



Association of Bay Area Governments  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District  
Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter  
101 Eighth Street  
P.O. Box 2050  
Oakland, CA 94607-4756  
(510) 464-7900  
fax: (510) 464-7985  
info@abag.ca.gov  
www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy

## JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE — REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Date: September 14, 2012

To: Joint Policy Committee

From: Will Travis and Bruce Riordan  
Joint Policy Committee Consultants

Subject: **Recommendation for Discussion with Senator Mark DeSaulnier**

**Recommendation.** Senator Mark DeSaulnier intends to attend the September 21, 2012 Joint Policy Committee meeting to discuss matters of mutual concern to the Senator and the JPC. We recommend that in its discussion with Senator DeSaulnier the JPC should focus on what roles the JPC and the Senator can most productively play in advancing the formulation of a regional economic development strategy for the Bay Area.

**Background.** In the coming decades, the nine-county Bay Area will face serious impacts from climate change, including sea level rise and storm surge, higher temperatures, precipitation shifts, ocean acidification, and an increase in extreme storm events. These impacts pose a significant threat to the Bay Area's economy, public health and ecosystems. They will eventually present a serious challenge to maintaining the Bay Area's renowned quality of life, a key attractor for the talented individuals and new businesses that have made the region a worldwide innovation leader. In addition, climate change will have a significant impact on vulnerable communities, exacerbating existing negative conditions for many residents, and making it even harder to reduce regional inequities.

The JPC is coordinating the work of four regional agencies to advance regional economic prosperity and integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation into long-range planning for the region. Recognizing the linkage between climate change and economic prosperity, the JPC is sponsoring two major initiatives: the Bay Area Climate and Energy Resilience Project, which is building a nine-county collaboration, and a Regional Economic Development Strategy Framework, which is being undertaken by the Bay Area Council Economic Institute to assess employment, business demographics, venture capital, business dynamics, labor pool and economic futures in the region.

Senator DeSaulnier has stressed the importance of a 20-year regional economic strategy by incorporating such a strategy into SB 1149, his statement of principles underlying SB 1149, and SB 878. The JPC has acknowledged the importance of such a strategy, and the JPC Executive Committee discussed the issue in detail on July 9, 2012. The Executive Committee noted that with the rapid changes in the economy, a 20-year plan might encompass too long a period of time though this concern might be addressed by making strategy broad rather than detailed and updating it regularly to adapt to changing conditions. Also, any long-term strategy would be

more effective if it focuses on eliminating obstacles to economic development rather than being prescriptive in advancing certain types of economic activity.

On July 20, 2012, the JPC unanimously adopted a motion to accept a recommendation from its Executive Committee that the JPC consultants and agency staff should work with the business community in drafting an action plan that assesses what elements should be included in a regional economic development strategy, the likely costs of developing such a strategy, and the potential sources of funding for such work. This scoping work will use the Regional Economic Development Strategy Framework as a foundation for the consultant's analysis, which should be aimed at determining the scope, content, cost and funding for a regional economic development strategy.

The JPC intends to continue to work closely with the business community on all aspects of a regional economic development strategy, and particularly on the question of whether the responsibility for formulating and implementing such a strategy best belongs at the JPC, another government agency, a different entity or a public/private partnership. Ultimately, it may be appropriate to embody the answer to this question into state legislation that prescribes the content of a regional economic development strategy and the roles the JPC and others should play in formulating the strategy.