

AB 2011 – West San Bernardino Construction Authority

Assemblymember Chris R. Holden

SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 2011 creates the West San Bernardino Construction Authority responsible for creating rail access to the Ontario International Airport.

BACKGROUND

The Ontario Airport is the primary airport for San Bernardino, Riverside and parts of LA County. However, there is no rail transit to the airport. It has the third highest passenger volume in Southern California behind LAX and John Wayne Airport and has significant capacity to expand. Currently the only public transit access to Ontario Airport is the Omintrans bus stop that does not go into the terminal. The airport is also planning to expand in coming years and additional commercial, residential and retail development will be constructed around the airport. However, driving cars along the congested 10, 210 and 15 freeways are the only reliable way to get to and from the airport. According to Ontario Airport Authority President Alan Wapner: “[Growth] will only occur if we are able to bring in transit, rail, other ways to get here other than with your car.”

The I-210 Freeway runs along the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains and connects the San Gabriel Valley to the Inland Empire and the Ontario Airport. This freeway is one of the busiest corridors in Southern California. The Metro Gold Line runs along the I-210 freeway creating a viable alternative to driving in this region. A light rail line connecting two counties to the Ontario Airport and curtailing the number of cars on roads, consequently reducing carbon emissions from personal vehicle trips, is consistent with the goals set by the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). The Metro Gold Line is currently being extended into Montclair, within 7 miles of the airport, but currently there are no plans to connect to the airport. A Gold Line connection to the airport would create much needed connectivity to the transit hub in Montclair, the San Gabriel Valley, and LA Union Station. There are also three Metrolink stops within five miles of the airport with no coordinated way to get between them and the airport.

Currently, no rail lines connect directly to the Ontario Airport. Rail to airport connectivity has been a topic of discussion for decades. Debates between transit agencies, lack of funding, and inaction by transportation authorities has hindered any attempt to build rail to the airport.

EXISTING LAW

Public Utilities Code Sec. 132400: Created the Pasadena Metro Blue Line Construction Authority which ultimately built the Gold Line.

Public Utilities Code Sec. 132600: Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority which completed the Los Angeles-Exposition Metro Line light rail project to Santa Monica.

Public Utilities Code Sec. 132400 (f): Authorized the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority to extend the line to the City of Montclair.

THE SOLUTION

A.B. 2011 will ensure that a rail line is created to the airport that serves the local community. It also ensures the planning will be done in a way that includes representatives of that community and will require local agencies to finally plan, fund, and build a rail line.

Support

Support:

San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

Contact: Naima Ford

Linda Rios

916-319-2041 || 916-319-2141 (Fax)