

Tulare County Association of Governments

AGENDA ITEM IV-F (Addendum)

October 19, 2009

Prepared by Elizabeth Wright, TCAG Staff

SUBJECT:

Action: Provide Direction Regarding Valley Policy Council Items and Legislative Update

BACKGROUND:

The Valley Legislative Affairs Committee (VLAC) was formed in order to assist the San Joaquin Valley Policy Council in the legislative arena. This valleywide group consists of staff from all eight counties and tasks include: researching and tracking pertinent legislation, updating the COG Directors and Policy Council regarding legislation, and making recommendations when warranted. Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) staff does additional tracking and reporting on state issues, including the state budget.

DISCUSSION:

SAFETEA-LU Extension

SAFETEA-LU, the federal transportation bill that was signed in August 2005, was set to expire September 30, 2009. Over the last year, TCAG has been tracking development of the new transportation bill that will be approved to replace SAFETEA-LU. The timeline has been unclear; Congressman Oberstar, chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has insisted that SAFETEA-LU be immediately replaced with a new bill, but he very recently agreed to a three-month extension. The House passed that extension. The Senate has pushed for more time on the new bill and the Administration has requested an 18-month extension. As of the date this agenda went to print, the Senate passed a continuing resolution for SAFETEA-LU that will result in a one-month extension.

There are major issues that need to be worked out in various timeframes. SAFETEA-LU called for a rescission of funds as of the date of its expiration that several members of Congress are working to get overturned. The rescission will stop several projects in their tracks and will reverse many of the benefits or ARRA funding, according to some members of Congress. The amount to be rescinded nationwide is \$8.7 billion. In order to stop the rescission, a funding source must be identified to fill the gap. Additionally, a new bill or extension will need to be agreed upon in thirty days to three months. TCAG will be monitoring news on the transportation bill and will keep the Board aware of any major issues or actions.

Valley Policy Council Visioning Session

On October 1, in conjunction with the San Joaquin Valley Fall Policy Conference, members of the Valley Regional Policy Council held a visioning session. At the TCAG Board meeting, items that came out of that visioning session will be reported to the Board by Board Representatives Paul Boyer and Allen Ishida. Direction to staff or the SJV Policy Council Members may be provided on those items.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Provide direction, if desired, on items regarding the Valley Regional Policy Council visioning session.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENT:

None.