



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY COMMITTEE

PART 1

Thursday, April 8, 2021

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Register for this meeting:

<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJlkceGvgDgpHdA6TB84N0eZXCXd8fjdeOV>

Immediately after registering, you will receive a link and confirmation email to join the meeting.

AGENDA

I. Welcome and Introductions

Speakers: Chair, Chris Rogers, Mayor, Santa Rosa
Vice Chair, David Pollock, Councilmember, Moorpark

II. Public Comment

III. Legislative Update

Informational

Speaker: Derek Dolfie, Environmental Quality Legislative Representative, League of California Cities

A list of the Cal Cities EQ interest bills can be found [here](#) and a complete list of all the Cal Cities EQ bills can be found [here](#).

IV. Funding Climate Measures In Your Community Discussion

Informational

Open forum and discussion opportunity for committee members to share ideas and strategies on how cities can fund local climate and environmental measures, especially those issues related to our Environmental Quality policy committee.

V. Legislative Agenda (Attachment A)

Action

1. [AB 897 \(Mullin\)](#) Office of Planning and Research. Regional Climate Networks. Climate Adaptation Action Plans.
2. [SB 1 \(Atkins\)](#) Coastal Resources. Sea Level Rise.

VI. Adjourn

PART 2 EQ Virtual Meeting: Thursday, April 15, 2021, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Please visit our Cal Cities Environmental Quality Policy Committee [webpage](#) for more information about the committee and resources on EQ topics.

Brown Act Reminder: The League of California Cities' Board of Directors has a policy of complying with the spirit of open meeting laws. Generally, off-agenda items may be taken up only if:

1. *Two-thirds of the policy committee members find a need for immediate action exists and the need to take action came to the attention of the policy committee after the agenda was prepared (Note: If fewer than two-thirds of policy committee members are present, taking up an off-agenda item requires a unanimous vote); or*
2. *A majority of the policy committee finds an emergency (for example: work stoppage or disaster) exists.*

A majority of a city council may not, consistent with the Brown Act, discuss specific substantive issues among themselves at Cal Cities meetings. Any such discussion is subject to the Brown Act and must occur in a meeting that complies with its requirements.

Environmental Quality Policy Committee
Legislative Agenda
April 8, 2021

Staff: Derek Dolfie, Legislative Representative, (916) 658-8218
Caroline Cirrincione, Policy Analyst, (916) 658-8250

1. AB 897 (Mullin) Office of Planning and Research: Regional Climate Networks: Climate Adaptation Action Plans. (As Introduced 02/17/21)

Overview:

This measure would encourage regional climate adaptation planning to reduce climate risk; foster collaboration among local, regional, and state entities; and develop guidance for potential state, federal, or private investment in regional adaptation projects.

Bill Calendar:

AB 897 (Mullin) is set for a hearing in the Assembly Natural Resources Committee on April 14.

Bill Description:

Specifically, AB 897 would:

- Authorize eligible entities including cities, counties, special districts, councils of governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and climate collaboratives to establish and participate in regional climate networks;
- Authorize the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to facilitate coordination between regions and encourage regions to incorporate as many eligible entities into one network as feasible;
- Authorize a regional climate network to develop a regional climate adaptation action plan;
- Require, by July 1, 2022, OPR to develop guidelines on how a regional climate network may develop a regional climate adaptation action plan, including certain information, analyses, and contents to be included in a plan and certain considerations and procedures for a regional climate network when preparing a plan;
- Require OPR to provide technical assistance to eligible entities developing regional climate networks and plans; and
- Require OPR to make recommendations to the Legislature on potential sources of financial assistance for the creation and implementation of Regional Climate Adaptation Action Plans and ways the state can support the creation and ongoing work of regional climate networks.

Background:

Cities across California are on the front lines addressing the impacts of climate change within their communities. The effects of climate change vary based on a community's physical, social, and economic characteristics. Because these characteristics extend beyond city or county boundaries, there is continued interest in the Legislature to enable

regional coordination between local governments, community-based organizations, non-profits, and private sector entities as a component of resiliency planning.

According to [California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment](#) (Assessment), climate change could have a myriad of consequential effects throughout California, including sea-level rise, inland flooding, more severe heat days, more frequent drought, and increased wildfires risk. This could damage state and local infrastructure, disrupt the provision of key services, impair natural habitats, and affect regional economies. The [assessment](#) also highlights a survey of local governments in California that found a lack of funding as the most significant perceived barrier to climate adaptation.

According to the author, "AB 897 seeks to encourage and support regional climate adaptation planning that builds upon and enhances local adaptation actions to reduce climate risk, foster collaboration among local, regional, and state entities on adaptation solutions, and develop guidance for potential state, federal, or private investment in funding regional priority adaptation projects across the state."

Fiscal Impact:

While the fiscal impacts of this measure are unknown, recommendations from OPR on potential sources of financial assistance could result in funding opportunities for local governments to support and create regional climate networks.

Existing Cal Cities Policy:

Climate Change

Coordinated Planning. State policy should encourage and provide incentive for cities to coordinate and share planning information with neighboring cities, counties, and other governmental entities so that there are agreed upon regional blueprints and strategies for dealing with greenhouse gas emissions."

Cal Cities 2021 Strategic Priorities

Improve state-local coordination and planning to strengthen community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery. Pursue additional resources and support to mitigate the effects of climate change, sea level rise, catastrophic wildfires, and flooding in our communities. Promote community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery in collaboration with the state and federal governments. Increase availability and access to the National Flood Insurance Program to include other natural disasters."

Staff Comments:

Over the last several years the Legislature has taken an interest in fostering and growing regional approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. We know that many cities have already created climate adaptation plans and others have yet to begin. Given the focus on regional approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, it is likely that the Legislature will continue to move in this direction until there becomes law.

AB 897 (Mullin) is a reintroduction of AB 2621 (Mullin) from last year, which stalled due to the time constraints on the Legislature due to COVID-19. This legislative session, three bills (AB 11 (Ward), AB 51 (Quirk), and AB 897 (Mullin)) have been introduced seeking to develop regional climate networks or collaborative. In discussion with Assembly Member Mullin's office, AB 897 will be the vehicle that the Assembly will use to contemplate this type of legislation.

Support *(as of 3/31/21):*

- Solano County Water Agency

Opposition *(as of 3/31/21):*

- None on file at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

Cal Cities staff recommends the committee support AB 897 (Mullin) and direct Cal Cities staff to seek further clarification that this bill does not supplant local land use authority.

Committee Recommendation:

Board Action:

Environmental Quality Policy Committee
Legislative Agenda
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Staff: Derek Dolfie, Legislative Representative, (916) 658-8218
Caroline Cirrincione, Policy Analyst, (916) 658-8250

2. SB 1 (Atkins) Coastal Resources: Sea Level Rise. (As Amended 03/23/21)

Overview:

This measure, the California Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Adaptation Act of 2021, would establish new planning, assessment, funding, and mitigation tools for California to address and respond to sea level rise.

Bill Calendar:

SB 1 (Atkins) was referred to three policy committees; Senate Natural Resources and Water, Senate Environmental Quality, and Senate Governmental Organization. It was first heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on March 16 and passed out of the committee. SB 1 is now before the Senate Environmental Quality committee, but has not been set for a hearing.

Bill Description:

Specifically, SB 1 would:

- Create within the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), the California Sea Level Rise State and Regional Support Collaborative (Collaborative);
 - The Collaborative would provide state and regional information to the public and support to local, regional, and other state agencies for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of sea level rise; and
 - The Collaborative's scope would include areas located in the coastal zone and under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC).
- Require the Collaborative to expend up to \$100,000,000 annually in grants to local governments to update local and regional land use plans to account for sea level rise;
- Require OPC, while in its role as the collaborative, to coordinate with other state planning and coastal management agencies, including the California Coastal Commission, to take into account the effects of sea level rise in coastal resources planning, management policies, and activities to identify, assess, and mitigate the adverse effects of sea level rise; and
- Increase the Environmental Justice Small Grant Program from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 annually, and require up to \$500,000 be expended for grants to organizations working to address and mitigate the effects of sea level rise in disadvantaged communities.

Background:

Climate change continues to threaten California's coast, forcing local governments to plan for and mitigate against the impacts of sea level rise. Specifically, the [Legislative Analyst's Office](#) (LAO) estimates that California could experience up to seven feet of sea level rise by 2100 having massive impacts on the state's lands, economy, and physical environment. The burden of responsibility to address sea level rise falls to local governments which will cause significant fiscal challenges in the next 100 years.

Protecting critical infrastructure and public/private property along the coast is not only costly to local governments but also involves oversight and collaboration with the California Coastal Commission. In the spirit of collaboration, the Cal Cities Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee¹, coastal counties, and California Coastal Commission representatives created a sea level rise working group. The working group adopted [this joint statement](#) of guiding principles, opportunities, and challenges associated with proactive and effective sea level rise adaptation for California's coastal communities.

Fiscal Impact:

While a funding source for the collaborative is not specified, a new resources bond, such as that proposed by [SB 45](#) (Portantino, 2021), could be a potential source.

Sea Level Rise Impacts to be Expensive and Extensive

According to the LAO, a 2015 economic assessment by the [Risky Business Project](#) estimated that if current global greenhouse gas emission trends continue, between \$8 billion and \$10 billion of existing property in California is likely to be underwater by 2050, with an additional \$6 billion to \$10 billion at risk during high tide. A recent [study by researchers from the US Geological Survey \(USGS\)](#) estimates that by 2100, roughly six feet of sea level rise and recurring annual storms could impact over 480,000 California residents (based on 2010 census data) and \$119 billion in property value (in 2010 dollars).

Existing Cal Cities Policy:***Coastal Issues***

Cal Cities opposes legislation that would permit the state to impose conditions on Local Coastal Plans developed by cities and counties.

Cal Cities supports efforts to curb frivolous appeals to local coastal decisions.

Cal Cities supports prohibiting the expansion of offshore oil and natural gas production along the California coast.

¹ The Cal Cities Coastal Cities Group was created by the Cal Cities Board of Directors in November 2006 as a forum for cities within the coastal zone to discuss coastal issues and build a relationship with the California Coastal Commission. The Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee consists of one elected official and their respective city manager, or their staff designee, from each of the six regions within the coastal zone. More information can be found [here](#).

Cal Cities supports the Federal Coastal Protection Act, which prohibits additional offshore development through the year 2002. This position was based, in part, on concern about the impacts to on-shore support facilities and services by offshore development activities.

Cal Cities opposes legislation that grants authority to the Coastal Commission that is inconsistent, duplicative and overlapping with the authority of other regulatory agencies, such as regional water quality control boards or other agencies, or that grants the Coastal Commission authority outside the coastal zone.

Cal Cities affirms its commitment to local control by requesting the Coastal Commission to defer to the elected officials of a City with respect to choices in the implementation of a Local Coastal Plan that complies with the requirements of state law and regulation.”

Cal Cities 2021 Strategic Priorities:

Improve state-local coordination and planning to strengthen community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery. Pursue additional resources and support to mitigate the effects of climate change, sea level rise, catastrophic wildfires, and flooding in our communities. Promote community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery in collaboration with the state and federal governments. Increase availability and access to the National Flood Insurance Program to include other natural disasters.”

Staff Comments:

Cal Cities Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee is working collaboratively with the coastal counties and the Coastal Commission to develop a path forward to address sea level rise in our coastal communities. This collaborative effort, starting in 2019, has helped our coastal cities directly communicate their thoughts and concerns with the Coastal Commissioners and staff on a variety of topics, including sea level rise. SB 1 could be a vehicle for continued discussion with the Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee, coastal counties, and the Coastal Commission to seek changes to how local coastal plans (LCPs) are created and updated.

As has been made clear in this analysis, the need for funding to plan for, respond to, and recover from the effects of sea level rise are dire. Numerous statewide reports from both the LAO and various state agencies has made clear that the state needs to do more to help local governments address this serious problem. The committee’s position on this bill can help guide staff and the Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee in future discussions with coastal stakeholders on how best to address this issue to benefit all of California’s cities.

Support (as of 3/16/21):

- California Coastkeeper Alliance
- Surfrider Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- California Coastal Protection Network

Opposition *(as of 3/16/21)*:

- None on file at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

Cal Cities staff recommends the committee support SB 1 (Atkins).

Committee Recommendation:

Board Action: