



January 21, 2020

To: Legislative and Communications Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: State Legislative Status Report

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority provides regular updates to the Legislative and Communications Committee on policy issues directly impacting Orange County Transportation Authority programs, projects, and operations. The State has formed several committees to inform guidance on the distribution of the coronavirus vaccine. An update is provided regarding Orange County Transportation Authority engagement on these discussions, including advocacy efforts to prioritize the transportation sector as an essential service within state guidance. With the start of the legislative session and new vacancies existing within the Administration, information is provided on changes related to the State Legislature's committee assignments and new appointments to the California Air Resources Board. As a follow-up to a memo sent to the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors, a verbal update will be provided on Governor Newsom's proposed fiscal year 2021-2022 state budget.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Discussion

Update on Vaccine Distribution Prioritization Advocacy Efforts

The State has formed three committees to evaluate the approval and distribution process of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines within the California Department of Public Health as vaccines become available throughout the country. First, the Scientific Safety Review Committee, charged with reviewing the efficacy of the vaccines that have been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration, reviews and confirms that the vaccines meet all safety requirements. Next, the Drafting Guidelines Workgroup (Workgroup) makes phased recommendations for the prioritization of the vaccine distribution

generally informed by the Center for Disease Control's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The Workgroup then presents their recommendation to the Community Vaccine Advisory Committee (CVAC) where the public has the opportunity to provide input and ensure equitable vaccine distribution and decision-making. The CVAC is made up of a variety of over 80 different stakeholder groups representing the healthcare industry, teachers, seniors, the disabled, minority communities, and more. The Workgroup uses that input to inform their final recommendation, which is then presented to the Governor, with continued feedback from the CVAC.

These phased recommendations are created to target the most at risk for potential exposure and those who are most vulnerable to the virus. Presently, there are three main phases proposed: Phase 1A, Phase 1B, and Phase 1C. Phase 1A, which has been approved and begun implementation, includes healthcare workers and residents in congregate facilities such as skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. Since the planning efforts for Phase 1B began, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) staff, along with stakeholders including the California Transit Association (CTA), have been working to ensure frontline workers within the transportation sector are prioritized. Specifically, OCTA staff has worked with CTA to help present the case for prioritizing transit workers in Phase 1B, providing data to demonstrate the essential nature of transit, impacts to the economy, and demographics of riders and frontline workers. To further these efforts, on December 18, 2020, OCTA submitted a letter to the Governor outlining the urgent need to include frontline transportation workers in Phase 1B. The letter is included as Attachment A. These public comment letters were discussed at the CVAC meeting on December 23, 2020, and as a result, the CVAC recommended transportation workers for inclusion as part of Phase 1B. On December 30, 2020, the Workgroup met to make their final recommendations for Phase 1B to be submitted to the Governor after receiving the feedback from the CVAC.

On January 6, 2021, the Workgroup presented its final recommendations for Phase 1B to the CVAC. These recommendations were separated into two tiers.

- Tier 1 in Phase 1B includes workers in education and childcare, emergency services, food and agriculture, and all of those 75 years of age and older.
- Tier 2 includes critical manufacturing, facilities and services, transportation and logistics, those between the ages 65 and 74, and those in congregate settings with outbreak risk, including those incarcerated and experiencing homelessness. Phase 1C is proposed to include all other essential industry sectors not included in Phase 1B, those 50 years of age and older, and those between the ages of 16 and 49 that have underlying conditions.

It should be highlighted that the Tier 2 recommendations were not originally considered to be in Phase 1B; however, it was included following the recommendations from the ACIP and advocacy from public transit agencies across the state, including OCTA. Additionally, since the previous CVAC meeting, the Workgroup amended these recommendations to include all individuals between the ages of 65 and 74 in Phase 1B, Tier 2, not solely those with underlying illnesses or considered to be more at risk. Members of the CVAC did not oppose these recommendations for Phase 1B and it is expected it will be approved by the Governor in short order.

As of writing this staff report, it is expected that the distribution process for Phase 1B will begin in late January and February of 2021. Although reports indicate that the State is currently behind the originally estimated schedule in administering the vaccine, public health officials insist that the pace will accelerate as they continue to operationalize distribution and administration processes throughout the State. The CVAC specifically addressed equity-informed strategies for operationalizing the vaccine distribution with local health departments. The CVAC also indicated that they are working with community-based organizations, using social media, and are building registries of eligible recipients on the state and local level. A key strategy is to expand flexibility in order to create larger pool of vaccine administrators, including the addition of more state support for on the ground clinics, pharmacy programs, and training other medical professionals such as dentists to be vaccinators. OCTA staff will continue to engage in the state-level meetings in coordination with other stakeholders to ensure transportation workers are prioritized. At the same time, OCTA staff is also engaged at the county level to inform further guidance and implementation efforts when transportation workers become eligible.

Update on Californian State Legislature Committee Memberships

The California State Legislature convened the 2021-22 Legislative Session on December 7, 2020. Both bodies officially returned on January 11, 2021, for legislative business after amending the original return date due to the increase of COVID-19 cases across the state.

With a new legislative session, there were several changes to committee memberships. The full list of Senate committee appointments is included as Attachment B. Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins (D-San Diego) appointed Senator Lena Gonzalez (D-Long Beach) to become Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, replacing former Senator Jim Beall (D-Campbell) who term ended out of elected office. It is worth noting that Orange County is well represented on this committee. Specifically, Senator Pat Bates (R-Laguna Niguel) remains as Vice Chair while Senators

Bob Archuleta (D-Pico Rivera), Dave Min (D-Irvine), Josh Newman (D-Fullerton), and Tom Umberg (D-Santa Ana) were all selected to serve on the Senate Transportation Committee. Also, former Senator Holly Mitchell vacated the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee's chairmanship after winning a supervisorial election in Los Angeles County. Senate President pro Tempore Atkins has since appointed Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) to be the next Chair for the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and reorganized the Senate Budget Subcommittees. Senator Maria Elena Durazo (D-Los Angeles) is now Chair of Budget Subcommittee Number Five on Corrections, Public Safety, Judiciary, Labor, and Transportation. Orange County Senators Newman and Min will also serve on the full Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee. Senator Pat Bates will continue to serve as Vice Chair on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Within the Assembly, Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood) appointed Assembly Member Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) to serve as Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee, replacing Assembly Member Jim Frazier (D-Fairfield). Already, Chair Friedman has made it clear that her priorities as chair include helping the state reach its climate goals, investment in mass transit, and promotion of measures regarding traffic safety. Orange County members that have been selected to serve on this committee include Assembly Members Tom Daly (D-Anaheim), Laurie Davies (R-Laguna Niguel), and Janet Nguyen (R-Garden Grove). While there will be no Orange County Assembly Members serving on the Assembly Budget Committee this year, Assembly Member Richard Bloom (D-Santa Monica) will remain Chair of Assembly Budget Subcommittee Number Three on Resources and Transportation. Assembly Member Davies will be a member of Assembly Appropriations Committee. The full list of Assembly committee appointments is included as Attachment C.

California Air Resources Board Chair Appointment

On December 9, 2020, the Governor appointed Liane Randolph to succeed Mary Nichols as Chair of the California Air Resources Board. Nichols' term ended on December 31, 2020 after serving as chair for 13 years. Randolph, an attorney, most recently served as a Commissioner at the California Public Utilities Commission since 2015, has also served in other capacities within the California Natural Resources Agency, the Fair Political Practices Commission, and the City of San Leandro. This appointment requires confirmation by the California State Senate.

Governor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022 State Budget

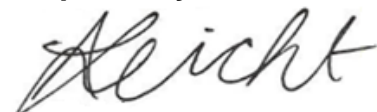
As required by the State Constitution, the Governor's proposed budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 is required to be introduced by January 10, 2021. While a memo outlining the proposed budget has been provided to the OCTA Board of Directors, a verbal update will be included as part of the January 21, 2021, meeting of the OCTA Legislative and Communications Committee.

Summary

An update is given on vaccine distribution. An overview is provided on the State Legislature's committee changes, and new appointments to the California Air Resources Board. A verbal update will be provided on the state budget.

Attachments

- A. Letter from Steve Jones, Chairman, Orange County Transportation Authority, to the Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California, dated December 18, 2020
- B. Senate Committee Membership for the 2020-2021 Legislative Session
- C. Assembly Committee Membership for the 2020-2021 Legislative Session
- D. Orange County Transportation Authority Legislative Matrix

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