

February 18, 2009

Memo to: MPO Executive Directors

From: Mike McKeever, Chair, RTAC

Re: Request for short-term staff work on data and modeling needs

At the first RTAC meeting there was a high level of interest from multiple committee members about better understanding the current data and modeling capacities of the MPOs as they relate to effectively implementing SB375. At a meeting on modeling issues with ARB, Caltrans and Business, Transportation & Housing Agency (BT&H) staff that some of us attended approximately one month before the RTAC meeting, Gregg Albright, BT&H Undersecretary for Environmental Issues, made it clear he would take the lead in trying to secure state support to help MPOs fill the gaps, so long as we could and would clearly identify those gaps. I spoke briefly with Mr. Albright following the RTAC meeting and he reiterated his interest in this topic and suggested that RTAC get a "demand" to him at the earliest possible moment. I am very much hoping that the Prop 84 planning funds, assigned to the new Strategic Growth Council to spend, can be a short-term source of funding for these vital issues.

In agenda planning discussions with ARB staff we have decided that the modeling and data issues will be one of two main agenda items for the March meeting. In order to be ready to present that complex information coherently to a broad-based 21 person group of Committee members a lot of work is going to have to be done fast. A common way to describe what we are all doing comes first, I think. Then a way to evaluate how close each of us are to where we need to be to implement SB375 effectively, how long it will take us to get where we need to be through a normal course of business approach, and then how quickly we could get there with the right amounts of financial and technical help from the state.

I know conversations have started among some of the technical staff, building off the work some of us did for the Haagen Smit conference and the various meetings with ARB and Caltrans staff that have happened since. To make this as orderly and efficient as possible, please send to Jeff Weir at ARB as soon as possible the name and contact information for the person you would like to lead your organization's efforts on this critical task. I am very much hoping that the open staff work session this Thursday on this topic will be fruitful and we will have clear materials to disseminate to the Committee in the March packet. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to let me know.



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