

Date of Hearing: May 12, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

AB 67 (Petrie-Norris) – As Amended April 5, 2021

Policy Committee: Natural Resources

Vote: 11 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires every state agency to take into account the current and future impacts of sea level rise, based on projections provided by the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), when planning, building, investing (or approving the allocation of state funds), operating or maintaining infrastructure in the coastal zone, jurisdiction of the Bay Area Conservation Development Commission (BCDC) or anywhere otherwise vulnerable to flooding from sea level rise or storm surges.

This bill also requires the OPC, in consultation with the Office of Planning and Research, to establish a multi-agency working group and develop a standard methodology for quantifying the economic impacts of sea level rise and publish a class-specific infrastructure resilience plan to be integrated into the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program at the OPC.

Lastly, this bill authorizes the State Controller to audit state agencies and consult with the working group to ensure compliance with the provisions of the bill.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Significant costs of an unknown amount, likely in the tens of millions of dollars or more annually and ongoing, for all state agencies with infrastructure or planning infrastructure in areas that may experience sea level rise or storm surges, to the extent they are not fulfilling the requirements of this bill already. The OPC's Sea-Level Rise Guidance 2018 Update document lists 138 sea-level rise scenarios over 13 timeframes. Many projects are estimated to be subject to at least 100 of these scenarios which would lead to significant modeling costs. This provision also requires state agencies to evaluate existing infrastructure, further increasing costs.
- 2) Absorbable costs for the OPC to develop a standard methodology for an economic analysis. OPC estimates the economic analysis will add an additional \$50,000 to \$100,000 to the costs of each project.
- 3) OPR costs of about \$160,000 to help support the multi-agency task force, participate in developing the standard methodology for the economic analysis and integrating it into the ICARP.
- 4) SCO costs are likely absorbable.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

It is in our best interest as a state to address sea level rise in a systemic way. Local governments are struggling to develop and implement strategies to prepare for sea level rise, and they need tools to help make these decisions. To support local sea level rise efforts, the state must provide additional information, assistance and support. Delaying sea level rise preparations and continuing to build in sea-level flood zones will result in lost opportunities and higher costs. California must act now.

2) **Sea Level Rise.** According to the Fourth Climate Change Assessment, California is one of the most “climate-challenged” regions of North America and must actively plan and implement strategies to prepare for and adapt to extreme events and shifts in previously “normal” averages.

In December 2019, The Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) released a report entitled “Preparing for Rising Seas: How the State Can Help Support Local Coastal Adaptation Efforts” which outlined the impacts and issues facing state, regional and local government related to sea level rise. The report stated that “coastal adaptation activities can help lessen sea level rise impacts” and made several policy recommendations to plan and reduce sea level rise impacts.

Sea level rise also threatens the state’s infrastructure, such as water and transportation infrastructure, located within and near the coastal zone and in the BCDC’s jurisdiction.

The OPC’s State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance and the Coastal Commission’s Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance recommend evaluating the expected impacts to infrastructure caused by approximately 10 feet of sea level rise over the next 80 years, using what is known as the “H++ scenario,” along with other sea level rise scenarios. In addition, in May 2020, the Coastal Commission adopted “Making California’s Coast Resilient to Sea Level Rise: Principles for Aligned State Action” which recommends addressing a minimum of 3.5 feet of sea level rise in the next 30 years.

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