



**ITEM ID:** 2024-321-0

**TRANSMITTAL DATE:** November 1, 2024

**MEETING DATE:** November 8, 2024

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

**SUBJECT:** November Legislative Update

**Issue**

Staff provides a regular monthly update on current legislative affairs.

**Recommendation**

Receive and file.

**Strategic Commitment**

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitments of:

- **Connecting and Leveraging Partnerships:** We will forge new and enhanced relationships with our public and private partners to integrate and coordinate connecting services, providing residents throughout Southern California with better, seamless, sustainable alternatives to driving. This commitment is met by sharing news, information and the Authority’s legislative priorities with elected officials.
- **Advancing Key Regional Goals:** We will grow the role of regional rail in addressing climate change, air quality, and other pressing issues by advancing toward zero emissions, making rail a compelling alternative to single-occupant automobiles and advancing equity-focused opportunities for all communities throughout Southern California. This commitment is met by encouraging federal, state and local support for Authority priorities.

**Background**

Staff continues to engage with community, local, state, and federal stakeholders concerning Metrolink service and relevant policy initiatives.

## **Discussion**

### **Local**

The Community Relations team, working with the Marketing and Communications department, has undertaken a comprehensive outreach effort throughout the Metrolink service region to assess community support for the possible procurement of additional Tier 4 locomotives. This outreach started on August 26, 2024, and ended on Clean Air Day, October 2, 2024. Outreach efforts included posting on social media and Nextdoor, sending email surveys directly to customers, and participating in five community events with an informational booth, one in each county within our service area.

The campaign resulted in robust participation and input from residents and passengers, with Metrolink receiving 442 completed online forms (410 in English, 32 in Spanish). Two-thirds of respondents provided comments in support of Tier 4s. Respondents also requested the integration of zero-emission locomotives into our fleet. Staff will be preparing a summary report of this campaign and the feedback received to include in future grant applications seeking match funding for the Tier 4 locomotives.

Community Relations staff has also conducted door-to-door outreach to residents in communities surrounding the Central Maintenance Facility (CMF) to inform them of additional late-night maintenance activities in support of the “Metrolink Reimagined” service expansion launched on October 21.

### **State**

A special session called for by the Governor to address high energy prices resulted in passage of ABx2-1. Signed by the Governor on October 14, the bill requires oil refiners in the state to maintain a minimum inventory of fuel as a buffer against supply shortages. The legislative matrix attached to this report includes the final disposition of all bills that Metrolink was monitoring or provided comment letters for.

### **Federal**

Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the federal government through December 20 with the three-month stopgap bill avoiding an October 1 shutdown. The House and Senate will return after the November 5 election to pass the FY25 appropriations bills or another CR.

The Federal Railroad Administration published a Notice of Funding Opportunity this month for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program for intercity rail projects. Metrolink is exploring eligible projects. More than \$1 billion is available and applications are due December 16.

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**Attachment(s)**

[Appendix A - November 2024 Bill Matrix](#)