

Regional Transit Measure SB Presentation Transcript
09-24-2026
League of Women Voters Bay Area

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Well, good evening and welcome to the League of Women Voters Bay Area Advocacy Webinar on the Regional Transit Measure.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: The League of Women Voters is one of the most trusted organizations on the subject of civic engagement.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: and a valuable resource for election information.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: This webinar is being recorded.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And it will be available on our website.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: LWVBA or LWVBayArea.org.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: I'm Louise Rothman-Riemer, and I'm co-president of the Bay Area League, along with my colleague and co-president, Kathleen Cha.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Madeline Cronenberg, our LWVVA Vice President, will join us to answer questions. And Sherry Thomas, our Communications Director, will be our tech person tonight.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: If you have a question, please put it in the chat and we will address it at the end of the presentation.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So let's have the first slide.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So...

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: The League has indeed supported the regional

transit measure and has signed the ballot argument and the rebuttal in all five participating counties.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Lake positions have long supported accessible, equitable, and environmentally sustainable transportation.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Regional transportation requires coordinated planning across city and county borders, boundaries, and reliable transit supports economic opportunity.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: public participation and.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Quality of life.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So, because the League.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: has principles upon which we base our support.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Here are four categories. There's regional planning, which is the focus of the Bay Area League.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: We coordinate solutions to issues that cross local county boundaries in all of the nine Bay Area counties. There's climate and air quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And improving air quality and then equitable access.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: to provide safe, reliable, and affordable transportation for all residents, and last and very important is public accountability.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: To promote informed participation and transparent.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Uh, decisions.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So today, I am very pleased to have Emily Loper join us. She is the Senior Vice President of Public Policy at the Bay Area Council.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: where she is the Council's Transportation Policy Portfolio Person. Now, for those of you who are unfamiliar with the Bay Area Council, the Council, and there are more than 325 member companies.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Engage business and civic-minded leaders to solve the most challenging regional issues to ensure the Bay Area is the most innovative, sustainable, inclusive.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: and globally competitive place in the world.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And so now it really gives me great pleasure to turn this over to Emily Loper.

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Emily Loper: Thank you so much, Louise. So I will share my screen here.

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Emily Loper: Um...

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Emily Loper: Okay, wonderful. Well, thank you so much for having me. The Bay Area Council is proud to be co-leading this campaign to pass the regional transit measure that will appear on your November ballot. I'd like to just set the stage about what this.

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Emily Loper: Measure is designed to address what the problem is here. So by now you have likely heard that our transit systems, our largest transit systems in the region are approaching a fiscal cliff, and this was caused by a combination of factors. When the pandemic first hit, of course.

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Emily Loper: ridership evaporated overnight with these stay-at-home orders, and you can see the ridership graph on the right, and yet our transit systems had to continue to operate to keep providing mobility for our essential workers. We received.

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Emily Loper: Federal relief funds to keep those systems operating, not

just in the Bay area, but across the country. And then, as ridership rebounded, we clearly entered a world of hybrid work. And so, while all of the.

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Emily Loper: individual transit riders for the major commuter rail systems, Bart and and Caltrain have returned to those systems. They're only commuting about half as frequently as they used to. And so that's about half of the budget deficit.

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Emily Loper: half of the operating budget that they were relying on pre-pandemic. Our systems were also heavily fare-dependent pre-pandemic. Actually, BART and Caltrain had two of the highest fare box recoveries in the country, meaning that they were self-sustaining. They could cover their.

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Emily Loper: Their operating, um, uh, costs with the fares they collected from passengers.

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Emily Loper: So a little more context about how we got here. The Bay Area is historically a self-help region, meaning we raise the majority of revenue for our transportation systems through local funds, as you can see on the.

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Emily Loper: The pie chart on the left here, the majority of that funding comes from either local funds or fares. And notably, our state does not provide sustainable operating revenue as our peer regions do for these systems. So as you can see in the chart on the right.

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Emily Loper: in New York, New Jersey, Boston, Philadelphia, those states provide 30 to 50% of the operating revenue for these systems to sustainably operate, whereas in California.

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Emily Loper: But California provides 5% of BART's operating costs. So that's That is what had, this is a structural issue that got us into this crisis.

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Emily Loper: If we don't pass this measure, the impacts will be severe. So BART is projecting that it would cut service up to 70%, eliminate two of its lines, close 15 stations, and end night service.

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Emily Loper: This would bring the system back to what it looked like

in 1976, when the region was about half the size, um, as it is of the... half the population as it... as we have today.

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Emily Loper: Um, SFMTA, which operates Muni, would cut up to a third of its service, eliminate full lines, um, and also double wait times.

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Emily Loper: Caltrain on the peninsula would reverse all the progress we've made since electrifying the service just over a year ago. It would reduce the service by 75%. We're going from right now 15 min headways during commute peak hours.

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Emily Loper: to just hourly. It would end night weekend service and close a third of stations. And AC Transit bus service in the East Bay would also be forced to cut about 16% of its service and eliminate full lines.

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Emily Loper: It's worth noting that this will impact everyone, not just those who rely on transit. So almost a million people take transit every day. If those level of service cuts were to go into effect.

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Emily Loper: We are projecting, based on an analysis by our co-leaders of this campaign at Spur, released just on Tuesday, shows that adding hundreds of thousands of additional cars to the roads would.

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Emily Loper: would double the commute times over the Bay Bridge and triple through the Caldecott Tunnel.

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Emily Loper: So the solution here that will appear on the November ballot is the regional transit measure. It includes these five counties. And it is a half percent sales tax in all of the counties except a full cent in San Francisco, full percent.

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Emily Loper: And that is because San Francisco's operating deficit is so large that they need to cover all of Muni's deficit plus a portion of Caltrain and a portion of BART. It's for 14 years. It funds the transit operations of those four largest systems that I just walked through.

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Emily Loper: Those four systems, um, account for about 80% of all of the transit ridership in the region. It takes 5% off the top to fund

these transit improvements to safety, cleanliness.

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Emily Loper: convenience overall seamless integration. It also funds low income discount programs for the most transit dependent riders. And.

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Emily Loper: in the counties. All the money raised in each county stays in that county. It 1st goes to fund the operating deficit, and then any of the money left over that was raised in that county can be used for transit capital projects and targeted roadway repairs.

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Emily Loper: Um, and that money is allocated by the county transportation authorities. There's also additional funding for some of the smaller transit operators, some of the smaller bus systems, SF Bay Ferry.

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Emily Loper: Et cetera. This is just a breakdown of the expenditure plan as a whole. So about two-thirds of the total goes to operating support and about a third is available for those local transit improvements and capital improvement projects.

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Emily Loper: within each county.

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Emily Loper: The accountability framework is very robust. My boss, Libby Schaff, our CEO and former mayor of Oakland, has said that she has never seen accountability this robust in her many years of public service.

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Emily Loper: And that is because the Berry Council influenced the development of this framework because we know that there is concern about the rising cost of living and high tax sensitivity right now. And also, this is our only solution to solve this.

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Emily Loper: Impending crisis. The two items I want to call out that go above and beyond what is generally in traditional oversight of measures.

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Emily Loper: This financial efficiency review is a concept that the business community really drove the development of, and that is a where a 3rd party expert comes in to review the 4 agency budgets.

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Emily Loper: And they identify all sorts of cost-cutting opportunities. And then there's an independent oversight committee that requires that those strategies are implemented in order to achieve those cost-cutting.

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Emily Loper: Reductions. That is to cut costs while maintaining and improving service for riders. Also, this ad hoc adjudication committee is a process by which the operators are held to maintain a certain level of service across the five counties.

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Emily Loper: And, and standards, and those, um, and if they don't meet those standards, then funds can be withheld from the transit agencies.

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Emily Loper: I'm proud to say we have the broadest coalition of any measure we have seen in the region. We have over 200 elected officials at the federal, state, and local level all signing on in support.

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Emily Loper: and almost now up to 200 business labor, transit advocates, environmental advocates and other community groups, all in support of this measure. And that is because this measure was really the result of a.

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Emily Loper: a few years of consensus building across the region to identify exactly what the measure looked like, what counties it applied to, what the revenue mechanism was, and how the money would be allocated to come to, um, an agreement on a measure that would work for everyone. So.

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Emily Loper: Um...

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Emily Loper: And and here's the final slide as as so as so appropriately explained by the San Francisco Chronicle in their recent endorsement that the Bay Area just does not work without well functioning transit. So I will stop sharing my screen so I can answer any questions.

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Kathleen Cha: Before you answer any questions, we have a few more slides to go. And then we have a series of questions, not only that have been submitted, but also in our chat. So I think it is Louise that .

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Emily Loper: Great.

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Kathleen Cha: Thanks.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Okay. Well, one of the things that we feel is so important.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: is the human impact.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And I just was talking about the measure with my 70 year old Richmond resident. She's my works for me, but she doesn't drive and she can face up to.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: A two and a half hour one way trip now.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: when local bus service fails, and she then has to walk extra blocks in order to get to BART.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So transportation is really an essential part of Bay Area life, along with housing and food.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: An unreliable service can threaten employment, independence, and access to basic needs.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And that's exactly what she said. What about these people that really depend on...

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Transit to get to their jobs. They could lose their jobs. And then what would their families do?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So for thousands of residents, public transportation is not simply a convenience, it is a necessity.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So, we've got some questions, and I know one of them that came up in the...

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: chat, and you could perhaps address this, Emily, is why was a sales tax chosen?

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Emily Loper: So, the, uh, the sales tax, the revenue mechanism was the result of this consensus-building process in the region, and, um, it was determined to be the most politically viable, uh, option, and that is likely because.

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Emily Loper: As I mentioned previously, that Bay Area Bay Area transportation is traditionally funded by local sales tax measures. So it's a recognizable source for transportation.

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Emily Loper: revenue. And it is also worth noting that in California, it is a slightly more progressive revenue mechanism because so many essential goods are exempt from sales tax versus other states across the country.

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Emily Loper: groceries and medication and, and other essential, um, goods are exempt. So, um...

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Emily Loper: Uh, that's worth noting.

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Emily Loper: Also...

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Emily Loper: a, uh, you know, individuals pay sales tax, but so do businesses, and so do tourists and visitors to the region. So it is generally, uh, widely distributed across, um.

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Emily Loper: Across the, um...

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Emily Loper: the region.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Right.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: So as you – the slide just suggested that it is –.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo,

and San Francisco that will pay the increased sales tax. And this will last for 14 years.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Years.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And so let's go to some additional questions.

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Kathleen Cha: Let's go to the next, yeah, let's go to the next slide. And this is something we, Emily already kind of showed that in her presentation, but we wanted to show this because everyone asked, how will the measure be funded? And there are two slides for this.

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Kathleen Cha: Half percent sales tax for Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara. 1% sales tax, San Francisco City and County. This was all negotiated amongst all of the, uh... that's what part of this coalition was about. What this will generate will be.

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Kathleen Cha: 980 million per year. That's the estimated, regional, avenue. And what's important about this is remember, this measure is not capital funding. It's operational funding, which is an important element in this.

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Kathleen Cha: And this tax would remain in effect for 14 years. So there's a beginning and end to it. Next slide.

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Kathleen Cha: We looked at it and here's where specifically where the money will go. About 611 million preserves existing transit service. And these are estimates. 325 million transit infrastructure operations and or roads with regular bus service.

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Kathleen Cha: 45 million for fares, accessibility, mapping, and wayfinding improvements. And then 2 million into that administration oversight. The largest operating allocations would go to BART, followed by SF Muni, Caltrain, AC Transit.

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Kathleen Cha: East Bay Bus Agencies, Golden Gate Transit Ferry, and San Francisco Bay Ferry. Um, why don't you, Emily, address... we only see five counties. Why only the five counties?

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Emily Loper: that...

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Emily Loper: was determined by... so there were two iterations of this. The SB 63, which is the state authorizing legislation that outlines... that gave.

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Emily Loper: that gave the region the authority to place this on the ballot. They, um... the... the statute allowed for the counties... it... it applied to the three, um, uh... uh...

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Emily Loper: Bart County, San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa because so much of the deficit was was addressing BART's deficit plus and Muni. And then it gave the option for San Mateo County and Santa Clara County to opt into the measure, which they did so.

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Emily Loper: The predecessor bill was an attempt to do this at the nine-county level, and through many negotiations and iterations, it was decided that the need was so acute in the transit-rich five counties that they focused the revenue.

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Emily Loper: Measure to these five counties.

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Kathleen Cha: A question came up just as you were speaking. Was there any discussion of consolidating the 27 transit agencies as part of this measure? Or was that not? What? What was the.

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Kathleen Cha: Good.

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Kathleen Cha: We realize this is a funding issue.

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Emily Loper: There was...

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Emily Loper: Mm-hmm.

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Kathleen Cha: Go for it.

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Emily Loper: Yeah, there were plenty of discussions on that topic, obviously a very politically sensitive topic. I will say that.

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Emily Loper: the agencies have made. So yes, we agree there should not be 27 different transit agencies across the Bay area. This, again, is a function of, or the result of our inability to sustainably fund transit.

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Emily Loper: From the state to the region as a whole, or to the state as a whole, as, again, they are comparable regions, get a lot of state support to fund robust transit operations, and then as such get, you know, funneled through a single larger transit entity.

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Emily Loper: Because we did not have that, we ended up raising the revenue for transit and other transportation projects at a local level, and those are generally raised at the county level. So then you get.

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Emily Loper: the county local counties are raising funds in that county, but only funding services that end at the county line, which, of course, we all know that our commutes and our travel patterns don't just end at the county line. We have been saying for.

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Emily Loper: years that we need to to work together as a more seamless, integrated system. And I do want to commend the transit agencies in the wake of the pandemic. They convened a blue ribbon task force that was facilitated through Mtc. And it came up with a whole bunch of recommendations that said.

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Emily Loper: how do we make transit more customer-focused and more attractive for the general population? And coming out of that, they have led to many, um, improvements that, um, that.

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Emily Loper: Those agencies are regularly working together to work on coordinating schedules, doing fair payment revisions that make it easier for you to transition from one system to another.

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Emily Loper: And also launching mapping and wayfinding that looks and feels like it's all one system, even if it's operated by different entities. I'll also say that that financial efficiency review that.

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Emily Loper: Uh, is a requirement of the measure.

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Emily Loper: As part of the efficiency review, they do need to identify areas to achieve all cost-saving opportunities as possible, and some of that may be looking at ways to consolidate some of the operations across the.

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Emily Loper: or functions across the agencies.

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Kathleen Cha: Okay, Madeline.

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Emily Loper: So I would say that's a step in the first step in that direction, certainly. Oh, also, the 5% that comes off the top for those transit improvements funds all of those seamless integration improvements that makes the system look and feel like one integrated system.

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Kathleen Cha: Nice.

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Kathleen Cha: Madeline, why don't you take the next group?

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Kathleen Cha: I guess I... I lost you, Madeline. Why don't, um... why is new funding... this is some of the questions that came in before. Why is new funding needed if transit.

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Kathleen Cha: Ridership is recovering.

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Kathleen Cha: And our what we our answer was ridership and fare revenue have not fully returned to pre-pandemic patterns, which Emily alluded to. And, while agencies still face substantial operating costs and financial pressures.

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Kathleen Cha: What is the concern of the opposition? This is the one that came up. Opponents object to increasing county sales tax. That is the main objection. Also, there was criticism of operations by the BART and the Transit.

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Kathleen Cha: However, what I think is really important about this regional measure is because of its accountability and implementation plans and the independent oversight, it really addresses how.

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Kathleen Cha: the funds are used, and how the improvements are made. So that... which is a really... as Emily said, and as others, that's why in this particular measure, the accountability and independent oversight is probably one of the strongest.

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Kathleen Cha: Um, what, um, does the measure include benefits for seniors and people with disabilities? Funding is specifically identified for accessibility programs and projects, along with improvements intended to make.

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Kathleen Cha: Transit easier to use? And then the question that we should, uh, look at, and it comes up, and why don't we go to the next slide?

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Kathleen Cha: How will oversight committees be selected? This one comes up over and over.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Over and over.

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Kathleen Cha: Who sits on that? Madeline, you can take it from here.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Oh, thanks, I got... I unmuted myself, that was the key. Okay, uh, how will taxpayers know that the money is being used as intended? And of course, that is, um, from the Oversight Committee. Additional accounting and MTC oversight, funding conditions.

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Madeline Kronenberg: and review of agency performance and financial sustainability. But Emily, who is choosing who's on the committee?

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Emily Loper: So there's 2 separate independent oversight committees. One oversees the expenditure of all of the funds to ensure they are consistent with statute. That is the.

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Emily Loper: traditional independent oversight committee that I mentioned regularly appears in measures.

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Emily Loper: That committee.

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Emily Loper: It includes appointments by each of the five boards of

supervisors to appoint a person to that.

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Emily Loper: to that Independent Oversight Committee.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Uh-huh.

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Emily Loper: The...

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Emily Loper: While the statute again, the statute is SB 63, which was the legislation, the state legislation last year that enabled us to go to the ballot and specifies the expenditure plan and the specifics of the measure.

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Emily Loper: that that statute doesn't specify what the criteria is that would be used by those 5 boards of supervisors to appoint someone. But I did look back to the Regional Measure 3, which was the previous big transportation, 9 county transportation measure that actually the Bay Area Council co-lead back in 2018.

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Emily Loper: And MTC submitted a letter to the boards of supervisors and, um, did have some criteria with which they needed to select those.

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Emily Loper: uh, individuals, uh, to... to be on the Independent Oversight Committee. They include things like ensuring, you know, there's no conflict of interest, or, um, you know, um...

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Emily Loper: uh... that they haven't, you know, worked for the contracted organizations, etc. So...

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Emily Loper: it is likely that it's similar criteria that would be used by MTC when they are soliciting the appointments from each of the boards of supervisors. The other independent oversight committee is the one that oversees this robust financial efficiency review that we.

00:51:13.000 --> 00:51:29.000

Emily Loper: believe will lead to meaningful change in how the systems operate more cost effectively. That Independent Oversight Committee has already been selected. The statute requires that it is made up of 4 independent experts with public finance experience.

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Emily Loper: which have been appointed, and then for one of each of the boards of the reviewed agencies. So one of each of the 4 agencies that will be reviewed, and that is to get buy-in also for the meaningful implementation.

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Emily Loper: Um...

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Emily Loper: That group has already been assembled by MTC and oversaw the first phase of this financial efficiency review that actually looked at ways for the agencies to start cutting costs before even going to the ballot. But the second, much more robust phase of that review will commence upon passage of the measure.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Does that review exist in a report, Emily, for people to read?

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Emily Loper: The Phase 1 does, yes.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Okay, so that would... they'd be able to find that on the MTC website?

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Emily Loper: Yes. Yes.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Okay, I mean, I think that...

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Emily Loper: And I'm happy to share that with you, and you can distribute it to the group. The findings actually showed they cataloged all of the cost savings that the agencies tried to do as they did try to cut their way out of this crisis so that they didn't have to go to the ballot.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Perfect.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Mm-hmm.

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Emily Loper: it did show that across the agencies over the past few years, since the pandemic, that they achieved about a billion dollars of cost savings, meaning that the deficits would have been that much

larger. I mean, Muni alone cut \$100,000. That would have made their deficit, you know.

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Emily Loper: a third larger, um, each year. So, it cataloged some of those changes, it made some initial recommendations about ways to further cut costs, but again, the much more in-depth.

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Emily Loper: Review that would be done by the third party that looks at the administrative.

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Emily Loper: capital and operating budgets, and identifies all sorts of opportunities to reallocate how... to restructure how these agencies operate to achieve cost savings. That is what will commence upon passage of the measure.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Um, so I have a question. Did this group also come up with the, uh, doomsday report as to what would happen if it doesn't pass?

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Emily Loper: Oh.

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Emily Loper: No, the doomsday scenarios are what each of the four major agencies.

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Emily Loper: projected...

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Emily Loper: what... what type of service level cuts they would need once the federal funding runs out, and then, as I mentioned, in 2023, we got some additional state funding support to keep the systems going while we were waiting to see how this, you know, ridership rebounded and how the cost.

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Emily Loper: Um, and whether they could, you know, manage with the... without raising additional revenue. When that aid relief funding runs out, uh, each of the four agencies did projections about what those service cuts would look like, and that is what those four slides were at the beginning of my presentation.

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Emily Loper: So these... those were come up... came up... were developed by each of the four planning...

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Emily Loper: Planning departments of each of the four agencies.

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Madeline Kronenberg: But they're very serious, and there's no question that they are in reality, right?

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Madeline Kronenberg: no other way around it if they don't get the money.

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Emily Loper: Correct. Yes.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Okay, let me ask the last question on this slide. Can transit agencies simply replace their existing local funding with this new money? And the answer was that the legislation generally requires the agencies to maintain existing funding levels.

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Madeline Kronenberg: so that the measure revenue supplements rather than merely replaces current transportation funding. That's...

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Emily Loper: Correct. Correct. That's what the maintenance of effort element of SB 63 catalogs.

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Madeline Kronenberg: How...

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Madeline Kronenberg: Okay.

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Madeline Kronenberg: All right, do we want to... Kathleen, you want to go to the ones that are, um...

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Kathleen Cha: We've answered some of those. There is one, I think it's kind of an interesting, I don't know, but you might direct where we can get the answer, and this has to do with, there's a lot about, they feel still that the accountability.

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Madeline Kronenberg: More.

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Kathleen Cha: they're just feeling it's not... not as robust as we're

saying it is. And then there's also something about, what about...

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Kathleen Cha: You made comment about the peer regional, support that others have, like, Boston. What about that? Why hasn't California done that kind of, period?

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Kathleen Cha: Do you have any insight into that or where?

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Emily Loper: I'll say it has been and will continue to be the focus of major advocacy effort on behalf of the Bay Area Council is to get the state to provide more sustainable.

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Emily Loper: funding for transit to fund it like a... the public good that we believe it is. There is no system in the world that operates, um.

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Emily Loper: You know, turns a profit, and these systems are... while there is opportunity to improve, certainly, the efficiency of the operations.

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Emily Loper: I just stress again that we're that the while this is an issue that the transit systems across the country have faced since the pandemic and sure have raised additional revenue to help cover those costs. We're in a particularly acute situation because.

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Emily Loper: we... we were so self-sufficient pre-pandemic, and... which you would think would be a good thing, but then when we transitioned to hybrid, um, work schedules, plus the combination of other inflationary pressures and rising costs of everything, I mean...

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Emily Loper: Costs continue to rise, also because fuel continues to rise, and, you know, these bus agencies have to... and ferry systems are continuing to purchase fuel, so there's a... there's many factors that go into the rising costs at a time where.

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Emily Loper: They can't completely cover their costs with the fares.

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Madeline Kronenberg: So I have a question. The 14 years, the idea is then that during those 14 years, there will be an opportunity to.

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Madeline Kronenberg: to rethink the funding formula. Is that right? That's really the goal.

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Emily Loper: The goal, yes, is to get the state to invest more sustainably in transit before the 14 years, certainly, but not to... that there will not be... to stabilize the systems and not need to go back to voters to continue to, you know.

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Emily Loper: fund operations. Part of the financial efficiency review requires an analysis of opportunities to generate new revenue, which is important for particularly the commuter rail systems that have such large deficits. They own.

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Emily Loper: you know, the land where their stations are, and there's opportunities for TOD around those, and ways to, um... to try to generate new revenue to support... sustainably support the operations.

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Madeline Kronenberg: All right.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Simply, what is the opportunity that individuals, riders would be able to contribute?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: if they feel that the system isn't working for them.

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Emily Loper: That's a good question.

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Emily Loper: I would say...

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Emily Loper: If it's specific to a certain service, to talk to that, you know, service, they do take all of that sort of customer feedback, and they should respond about issues that, you know, that riders are having.

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Emily Loper: But also, I mentioned that...

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Emily Loper: Mtc. Convene this blue ribbon task force post pandemic, where all of the transit operators were encouraged to work together as

a more seamless system, and we've seen a lot of progress that has come out of that as part of that.

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Emily Loper: they also created a long, wonky name called the Regional Network Management, which is regional, you know, integration of these services, Customer Advisory Group. And this is a group, I actually sit on it.

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Emily Loper: Um...

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Emily Loper: that takes feedback from customers about opportunities to, to, um, and we deliver that, that, those, um, that feedback from riders to the, uh, general managers and to the, the operators themselves. So, I can also share, um, opportunities. We meet monthly at.

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Emily Loper: MTC, and we take public comment, and we, you know, seek feedback from customers about ideas about ways to have the systems work better for riders.

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Kathleen Cha: I had that. Let's go the next step. How would an individual in a sense register their their complaints or their concerns? Is there? I mean, is there a particular line or email? Or is there a card they fill out? You see what I'm saying? Because I hear what you're you're getting there. But.

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Kathleen Cha: A lot of people don't really know how to complain.

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Emily Loper: Yeah, I'll drop the link to this group in here, and then they can just submit letters or public comment, or come to meetings and talk to the, um, the folks that sit on this advisory group.

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Emily Loper: Will that help?

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Kathleen Cha: Sure, I'm just talking about... I'm just thinking about the everyday, you know, writer who has...

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Emily Loper: Oh, yeah, I mean, that varies based on the system.

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Emily Loper: But, I mean, just reaching out to the... even just the communications teams at these... at these agencies will... you should get a response from writers, or, I mean, from... to writers.

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Kathleen Cha: Okay.

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Kathleen Cha: Um, I don't know, have you, have you, Emily, taken a look at all the different questions that we've had in here?

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Kathleen Cha: You might want...

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Emily Loper: Uh, they're coming in quickly, so, um...

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Emily Loper: Is there this question about, is there an ongoing group like the Berry Council that's facilitating for continuous improvement? Yes. The Berry Council and SPUR are working, have been for many years and will continue to work.

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Emily Loper: Uh, together on advocating for those transit improvements and for, for, for, um...

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Emily Loper: and for funding to support those.

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Kathleen Cha: Oh.

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Emily Loper: Does that answer your question, Marianne?

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Kathleen Cha: I thought it was interesting comment.

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Emily Loper: There seems to be a conversation happening in the chat.

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Kathleen Cha: Oh, lots of conversations.

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Emily Loper: Or back and forth, yes.

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Kathleen Cha: It says, I think from Marianne Shovlin, the past

president, that it's great that they reviewed potential consolidations. However, since that has not been effective before this measure. She was observing some folks may vote against this measure.

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Kathleen Cha: to get a better solution in the future. But I think.

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Kathleen Cha: Um, my perception is, and you can clarify whatever, is that this measure was not meant.

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Kathleen Cha: to address the consolidation. It was to address the funding and operational needs of the Transit Transportation Agencies.

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Kathleen Cha: Am I correct?

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Emily Loper: That's right, that's right, and that is... that was the result of this consensus-building process, that...

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Emily Loper: You know, there were multiple, um...

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Emily Loper: attempts at addressing, uh, consolidation through studies, through the legislature, I think that the transit.

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Emily Loper: improvements that is funded by that 5% that comes off the top to fund these improvements to the system, and to deliver on.

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Emily Loper: the Blue Ribbon Task Force findings helps to achieve many of those.

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Emily Loper: Interconnected.

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Emily Loper: You know, um, a more seamless integrated system, and can achieve some efficiencies through that, and certainly a better rider experience without.

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Emily Loper: without necessarily, you know, completely combining the agencies. as I said, I think this is a step in the direction of achieving a much more integrated system.

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Emily Loper: But it is primarily designed to address this immediate operating crisis.

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Kathleen Cha: There was just the one, um...

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Kathleen Cha: What about, uh...

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Kathleen Cha: Let's see.

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Kathleen Cha: OK, I'm just looking at again to remind everyone, one of them is are all these slides available to attendees? Yes, we will make sure they are on our website as well as the recording.

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Kathleen Cha: recording of this whole, um...

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Kathleen Cha: um, of our webinar. But both ways, we will... and we will, uh, respond to everyone, uh, showing the links to that, as well as the PDF of the, uh, PowerPoint, just to remind you all.

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Kathleen Cha: And as Louise opened up, LWVBA.org.

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Kathleen Cha: It's where you can go, and it'll be very well, and we'll be sending out notices to all of our many people about this to remind them that they have this, and what we will do is I noticed, for example.

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Kathleen Cha: Emily has put in the chat the advisory... customer advisory group link, and we'll make sure people have that, so they can go and take a look at that particular process.

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Kathleen Cha: Um, we have a lot of different questions about union and things like that, but I think that's...

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Kathleen Cha: That's something else, unless there's something you...

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Emily Loper: Well, I will say to that point that the efficiency review does look at those labor contracts and work rules and identifies

opportunities to reduce costs.

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Kathleen Cha: Okay.

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Emily Loper: That is why this is...

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Emily Loper: So, um...

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Emily Loper: robust in its accountability framework.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Emily, can you speak to how does the money that is and this whole process for the five counties?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: integrate with the total 9 counties of the Bay area like the Marin, Solano, Sonoma have transit issues, too. Is there a coordination.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: is with that.

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Emily Loper: All of the regional network management, which is...

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Emily Loper: Again, this, um, this...

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Emily Loper: coordination across all of the 27 agencies. That was, uh, that came out of the pandemic as ways to sort of restructure the transit system to best meet the needs of riders.

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Emily Loper: That includes all of the transit systems across the region. So many, so certainly.

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Emily Loper: The 5% that goes to these transit improvements will also benefit, you know, deploying wayfinding and, you know, fair...

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Emily Loper: Fair payment improvements and... and things like that will, um...

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Emily Loper: Are advancing the benefits across the region as a whole.

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Kathleen Cha: Okay.

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Emily Loper: It's just that the operating support and, you know, the transit, the capital improvements are within the districts of the five counties.

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Emily Loper: Intentionally, right? That's how the measure got to be.

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Emily Loper: these five transit-rich counties. These were the five counties that were more likely to support a tax to fund transit, because they benefit and have many transit services in them.

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Madeline Kronenberg: There's a question about, what does a typical board member make for sitting on one of the 27 Transit Boards? Do you know?

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Emily Loper: No.

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Madeline Kronenberg: Alright, that's a...

01:08:48.000 --> 01:08:54.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Who would negotiate with the unions?

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Madeline Kronenberg: That's a research.

01:08:54.000 --> 01:09:02.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: for salaries and improvements. Is that MTC? Is that ABAG?

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Emily Loper: No, those are the general managers of each of the agencies make their own labor.

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Emily Loper: Contracts.

01:09:14.000 --> 01:09:29.000

Kathleen Cha: I think I have, I think we have generally addressed we have a lot of interesting comments. Please, everyone, feel free to read the chat, see what some of the comments are, but I think we have

answered them.

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Kathleen Cha: And to summarize.

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Kathleen Cha: Why the League supports the measure.

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Kathleen Cha: Regional cooperation, really an attempt to bring them all the groups together. And as Emily has alluded to in a variety of different ways to be able to address the transportation issues.

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Kathleen Cha: Equitable and more equitable access to transportation is an underlying, um, kind of, uh, part of this measure. Environmental sustainability. In other words, uh, by the very fact that we have a good transportation system.

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Kathleen Cha: That we are, it will really do. It will address our greenhouse gas emissions issue because we're not putting the cars on the road. Public accountability. And I think that's the one that is a major is.

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Kathleen Cha: when we say public accountability, it is not only the agencies, but also our elected officials. And then there are, as we were bringing up, customer advisory councils. There are ways to be able to keep.

01:10:43.000 --> 01:10:59.000

Kathleen Cha: our systems accountable, not only and and I think especially in this is the funding and the fact that they have said these are the things that will be taken care of. And the public accountability is the independent oversight and the the various kinds of oversight.

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Kathleen Cha: We'll kind of we'll be reviewing and overseeing to make sure those particular promises and kinds of services are in a sense supported fiscally as well as operationally.

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Kathleen Cha: Louise, do you have any other comments at this point?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: No, I don't think so.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: I think that we have covered it pretty well, and.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: The thing that to me keeps, I keep coming back to is.

01:11:34.000 --> 01:11:38.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: how people will be impacted by this.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: without having this measure pass.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And that is really, I think, the most important.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Consideration.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: is.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Is the system that we have going to work for everyone?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And how do we make...

01:12:01.000 --> 01:12:09.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: it better for everyone and especially for the people that are.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: Transit dependent on our systems.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: And I am assuming and hoping that we are constantly looking for better ways to improve the system. And I'm wondering, Emily.

01:12:30.000 --> 01:12:43.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Is there a way that the community can better know what kind of improvements and consolidations have been made in order to be.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: more accessible, and to understand what is going on.

01:12:49.000 --> 01:12:57.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: why perhaps there aren't more small buses as opposed to bigger buses. I know how.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: How can we improve?

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: the information that goes to the public so that their.

01:13:07.000 --> 01:13:12.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Trust in the system is a problem.

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Louise Rothman-Riemer: stronger, and they can feel that what they are supporting really will work for them.

01:13:25.000 --> 01:13:44.000

Emily Loper: So how do we, the question is how do we engage the community more and how these public agencies are making changes? Well, I mean, all of these agency board meetings and MTC and all their many subcommittees are all open to the public and they seek public.

01:13:32.000 --> 01:13:33.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Yes.

01:13:34.000 --> 01:13:36.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Thank you.

01:13:44.000 --> 01:13:53.000

Emily Loper: comment. And and you know, by either submitting a letter or comment online or or calling into meetings.

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Emily Loper: That is a great way to figure out what's happening in the region and how folks are making decisions about, you know, where to enhance services or the budget challenges they're facing or, you know.

01:14:06.000 --> 01:14:23.000

Emily Loper: Things like that. If there are opportunities for this community who is there, if you're supportive of the measure, I have many opportunities for you to get involved and also share, you know, information about this to your communities.

01:14:23.000 --> 01:14:24.000

Emily Loper: as well.

01:14:25.000 --> 01:14:27.000

Kathleen Cha: Okay.

01:14:25.000 --> 01:14:31.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Well, thank you, Emily. I think this has been very informative.

01:14:31.000 --> 01:14:43.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: And as we have said, we are going to share this session and put it on our website. And thank you really for being here.

01:14:43.000 --> 01:14:51.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: taking all this time and helping all of us better understand how this works.

01:14:51.000 --> 01:14:53.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: So, um...

01:14:52.000 --> 01:14:54.000

Emily Loper: Thank you for having me.

01:14:53.000 --> 01:14:55.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: You're welcome.

01:14:55.000 --> 01:14:58.000

Emily Loper: And thank you for your support.

01:14:58.000 --> 01:15:12.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: You're welcome, and yes, that's true. We have... the League of Women Voters has supported, uh, by signing the ballot measure and the rebuttal, and we are...

01:15:00.000 --> 01:15:02.000

Kathleen Cha: Sure.

01:15:12.000 --> 01:15:23.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: really concerned that all people are able to benefit from our mass transit system. So thank you.

01:15:23.000 --> 01:15:25.000

Kathleen Cha: Thank you.

01:15:27.000 --> 01:15:32.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: Madeline, Kathleen, anything from you?

01:15:31.000 --> 01:15:46.000

Madeline Kronenberg: I just want to thank everybody who came. I'm very impressed that there are still 45 people here with us, and I hope that you share out the information that we received today with all of your networks. It's really important.

01:15:46.000 --> 01:15:47.000

Kathleen Cha: Thank you.

01:15:50.000 --> 01:15:52.000

Louise Rothman-Riemer: And good night.