



LEAGUE OF  
CALIFORNIA  
CITIES



June 16, 2022

The Honorable Lena Gonzalez  
Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation  
State Capitol, Room 405  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2237 (Friedman): Transportation planning: regional transportation improvement plan: sustainable communities strategies: alternative planning strategy: state transportation funding.**  
**OPPOSED** (As Amended June 13, 2022)

Dear Senator Gonzalez,

On behalf of the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), who collectively represent cities and counties throughout the state, we respectfully **oppose AB 2237 (Friedman)**, which takes an overly prescriptive approach that strips away regional and local flexibility to meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets expected under SB 375 (Steinberg, 2008).

We are concerned that AB 2237 is based on the conclusions of the California Transportation Assessment Report (AB 285, 2019) due to limitations of the data reviewed to create the report, including the exclusion of local project-level data provided pursuant to SB 1 (Beall, 2017). The report relies heavily on Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) data sets, which exclude many local complete streets and maintenance expenditures, which are broadly consistent with state transportation climate goals, as well as significant transit funding. As a result, the report incorrectly concludes that a disproportionate amount of transportation funds have been, and continue to be spent on capacity increasing highway and road projects. The AB 285 Report lacks important granular data such as transit operating and maintenance costs, and local fix-it-first expenditures, which are not included in the FTIPs.

### **Imperils Transportation Improvements Funded by Local Tax Measures**

AB 2237 would preclude *any* expenditures from a self-help local tax measure unless *all* projects are included in an adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy

(SCS) or Alternative Planning Strategy (APS). This prohibition is excessively broad and could put billions of dollars of expenditures on hold, imperiling timely project delivery, due to a small number of projects that are not included in an SCS/APS. We note that many self-help measures include dedicated sub-allocated funding to cities and counties for local streets and roads, active transportation, and transit operations purposes. Most or all of this class of expenditures would not be contained in a regional SCS/APS, as they are being locally funded and most likely will not require air quality conformity analysis. As noted below, this provision would also be unworkable in non-metropolitan areas not required to adopt an SCS or APS. For larger projects funded by a local measure that may induce driving, we note that feasible mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles travelled would be required for any project under CEQA, whether or not it is included in an SCS.

### **Applies SCS/APS Consistency Requirements to Non-MPO Areas**

Section 1 of the bill requires consistency between the five-year Regional Transportation Improvement Program that each region proposes to fund, in whole or in part, with State Transportation Improvement Program funding, with the regional SCS or APS, and state and federal air quality standards. This requirement is redundant for metropolitan areas, and it is misplaced for non-metropolitan areas that are not required to adopt an SCS or APS under current law.

### **Limits Needed Single Occupancy Vehicle Projects & Precludes Projects in Non-Metropolitan Areas**

We are concerned that AB 2237 does not include an explicit definition of a single occupancy vehicle capacity project. Moreover, due to the bill's requirement that the state shall not use "state funds from any source" for such a project unless it is included in an adopted SCS or APS, the bill would mean a de facto moratorium on any such project in California's 21 non-metropolitan counties. These areas are outside of MPOs and not required to adopt an SCS/APS under SB 375. Many of these areas lack alternative transportation options, have low densities and populations, and experience significant traffic safety issues that may warrant new single occupancy vehicle projects.

In non-metropolitan areas, maintenance of roadways for safety is paramount, as those roadways serve as critical connectors within rural communities, and as major thoroughfares for urban residents traversing the state to visit rural areas or to reach other metropolitan areas. Additionally, these roadways are subject to increased threats from climate-induced extreme weather, including flash flooding. These roadways are also critical to facilitating emergency response and evacuation during major natural disasters, including and especially during wildfires. Non-metropolitan counties must retain the ability to repair and maintain their local road networks, as there are few-to-no surface transportation alternatives otherwise.

We are also troubled by the limitations that would apply within metropolitan areas. Key terms, including “state funds from any source” are undefined. The language fails to acknowledge that an SCS/APS are designed to ensure emissions reductions from the transportation and land use sector across the plan—individual projects that may induce emissions are permitted, and may be desirable for other transportation goals, notwithstanding the feasibility of offsetting emissions for any one individual project.

For these reasons, Cal Cities, UCC, RCRC, and CSAC **oppose AB 2237 (Friedman)**. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Damon Conklin at [dconklin@calcities.org](mailto:dconklin@calcities.org) or Chris Lee at [clee@counties.org](mailto:clee@counties.org). Kiana Valentine (UCC) at [kiana@politicogroup.com](mailto:kiana@politicogroup.com), or Sidd Nag (RCRC) at [snag@rcrcnet.org](mailto:snag@rcrcnet.org).

Sincerely,



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cc: The Honorable Laura Friedman, Member, California State Assembly  
Honorable Members, Senate Transportation Committee  
Melissa White, Consultant, Senate Transportation Committee  
Ted Morley, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus