

- A part of the relinquished portion of the highway shall be used for transportation purposes to ensure the continuity of traffic flow
- The relinquishment is consistent with federal law and regulations
- The city or county determines that the construction of the infrastructural barrier had a significant impact on a disadvantaged community.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose.* The author is concerned about the detrimental impacts of the highway system and that the state should provide a relinquishment solution to repair the damaged communities.
- 2) *Freeway Impacts.* There's been increasing recognition that freeways can be harmful to the adjacent neighborhoods and that the construction of freeways has broken apart communities. This is one of several reasons that it is rare to build new highways. Moreover, there are efforts underway to undo some of the damage. In 2021 the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act established a \$1 billion grant program known as the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Grant Program to restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure that creates barriers in communities. A similar program has been proposed by the Newsom Administration, known as the Highways to Boulevards program.
- 3) *Some Strings Attached.* Property that was acquired using federal funds must continue to be used for that purpose even if relinquished to a city or county. This bill contemplates using relinquished property for affordable housing, green space and transit-oriented development. Some of these purposes may conflict with the restrictions on the use of the federal funds. If so, the federal government will seek reimbursement which would be a surprise bill for the city or county. ***The author may wish to clarify that any relinquishment pursuant to this bill does not require reimbursement to the federal government.*** Similarly, the California Constitution limits the use of gas taxes, and some of the purposes authorized with this bill may conflict with those limitations. ***The author may wish to clarify that any relinquishment pursuant to this bill does not conflict with the Constitution.***
- 4) *Clarifying Amendments.* The bill language isn't clear that the relinquishment process established in this bill is a new process that is in addition to the existing relinquishment process. The definition of "infrastructural barrier" is unclear. The committee understands that the author intends this to mean state highways that displace residences or create obstacles to connectivity. ***The author may wish to clarify these points.***

5) *Opposition.* The City of Pasadena has been concerned that the bill impacts its current relinquishment process. That is not the intent of the author. ***The author may wish to clarify that the relinquishment process established in this bill does not impact a relinquishment process that has commenced prior to January 1, 2023.*** With this amendment the committee understands that the City of Pasadena will remove its opposition.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

AB 950 (Ward, 2021) — Authorizes Caltrans to sell excess real property to the city or county, where the real property is located, for development of affordable housing. *This bill is a 2 year bill in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

SB 7 (Portantino, Chapter 835, Statutes, 2019) — This bill restricted the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) from considering a freeway or tunnel as a feasible alternative for State Route (SR) 710 between Interstate (I-) 10 and I-210, and makes other changes related to the SR 710 corridor.

AB 29 (Holden, Chapter 791, Statutes, 2019) — This bill restricts the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) from considering a freeway or tunnel as a feasible alternative for State Route (SR) 710 between Interstate (I-) 10 and I-210, and redefines, as of January 1, 2024, which portions of SR 710 are included in the state freeway and expressway system to exclude the section of SR 710 generally between I-10 and I-210.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

Unknown

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Friday, June 22, 2022.)

SUPPORT:

Activesgv, a Project of Community Partners
California Apartment Association
Union Station Homeless Services

OPPOSITION:

California Coalition for Rural Housing
California Council for Affordable Housing
California Housing Consortium
California Housing Partnership
City of Pasadena
Housing California
Non Profit Housing Association of Northern California
Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing

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