


[Home](#)
[About MTC](#)
[News](#)

[Headlines](#)
[Press Releases](#)
[Current Topics](#)
[Transactions](#)
[E-News](#)
[Exec Report](#)
[Photos](#)
[Video](#)
[Social Media](#)

[Jobs & Contracts](#)
[Meetings & Events](#)
[Get Involved](#)
[Services](#)
[Library](#)
[Maps & Data](#)
[Funding](#)
[Planning](#)
[Projects](#)
[Legislation](#)
[Links](#)
[Current Topics](#)

Governor Signs High Speed Rail Bill

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July 18, 2012 (Update)

Governor Jerry Brown today signed Senate Bill 1029, which paves the way for building the first segment of California's long-planned high-speed rail line while also providing for a series of complementary regional rail improvements. According to the governor's office, the investments "will create thousands of new jobs in California by modernizing regional transportation systems and linking them to the state's future high-speed rail line." The governor signed the bill at Union Station in downtown Los Angeles this morning, and made an appearance at the future site of the Transbay Transit Center in San Francisco this afternoon. Both of these stations will serve as major hubs for the future high-speed rail line.

According to a release from the governor's office, SB 1029 invests \$4.7 billion in state bonds to improve rail service statewide. These funds include a \$2.6 billion investment (matched by additional federal funds) for construction of the high-speed rail line along a segment in the Central Valley.

According to the release, SB 1029 also includes a \$1.92 billion state investment in local rail projects to improve connectivity across the state:

- Light rail systems including LA Metro in Los Angeles and San Diego's Blue Line;
- Electrification of the Caltrain system in the San Francisco Bay Area;
- Replacing train cars on major commuter services like BART in the San Francisco Bay Area; and
- Positive Train Control, an automated safety system designed to stop train collisions.

According to the governor's release, SB 1029 ensures approximately \$3.6 billion of economic investment in Northern California, \$2.8 billion in Southern California and \$8 billion in the Central Valley when matching federal and local funds are factored in.

Read more [here](#).

Next Stop for High-Speed Rail: Governor's Desk

July 6, 2012 (Updated July 10, 2012)

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Governor Brown signs the high speed rail bill (SB 1029). (Photo: Justin Short)



(Photo: Karl Nielsen)

July 6, 2012

California High-Speed Rail Authority Board Chair Dan Richard today issued the following statement regarding the Legislature's passage of Senate Bill 1029 which appropriates federal grant funds and Prop 1A funds for California High-Speed Rail:

"Today's vote to commence high-speed rail construction, like all major public policy decisions, is the result of hard work and collaborative effort. Credit must go to Governor Brown whose courage and steadfast leadership has improved the High-Speed Rail Authority's plans and operations," said California High-Speed Rail Authority Chair Dan Richard. "We also express deep gratitude to Assembly Speaker John Perez and Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg for passing this measure through their houses. The Legislature's action sets in motion a Statewide Rail Modernization Plan for California. Not only will California be the first state in the nation to build a high-speed rail system to connect our urban centers, we will also modernize and improve rail systems at the local and regional level. This plan will improve mobility for

Advocates of high-speed rail in California had something major to celebrate 4th of July week besides the holiday: passage by the state Senate on July 6 of a bill authorizing an \$8 billion package to build the first phases of the line while also making improvements to existing commuter rail service in Northern and Southern California. The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 21-16, just one vote shy of defeat. The bill passed the state Assembly the day before by a vote of 52-28, and is now heading to the governor, who has advocated for the project.

commuters and travelers alike, reduce emissions, and put thousands of people to work while enhancing our economic competitiveness," said Richard.

See also:

- www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov
- [Senate Bill 1029 \(PDF\)](#)
- [New High-Speed Rail Plan Approved, Includes Pact to Electrify Caltrain](#)
April 12, 2012
- [Keeping High-Speed Rail on Track](#)
July 27, 2011

The governor's signature would release \$4.7 billion in state bond money for the project and open the gates for the state to receive \$3.2 billion in federal stimulus funding to match the state's share. The package would begin construction of an initial 130-mile length of track in the Central Valley, between Merced and Bakersfield. This segment falls in the middle of a proposed 432-mile route that ultimately will connect San Francisco and Los Angeles in under 2.5 hours. Included in the first phase of investments are local rail improvements in the Bay Area, key among them electrification of the Caltrain line that connects San Francisco and San Jose.

Plans call for an eventual 800-mile system extending as far north as Sacramento and as far south as San Diego. MTC has been a strong supporter of high-speed rail, playing an important role in brokering agreements on Bay Area aspects of the massive infrastructure project.

Caltrain Press Release:

Caltrain Modernization Takes Important Step Forward

Contact: Christine Dunn, 650.508.6238

July 6, 2012... The California State Legislature's vote to approve funding for the Caltrain Modernization Project as part of the California High-speed Rail Authority's effort marks an important milestone in bringing modern electric rail service to the Bay Area. The bill authorizes \$600 million in high-speed rail funds to modernize Caltrain.

In addition to the money received through the high-speed rail program Caltrain also will receive more than \$100 million in connectivity funding through Prop. 1A. Additional funds for the project will come from a combination of local, regional and federal sources.

A modern Caltrain system will provide more service, carry more riders, get more cars off the roads, reduce the operating subsidy and reduce pollution.

"There is a generational responsibility to leave behind a world that is better than the one we found. This speaks to that responsibility," said Executive Director Mike Scanlon.

The "blended system" advanced by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Assemblyman Rich Gordon and State Senator Joe Simitian will allow Caltrain and high-speed rail to operate primarily on Caltrain's existing tracks, minimizing the impacts on the communities through which it passes.

Electrification also will help Caltrain reduce its ongoing financial problems. Not only are electric trains less expensive to operate, but modern, electric Caltrain service will attract more riders, which will bring more revenue.

The modernization program is a comprehensive reinvention of the historic railroad that includes electrification and an advanced signal system with Positive Train Control. PTC is a federally mandated safety system that prevents train collisions.

With the additional funding for the \$1.5 billion project, electric train service could be operating on the Caltrain corridor as soon as 2019.

Información en Español



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6-15-14

Budget

Continued from Page 1

budget negotiations will finance preschool for all low-income 4-year-olds and overtime pay for in-home aides who care for the elderly and disabled. And spending on public schools is set to rise \$5.6 billion — a 10 percent increase over last year.

But many Democrats who voted for the plan said it was too skimpy considering that the state is flush with cash.

“The governor is the one with the bully pulpit. He sets the tone,” said Sen. Loni Hancock, D-Berkeley. “In this case, he wasn’t willing to back the same level of reinvestment the Legislature sought. In the future, I hope we do more.”

Democrats and Republicans both complained when they learned late last week that the budget would not include an increase in Medi-Cal providers’ reimbursement rates, which were lowered during the economic downturn and haven’t risen since.

The Brown administration said the state simply couldn’t afford it this year.

California’s rates are now among the lowest in the country, making it difficult, if not impossible, for some doctors to accept low-income patients or keep clinic doors open. Failing to boost rates puts millions of Californians at risk of not having access to care when they need it, lawmakers said.

“It hit me hard,” Sen. Jim Beall, D-San Jose, said of the Legislature’s failure to strike a Medi-Cal deal.



RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg is congratulated by Sen. Alex Padilla, left, as the Senate votes on the state budget Sunday.

“We signed up a huge number of people through the Affordable Care Act, and now they may have to wait in long lines to see a doctor. No one wants to see that.”

Republican lawmakers applauded the budget’s commitment to saving and paying down old debts. But Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff said some compromises, including a long-term funding plan for California’s controversial bullet train, were nothing more than “back-door deals drafted by Democrats, for Democrats.”

“A Republican budget ... would not continue to throw billions of dollars into the illegal high-speed rail scheme that could cost \$100 billion,” said Huff, R-Diamond Bar. “It’s over budget, embarrassingly behind schedule, and the public doesn’t support it.”

Sen. Anthony Cannella, of Ceres, was the only Republican to vote for the budget, which requires a simple majority vote.

After months of negotiations, Brown and Democratic leaders nailed down a plan for spending the cap-and-trade proceeds

collected annually from the state’s worst polluters in the fight against greenhouse gases and climate change. It allocates a third of the fees — which will total about \$850 million next fiscal year — to construction of the bullet train. Democrats in the Legislature wanted to set aside half as much.

They agreed to use a quarter of the money for high-speed rail and a third for construction of affordable housing near “green” transit, such as light rail.

Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, applauded the budget agreement on cap-and-trade but conceded that the spending plan does not go far enough to reinvest in California’s most vulnerable populations, including the 6 million people living in poverty.

“We are not there yet, but we are well on our way, and things are dramatically different and better than they were several years ago,” Steinberg said. “The difference is night vs. day. A hail storm vs. bright sunshine. It is constant dread vs. real hope for the future.”

Budget approved by wide margins

State spending on schools to rise 10 percent over last year

By Jessica Calefati

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SACRAMENTO — The Legislature on Sunday night approved a record \$108 billion budget that has some new spending aimed at helping California’s most vulnerable but also reflects Gov. Jerry Brown’s insistence on fiscal prudence.

The main budget bill cleared the Assembly 55-24 and passed the Senate 25-11, with only one Republican in the Democratic-controlled Legislature voting in favor of it. Lawmakers worked on Father’s Day because they had to meet a constitutional deadline to send a balanced budget to the governor — or risk not getting paid.

The spending blueprint for the fiscal year that starts July 1 is \$7.2 billion larger than last year’s general fund budget. It includes \$10.6 billion to pay down old debts, \$1.6 billion for a “rainy day fund” to ease the pain of future recessions, and a long-sought plan to fully fund the teachers’ pension system.

Key deals struck in the final days of

ONLINE EXTRA

Read updates on the state budget and find more coverage of the state Capitol at www.mercurynews.com/politics-government.