-compliance with state-mandated Housing Element update schedules.
- Oppose expanding State Department of Housing and Community Development's authority over local jurisdictions.
- Oppose legislation that will hinder local jurisdictions with incorporating infill, transit oriented development, mixed-use projects and other smart growth-related opportunities.
- Oppose legislation that would penalize regions or local governments for not meeting the greenhouse gas emission targets outlined in SB 375 (2008).

Land Use

- Support legislation that seeks to streamline environmental processing (CEQA and NEPA) for infrastructure projects (e.g. transportation, transit, utilities) necessary to mitigate the increased density allowances of SB 375.
- Support legislative amendments to SB 375 that will expand CEQA streamlining to include commercial, industrial and transportation projects that fall within the Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- Support legislation for subregional agencies to develop and implement region- wide planning guidelines that would integrate land use, transportation, transit and economic development to create balanced and sustainable communities.
- Support legislation that will fund regional planning efforts to reduce the job/housing imbalance between two regions or counties.
- Support legislation to create a permanent funding source for regional and local planning activities.
- Support efforts that protect the rights of cities and counties to plan and govern their own communities, and oppose restrictions on local control of land use and development.

- Oppose legislation which would ban the use of eminent domain for public projects that demonstrate necessary use for transportation improvements and/or economic development.

Economic and Community Development

- Support legislation that facilitates economic development efforts and encourages businesses to locate or remain within western Riverside County.
- Support legislative opportunities to encourage technology to assist jurisdictions and community colleges with attracting potential businesses and educating future workers (i.e. WiFi, DSL, fiber optics, etc.).
- Support legislation to encourage revenue-neutral economic development.
- Support legislation that would allow interested jurisdictions to assume responsibility of state parks within their jurisdiction.
- Support legislation that would provide assistance to individuals that are in the process of losing their homes, or have lost their homes due to a recent foreclosure.
- Support legislation aimed at assisting jurisdictions in securing and rehabilitating homes that are vacant and abandoned.
- Support legislation and other efforts that would reduce and/or house the homeless.
- Support legislation that would provide medical services and job training to homeless individuals.
- Oppose legislation to lessen local control over the placement of telecommunication and wireless communication facilities.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EDUCATION

Public Safety

- Support legislation which would provide for lengthened jail sentences and parole time for repeat sexual offenders.
- Support legislation which would increase the number of judgeships and judicial officer positions to relieve local judges from over-burdened case loads, and to provide residents justice in a timely and efficient manner.
- Support legislation that would create funding mechanisms for local jurisdictions and regional agencies to develop and maintain critical data for health and safety services.
- Support legislation for local control over the placement of group homes containing six or fewer residents.

Education

- Support legislation that will improve the quality of education for all students.
- Support legislation to promote personal safety and security in public schools.
- Support legislation that promotes the inclusion of recycling and environmental awareness programs in K-12 curriculum.
- Support the development of curriculum geared towards preparing students for sustainable green collar/green technology jobs.
- Support legislation that would provide funding to retrain individuals to facilitate their re-entrance in to the work force.

SERVICES

Energy and Utilities

- Support legislation to provide or extend financial incentives for new and existing warehouses to have or install solar panels on their rooftops.
- Support legislation that provides incentives for businesses and local governments to voluntarily implement energy saving measures.
- Support legislation that establishes/preserves the role of local government in energy decisions, particularly activities pertaining to electricity generation, supply, demand, transmission line siting, and conservation to ensure adequate supply for, and reasonable costs to, residents and businesses.
- Support legislation that would encourage the production and use of clean alternative energy sources.
- Support legislation aimed at the development of “green” technologies for energy production.
- Support or sponsor legislation that establishes baseline parameters that more fairly addresses WRCOG jurisdictions’ electricity demands.
- Oppose legislation which would prevent a local government from entering into a franchise agreement with a local service provider.

Technology

- Support legislation to fund the development of regional data centers for local jurisdictions to share and maintain regionally significant datasets useful to the operations of local government and for use during emergency situations.

Water

- Oppose water conservation measures that do not take into consideration the incorporation of alternative water resources such as recycled water, storm water reclamation and groundwater desalination.
- Support legislation that would examine water use, not building size or acreage, when determining whether a water supply assessment is needed for commercial or industrial projects.
- Support legislation that would examine the potential for a canal that would convey water around the Sacramento—San Joaquin Delta to Southern California.
- Support legislation that would examine a variety of water storage methods.
- Support legislation that will provide funding to local governments for water quality and conservation related programs.
- Support legislation to improve the State’s water infrastructure and delivery mechanism without causing excessive financial burdens or delivery delays to southern California.
- Oppose legislation that would shift or re-align local ad valorem property tax revenues approved by local voters for vital water and wastewater infrastructure.

TRANSPORTATION

- Support legislation aimed at enhancing the safety of city streets and arterials for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.
- Support funding mechanisms for planning, development, and maintenance of regional non-motorized networks.
- Support legislation that will reduce traffic congestion and support regional transportation programs.

- Support legislation that would provide funding for goods movement related projects and studies.
- Support legislation that would give priority to “self help” counties and/or areas that provide matching transportation funding (i.e. TUMF) when distributing bond funding and/or other transportation funding.
- Support legislation to continue State and Federal funding for local and regional transportation projects, including public transit.
- Support legislation to increase local flexibility in the allocation of transportation capital funds.
- Support legislation that provides additional funds for street and road rehabilitation and maintenance projects.
- Support legislation which would provide full funding of Proposition 42 for uses solely related to roads, road improvements, intersections and other infrastructure improvements.
- Support legislation which would encourage use of design-build methods to facilitate a faster, stream-lined approach to project delivery.
- Oppose legislation to eliminate or restrict the use of Riverside County State Improvement Transportation Funds, TEA-21, Measure A, or Gas Tax funding for local transportation projects.