

Linda VanBuskirk

From: California Association of Recreation and Park Districts <carpd@specialdistrict.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 9:58 AM
To: Linda VanBuskirk
Subject: CARPD: Call to Action - Support AB 817



March 29, 2023

A CALL TO ACTION

We need your support! This year, CARPD is proud to be a co-sponsor of [AB 817](#) (Pacheco) with the League of California Cities (CalCities), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representative of California (RCRC), and the California Association of Counties (CSAC).

AB 817 will serve to remove barriers to entry for appointed and elected offices by allowing non-decision-making legislative bodies (i.e. Board Committees) to participate in two-way remote teleconferencing without posting at their location.

For more on AB 817, check out our [Coalition Letter](#), Assembly Member Pacheco's [Fact Sheet](#), and review the current draft language [HERE](#)

The bill has been referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee and is awaiting a hearing date. **CARPD strongly encourages our District Members to submit letters in support of the bill as soon as possible!** Below is a template letter we've prepared for you.

[Download AB 817 Support Letter Template](#)

SEE ATTACHED PROPOSED LETTER FROM LARPD

Please update the letter with your District's information and send it to my attention at mduarte@capri-jpa.org as soon as possible.

ABOUT THE BILL - AB 817 (PACHECO) LOCAL GOVERNMENT: OPEN MEETINGS

Local governments across the state have faced an ongoing challenge to recruit and retain members of the public on advisory bodies, boards, and commissions. Challenges associated with recruitment have been attributed to participation time commitments; time and location of meetings; physical limitation, conflicts with childcare, and work obligations. The COVID-19 global pandemic drove both hyper-awareness and concerns about the spread of infectious diseases, as well as removed barriers to local civic participation by allowing this same remote participation. This enabled individuals who could not otherwise accommodate the time, distance, or mandatory physical participation requirements to engage locally, providing access to leadership opportunities and providing communities with greater diversified input on critical community proposals.

Diversification in civic participation at all levels requires careful consideration of different protected characteristics as well as socio-economic status. The in-person requirement to participate in local governance bodies presents a disproportionate challenge for those with physical or economic limitations, including seniors, persons with disability, single parents and/or caretakers, economically marginalized groups, and those who live in rural areas and face prohibitive driving distances. Participation in local advisory bodies and appointed boards and commissions often serves as a pipeline to local elected office and opportunities for state and federal leadership positions.

CARPD MEMBERS UNITE

Join me and your colleagues in making sure our legislators see the importance of removing open meeting barriers so that equity in opportunity to serve locally and representative diversity in leadership can be achieved. Thank you in advance for your support.

-Matthew Duarte, CARPD Executive Director



Livermore Area
Recreation and Park District
An independent special district

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General Manager
Mathew L. Fuzie

April 13, 2023

The Honorable Blanca Pacheco
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6240
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 817 (PACHECO) LOCAL GOVERNMENT: OPEN MEETINGS – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly member Pacheco:

On behalf of the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District, we write to express our strong support for AB 817, which would remove barriers to entry for appointed and elected office by allowing non-decision-making legislative bodies that do not have the ability to take final action to participate in two-way virtual teleconferencing without posting location.

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District continues to face challenges regarding the effort to recruit and retain members of the public on advisory bodies and commissions. Challenges associated with recruitment have been attributed to participation time commitments; time and location of meetings; physical limitation, conflicts with childcare, and work obligations. The COVID-19 global pandemic drove both hyper-awareness and concerns about the spread of infectious diseases, as well as removed barriers to local civic participation by allowing this same remote participation. This enabled individuals who could not otherwise accommodate the time, distance, or mandatory physical participation requirements to engage locally, providing access to leadership opportunities and providing communities with greater diversified input on critical community proposals.

Existing law (Stats. 1991, Ch. 669) requires local bodies to publish and publicly notice opportunities that exist to participate in and serve on local regulatory and advisory boards, commissions, and committees under the Local Appointments List, known as Maddy's Act. However, merely informing the public of the opportunity to engage is not enough: addressing barriers to entry to achieve diverse representation in leadership furthers the Legislature's declared goals of equal access and equal opportunity.

Diversification in civic participation at all levels requires careful consideration of different protected characteristics as well as socio-economic status. The in-person requirement to participate in local governance bodies presents a disproportionate challenge for those with physical or economic limitations, including seniors, persons with disability, single parents and/or caretakers, economically marginalized groups,

Board of Directors

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ITEM 4.2

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District

Draft Letter re: AB 817 (Pacheco) Local Government: Open Meetings - Support

April 13, 2023

and those who live in rural areas and face prohibitive driving distances. Participation in local advisory bodies and appointed boards and commissions often serves as a pipeline to local elected office and opportunities for state and federal leadership positions.

AB 817 would help address these issues by providing a narrow exemption under the Ralph M. Brown Act for non-decision-making legislative bodies that do not take final action on any legislation, regulations, contracts, licenses, permits, or other entitlements, so that equity in opportunity to serve locally and representative diversity in leadership can be achieved.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 817 and thank you for your leadership on this most important issue.

Sincerely,

James Boswell, Chair
Board of Directors
Livermore Area Recreation and Park District

cc: Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Senator Steven M. Glazer
California Special Districts Association
[via advocacy@cda.net]