



community report

NOVEMBER 23, 2015

Some good news about HSR

Three Initiatives could mean the end of HSR ... and more!

The California Constitution guarantees the people the right to legislate directly, by way of the initiative process. That remedy is available when the State Legislature fails to do what the people think should be done.

HSR presents serious problems to California. Notwithstanding continuing revelations that the state's High-Speed Rail project is mismanaged and poorly conceived, neither the Governor nor the Legislature (nor the High-Speed Rail Authority itself) have been willing to be honest with the public, and to tell the public about massive construction problems in Southern California, and about \$9 billion in anticipated cost overruns. The Authority's failure to disclose has attempted to hide the utter and monumental absence of adequate construction funds needed to finish even the very first High-Speed Rail segment. Check out our November 9 Community Report if you need a refresher.

So, what can be done? "Taking the initiative" is one way to respond, and this bulletin is to let you know about **THREE initiative measures that could mean the end of the state's ill-conceived High-Speed Rail Project.**

First, an initiative has qualified for the November 2016 ballot that will require a vote of the people whenever the state proposes to use revenue bonds for a project costing over \$2 billion. General Obligation Bonds require a vote of the people, but Revenue Bonds don't, and that has provided a loophole for boondoggle projects like High-Speed Rail. For the text of this initiative measure, go to:

<http://oag.ca.gov/system/files/initiatives/pdfs/15-0003%20%28Bond-funded%20Projects%20V2%29.pdf>

If it passes next year, this initiative will plug a loophole that the High-Speed Rail Authority could use to raise money for its project without voter approval. That's good news!

Second, there is more good news in **proposed Initiative #2:** This initiative has not yet qualified for the ballot, but after receiving an official title and summary from the Attorney General, it **will move to the streets for signature gathering.** Fewer signatures will be required than will be required for Initiative #3, described below, since this Initiative #2 proposes "statutory," as opposed to "Constitutional" changes. This should make it easier to qualify this initiative for the ballot. Initiative #2 **would wind down and terminate the state's High-Speed Rail project.** For the text, go to:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9m407yyFerMNjBLLWg2ODdPX2s/view>

cc-hsr community report

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If this initiative qualifies for the November 2016 ballot, the voters will finally have a chance to express their own opinion about High-Speed Rail, now that it has become so totally clear that the current project is a huge boondoggle.

Finally, consider proposed Initiative #3: This proposed initiative must also receive a title and summary from the Attorney General before signatures can be gathered. It would take unspent funding allocated for High-Speed Rail by Proposition 1A, and transfer that money to water projects. If Initiative #3 qualifies for the ballot and passes in November 2016, this Water/High-Speed Rail initiative might well terminate the state's High-Speed Rail project, as a practical matter, by depriving it of its major funding source. The initiative, which proposes changes to the California Constitution, would have impacts going beyond High-Speed Rail. For the text of this proposed initiative, go to:

<http://www.oag.ca.gov/system/files/initiatives/pdfs/15-0107%20%28Redirect%20HighSpeed%20Rail%20Funds%20to%20Water%20Projects%29.pdf?>

One more good news item

The Judge who is overseeing the Tos case, which will go to trial next February, will allow the petitioners to use the latest revelations about cost overruns and construction problems in their legal attack on the state's compliance with Proposition 1A. The new evidence is devastating, clearly showing how the Authority has not met the requirements of the Bond Act.

The petitioners' brief has been filed, and here is what the attorney for the petitioners has said: *"It's understandable why the Authority wanted this evidence kept hidden. It directly contradicts the cost estimates in the Final 2014 Business Plan. The Business Plan's deceptively lowered costs successfully pulled the wool over legislators' eyes. Two months later, they gave the Authority billions of dollars in a multi-year gift of climate change mitigation funds. It's hard to believe that would have happened had they known what a bottomless money pit the project had become."* In this case, the Authority's deception strongly supports the petitioners' arguments, and may lead directly to a decision against the project.

CC-HSR loves to deliver good news! We will definitely keep you posted on all these good news items!

Your Support Is Vital! Help keep our efforts moving forward>

CC-HSR is deeply grateful for the support we have received from our contributors! We depend completely on voluntary contributions, and your support is what keeps us working on the issues. Next February, the Tos case goes to trial. That is obviously a top priority for CC-HSR, but in the meantime, as this Community Bulletin shows, we are working to make sure that the High-Speed Rail Authority doesn't victimize residents and businesses on the Peninsula, with their very problematic plans to send high-speed trains barreling through our communities, causing increased noise, major traffic disruption, reduced property values, and more noise and danger. If you are in a position to help us, please do! We are truly appreciative of your past and continuing support!

cc-hsr community report

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To Contribute, Please Mail Your Check To:
Community Coalition on High Speed Rail
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Woodside, CA 94062

Visit our web site. You can contribute to CC-HSR online: **www.cc-hsr.org**

Help us continue our coverage.

Since 2008, CC-HSR has been working through litigation, lobbying, and public outreach to make sure that the state's proposed High-Speed Rail project does not bring devastating impacts to the San Francisco Peninsula, or to other parts of California. Return go to our web site **www.cc-hsr.org** to make a donation to support our work. CC-HSR is totally supported by the community, and this latest decision by the STB, and the anticipated approval in January of the proposed Caltrain "Pre-HSR" project, means that we will probably have to be back in court very soon. We truly need your help! (AS NOTED ABOVE.)

AND, please Know This: WE APPRECIATE Your Support!

CC-HSR is totally supported by the community, and we truly appreciate your help! Thank you again for your support and assistance for our work!

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