

7/7/10

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jacki Bacharach
FROM: Don Camph
RE: Legislative Outreach, July – August, 2010

Introduction

The Legislature is in recess until August 2 (except for [one hopes] working to adopt a budget), and an extended Congressional “district work period” is envisioned for the period August 9 through September 10. This presents an excellent opportunity for the SBCCOG to continue outreach efforts to our State legislators and Congressional representatives, and/or their district staffs.

The SBCCOG has, over the years, shown itself to be an effective advocate with respect to issues of significant importance to individual cities and to the subregion as a whole. The SBCCOG has a good track record on which to build, but there is always room for improvement. The SBCCOG’s program of outreach activities with respect to maintaining strong lines of communication to Congressional and State legislative offices should be designed to meet three important criteria for effective advocacy at the State and Federal level. Specifically, outreach to members and their staffs should be:

- *Focused* on a limited number of key issues on which the SBCCOG wants (or may want down the road) their active support and involvement. The array of issues and attendant legislation that would fit under the SBCCOG’s statement of “Overriding [Legislative] Principles” is rather broad. Given limited resources, the SBCCOG needs to be discerning as to what really matters and where to direct its advocacy resources.
- *Sustained*, which is to say there should be established a regular program and schedule of outreach activities and events that is repeated, as appropriate, each year. In the minds of Legislators and their staffs, visits from the SBCCOG, or attendance at SBCCOG-sponsored events, should become something that is expected and counted upon.
- *Coordinated* not only with member cities but also with private sector and community stakeholders who share the SBCCOG’s interests and views on a particular issue or set of issues. As an example, we have previously suggested an effort to build a “South Bay Transportation Alliance” so as to broaden and strengthen the SBCCOG’s advocacy platform in the transportation arena. This (or an even broader, “Team South Bay”) may be something the SBCCOG in arenas other than the State Legislature or the Congress.

- *Systemic*, in that State and Federal elected officials are not only legislators in the narrow sense of the word; they are also *political assets* to be deployed, in some instances, on behalf of the both adopted 1/28/2010] to ascertain which issues are “in play” in the Legislature and/or Congress and might therefore warrant mid-session input from the SBCCOG. In addition, the SBCCOG should survey the legislative landscape to ascertain whether there are other issues of interest that have surfaced that were not anticipated in the January 28 action. As always, in advocating for (or opposing) legislation, it is important to take a focused approach and weigh in only on those issues that are of the greatest import to the SBCCOG and its member cities.
- The SBCCOG should use the opportunity to review its “2010 Legislative Agenda” and list of “Timely Issues for 2010” [SBCCOG may wish to consider in the year ahead.)

The Legislative Agenda adopted on 1/28/2010 contains this statement of “Overriding Principles”:

“SBCCOG believes that cities must be able to control matters within their own jurisdictions. Therefore, the SBCCOG will take positions on proposed legislation, rules and/or regulations that affect cities’ local control and will oppose preemption of local authority whether by legislation or ballot measure. Additionally, the SBCCOG will take positions on issues that directly affect the South Bay. And, when local decisions affect neighboring communities, the SBCCOG supports local governments working collaboratively and regionally to address regional issues.”

Certainly the statement with respect to local control is clear and forceful. The SBCCOG may wish to consider a somewhat more elaborated description of what this means, something to the effect that by “local control” is meant not only the *authority* but also the *flexibility* and *resources* for cities and the SBCCOG to make policy and programmatic decisions in the best interest of local jurisdictions and the subregion. While this might generally apply to legislation, it could also apply to actions proposed by Federal, State and regional regulatory authorities as well as funding agencies (the recent discussion at the MTA with respect to cost containment policies in the context of the 30/10 Initiative is an example of the latter).

Non-Legislative Issues

Beyond being participants in the legislative process, legislators are political assets to be deployed on the broader chessboard that encompasses the fully diversity of policy issues in which the SBCCOG has an interest. Depending on the issue and circumstances, their leadership and influence may work to the SBCCOG’s advantage if it can be brought to bear in a timely and focused manner. Even if there is not currently an issue on which the SBCCOG seeks assistance, it is important that our representatives in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., as well as their staffs locally and in the capitals, be kept up to speed on key SBCCOG initiatives and, most importantly, that they gain a real understanding of the importance of these initiatives to their constituents.

Accordingly, one objective of legislative outreach in the coming months should be to inform of them of important activities and initiatives of the SBCCOG, including:

- Local government resources
- Transportation
 - The Measure R Highway Program.
 - The South Bay Green Line Extension.
 - The MTA’s “30/10” Program Acceleration Initiative
 - Green Line Extension to LAX
 - Crenshaw to LAX Extension
- Environmental issues
 - GHG emission inventories and climate action plans
- Energy efficiency and conservation
 - LUV

In some cases the SBCCOG may wish to ask for their support with respect to a specific issue; for example, concerns about project sequencing and protection of South Bay fiscal resources in the context of the MTA 30/10 Initiative.

Members for Outreach

- Congressional:
 - Barbara Boxer
 - Dianne Feinstein
 - Maxine Waters (35th)
 - Jane Harman (36th)
 - Laura Richardson (37th)
 - Dana Rohrabacher (46th)
- State Senate
 - Roderick Wright (25th)
 - Curren Price (26th)
 - Alan Lowenthal (27th)
 - Jenny Oropeza (28th)
- State Assembly
 - Steven Bradford (51st)
 - Ted Lieu (53rd)[we may wish to consider meeting the two major candidates for this seat]
 - Bonnie Lowenthal (54th)
 - Warren Furutani (55th)

Next Steps

Once agreement is reached on the list of issues and “message points,” SBCCOG staff should be directed to contact the appropriate offices to set up briefings during July and August. The issues identified in this memo should be the basis for meetings.

In addition, consideration should be given to some kind of event, perhaps after the November election, to showcase SBCCOG activities and issues, to thank legislators for their leadership, and to set the stage for 2011.