



CARPD NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

By: Russell W. Noack, Public Policy Advocates, LLC

April 1, 2019

California Political Makeup Continues to Trend for the Democratic Party

The Democratic supermajority, allowing the majority to dictate most political issues, has increased since January. Brian Maienschein, a longtime Assembly Member from San Diego, announced that he has switched from the Republican to Democratic Party. Accordingly, there are now 61 Democrats out of the 80 legislators in the Assembly. The Senate stands at 28 Democrats and 10 Republicans with 2 vacancies. On June 4, Senate District 1 will have a Special Runoff Election between two Republicans who currently are members of the Assembly. Brian Dahle will be facing off against Kevin Kiley to replace Ted Gaines who was elected to the Board of Equalization in November 2018. On the same day, Senate District 33 will have a runoff for the seat to replace Ricardo Lara, the newly elected Insurance Commissioner. Long Beach Councilwoman Lena Gonzalez, a Democrat, is heavily favored to capture the seat over the Republican Jack Guerrero.

Legislation

After an exhaustive day reviewing nearly 100 newly introduced pieces of legislation, the CARPD Legislative Committee made its recommendations on positions to the Board of Directors. The Board has adopted positions and some of the critical measures include:

[Assembly Constitutional Amendment No. 1 \(Aguiar-Curry\)](#), if enacted, will place on the ballot a constitutional amendment to lower the voter threshold for local General Obligation Bonds and Special Taxes for public infrastructure and affordable housing projects from two-thirds vote requirement to 55%. ACA 1 has been amended at the request of the CSDA to expressly add special districts to the list of local agencies where the 55% vote will apply. As amended, the CARPD supports ACA 1 and I am pleased to report that ACA 1 passed its first legislative hurdle last week when it was voted out of the Assembly Local Government Committee on a 5-to-2 vote. It now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where a vote is expected in a few weeks.

[Senate Bill 45 \(Allen\)](#) is a significant “work in progress” measure. The bill would place on the ballot in 2020 a bond measure to provide increased funding for wildfire, drought and flood protections. Although not specifically directed at the recreation and park

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community, this \$4.3 Billion bond to promote greater climate resiliency likely will be built out in ways that would help provide grant opportunities for our districts.

[Assembly Bill 1111 \(Friedman\)](#) is the reintroduction of Assembly Bill 1918 of last Session. The CARPD supports this bill, which seeks to establish an Office of Sustainable Outdoor Recreation within the Natural Resources Agency. The Office would be dedicated to promoting the importance outdoor recreation contributes to personal health and the State's economic wellbeing. AB 1111 passed the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on a 13-to-0 vote.

The attempt to revive the Redevelopment Act continues. [Assembly Bill 11 \(Chiu\)](#) is the lead bill and it would establish the ground rules for creating a new tax increment financing scheme to fund infrastructure and affordable housing improvements. The author has committed to provide a workable pass-through mechanism for special districts. Despite some indication that Governor Newsom is not favorable to re-enactment of RDA at this time, various legislative leaders continue to push for it.

Reduction in developer fees to reduce the cost of affordable housing is also a legislative issue this Session. [Senate Bill 4 \(McGuire\)](#) seeks to streamline the ministerial review process for urban infill projects and to eliminate various impact fees including park fees. Additionally, [Senate Bill 13 \(Wieckowski\)](#) is a measure designed to promote accessory dwelling units and it also would eliminate park fees for this form of residential structures.