



**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHTS
Thursday, March 16, 2023**

ATTENDANCE

Members: Jennifer Cavanaugh (Chair); Illece Buckley Weber (Vice Chair); Teresa Acosta; Katherine Aleman; Scott Bauer; Paolo Beltran; Mary Ann Bier; Megan Campbell; Margaret Clark; David Cohen; Matthew Downing; Pat Eklund; Eric Friedman; Joe Garcia; Nicholas Ghirelli; Tiffany Grimsley; Miguel Guardado; Britt Huff; James Jackson; Dan Kalb; Tamala Kelly; Julio Martinez; Merry Monlux; Kitty Moore; Cynthia Moran; Andy Pease; Max Perrey; Thai Phan; Randall Putz; Karina Quintanilla; Gabriel Quinto; Bruce Roundy; Julie Ryan; Nick Schultz; Kristine Scott; Scott Smith; Niroop Srivatsa; Debby Stegura; Anissa Williams; Jamie Wood

Cal Cities Partners: Brian LaBrie

Staff: Nicolas Romo, Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

I. Welcome

Chair Jennifer Cavanaugh and Vice Chair Illece Buckley Weber welcomed the committee members and thanked everyone for their involvement. They briefly went over the plan for the day. Chair Cavanaugh then introduced President Taj.

President Ali Sajjad Taj, Council Member, Artesia, welcomed everyone to the second policy committee of the year. He shared his gratitude for everyone's involvement in this committee. He mentioned how the lawmakers in Sacramento are starting to make decisions on important legislation and that we need everyone's participation so that we, as an organization, can better serve our members and their communities.

President Taj then introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director, and CEO. She welcomed the committee members and thanked them for their service to their cities and Cal Cities. She explained how important the work we do in the policy committees are to our advocacy efforts. Ms. Coleman thanked committee members again for serving on the committee and wished them a great meeting.

II. Public Comment

Chair Cavanaugh asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment

III. General Briefing

Cal Cities staff provided a General Briefing of all policy areas, which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities, as detailed below. The Advocacy team's complete analysis of the [Governor's proposed budget for 2023-24](#) and the [2023 Advocacy Priorities](#) are available on the Cal Cities' website.

- **Community Services:** Securing ongoing funding to support cities' efforts to reduce homelessness continues to be a top priority for Cal Cities. This spring, the

Legislature is hyper-focused on local “accountability” for state homelessness funding. Cal Cities is working diligently to ensure any new accountability measures do not limit local flexibility to address this critical issue. Cal Cities is also in strong support of Senator Eggman’s [SB 43](#) and [SB 363](#), which would improve the state’s behavioral health care system.

- [Caroline Cirrincione](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Environmental Quality:** Cal Cities continues to promote the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the natural environment, public health, and quality of life for all residents. Cal Cities is engaging with the author and affected stakeholders of [AB 1000 \(Reyes\)](#), which would require minimum setbacks and additional requirements for logistic centers, warehouses, and related infrastructure. Cal Cities is also working with our Coastal Cities Working Group on [SB 272 \(Laird\)](#).
 - [Nick Romo](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations:** Cal Cities is sponsoring two measures that aim to modernize the Brown Act: [AB 817 \(Pacheco\)](#) and [AB 557 \(Hart\)](#); and a measure that would reform council member pay: [SB 329 \(Dodd\)](#). Cal Cities is also opposing [SB 251 \(Newman\)](#), which would limit an elected officer from employment with another elected officer with the same constituencies.
 - [Johnnie Ping](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Housing, Community, and Economic Development:** Cal Cities continues to focus on our advocacy priority to increase the supply of and affordability of housing, while also maintaining local decision-making. Cal Cities opposes [SB 423 \(Wiener\)](#), which would expand SB 35 (Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) provisions and eliminate the January 1, 2026 sunset date.
 - [Jason Rhine](#), *Assistant Director, Legislative Affairs*
- **Public Safety:** As concerns about repeated retail theft continue to grow, Cal cities is sponsoring [AB 1708 \(Murtsuchi\)](#), which would increase accountability or repeat offenders and offer pathways for pre-plea diversion programming. During the February Board meeting, the Cal Cities Board of Directors approved a resolution to address the fentanyl overdose crisis in California. Cal Cities will support bills [AB 367 \(Mainschein\)](#) and [SB 44 \(Umberg\)](#), which would have great impacts on cities’ ability to mitigate the fentanyl crisis.
 - [Elisa Arcidiacono](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Revenue and Taxation:** Cal Cities is committing to preserving existing local revenue streams and bolstering local fiscal sustainability. Cal Cities is sponsoring [AB 972 \(Maienschein\)](#), which would streamline the state grant application process for local governments so every community has the same opportunity to compete for funding. Cal Cities continues to strongly oppose the [California Business Roundtable ballot measure](#) that would restrict new or increased taxes and jeopardize local fiscal sustainability and is actively monitoring introduced legislation that would create new tax exemption programs that would reduce local tax revenues.
 - [Ben Triffo](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Transportation, Communications, and Public Works:** Cal Cities is working with the Office of Broadband and digital Literacy within the California Department of Technology, to provide input towards the development of the State Digital Equity Plan to promote the Digital Equity Ecosystem Mapping tool for organizations

throughout the state. Cal Cities is co-sponsoring [AB 400 \(Rubio\)](#) and [SB 706 \(Caballero\)](#). These measures are both related to the expanded use of design build and progressive design build delivery methods for public works projects.

- o [Damon Conklin](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*

IV. Building a Circular Economy

Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director of the National Stewardship Action Council, discussed the implementation of the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (SB 54, Allen, 2022), and related producer responsibility. This presentation discussed what a circular economy is, why it is important, and what we can do to help reduce plastic waste.

The three principles of a circular economy are design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate nature.

This waste not only impacts our environment but also our individual health. Ms. Sanborn shared how heart surgeons are finding microplastics embedded into patients' systems, making it difficult for them to recover from heart surgery.

V. Legislative Update

There are currently 2600 bills introduced in the state legislature, which is the highest number since 2010. Environmental Quality Lobbyist Nicolas Romo discussed a select number of bills that are the primary focus of the policy committee.

AB 50 (Wood) would require a public utility to provide timely service for electric customers, has gained popularity. Cities have indicated a delay in communication and services from public utilities so this bill would improve communication and response time.

There is a need for analysis to determine the extent to which cities are affected by non-compliance with solar permit fees under AB 1132 (Friedman).

AB 1000 (Reyes) regarding warehouse siting has transitioned into a two-year bill, and no action will be taken on this bill this year.

AB 1572 (Friedman) is a controversial bill, and further clarification is needed regarding the definition of "nonfunctional turf." Additionally, the potential impact of communities without purple pipes needs to be addressed.

VI. Legislative Review: Climate Bonds

[AB 1567 \(Garcia\)](#) Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparation, Flood Protection, Extreme Heat Mitigation, and Workforce Development Bond Act.

Cal Cities staff presented AB 1567 to the committee and gave a brief overview of the measure. This measure would enact the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparation, Flood Protection, Extreme Heat Mitigation, and Workforce Development Bond Act. If approved by the voters at the November 5, 2024, statewide general election, this bill would authorize the sale of \$15.105 billion in general obligation bonds

SB 867 (Allen) Drought and Water Resilience, Wildfire and Forest Resilience, Coastal Resilience, Extreme Heat Mitigation, Biodiversity and Nature-Based Climate Solutions, Climate Smart Agriculture, and Park Creation and Outdoor Access Bond Act of 2023.

Cal Cities staff presented SB 867 to the committee and gave a brief overview of the measure. This measure would enact the Drought and Water Resilience, Wildfire and Forest Resilience, Coastal Resilience, Extreme Heat Mitigation, Biodiversity and Nature-Based Climate Solutions, Climate Smart Agriculture, and Park Creation and Outdoor Access Bond Act of 2023. This bill would authorize the sale of an unspecified amount in general obligation bonds. The bill does not specify in which statewide election this initiative would be included.

SB 638 (Eggman): Climate Resiliency and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2024.

Cal Cities staff presented SB 638 to the committee and gave a brief overview of the measure. This bill would enact the Climate Resiliency and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2024, which, if approved by the voters, would authorize the sale of \$4.5 billion in general obligation bonds. This bill would submit the bond for a vote during the November 5, 2024, statewide general election.

The Committee voted to support three climate bonds if amended to include specific priorities. In addition to projects funded in the existing bond measures, the committee identified the additional top funding priorities within selected funding categories:

Water

- Stormwater capture and reuse
- Desalination build-out and operation
- Groundwater recharge
- Evaporation mitigation/prevention

Energy

- Rate protection for low-income and seniors
- Utility line undergrounding
- Battery storage projects
- Green hydrogen research and development

Coastal Resilience

- Sea level rise planning and adaptation

Community Resilience/Air Quality

- Addressing heat islands
- Public transportation
- Urban greening and parks
- Removal and source reduction of microplastics

Waste/Recycling

- Organic waste diversion infrastructure and education
- Source reduction and increased recyclability of products (ex. Plastics, textiles)

Biodiversity/Wildlife

- Reducing the use of rodenticides, herbicides, and other toxics found to be harmful to biodiversity
- Native landscaping
- Wildlife crossings
- Invasive species control and protection of monarch butterflies and other natural pollinators

VII. Adjourn

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 22, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Pomona (in-person)

2016 Policy Committee Appointments

REMINDER: The 2015 policy committee appointments will end at the close of the Annual Conference; appointments for 2016 can be requested thereafter. Members seeking appointments for 2016 are urged to contact their incoming department, division, or affiliate president immediately following the Annual Conference to request reappointment. A presidential appointment from the League's incoming president may also be requested, although members are encouraged to first exhaust appointment opportunities through their division or department presidents. These requests should be sent c/o Meg Desmond, 1400 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 or via e-mail: mdesmond@cacities.org. Please include a brief bio. If you have questions regarding the appointment process, please call (916) 658-8224, send an e-mail to