

2025 State Legislation

Recommendation for Support Position – March 5, 2025 Legislative Committee

PARK DISTRICT SPONSORED LEGISLATION

SB 392 (Grayson D-Orinda)

East Bay Hills Conservation Program

Key advocacy goal:
Ecosystem Stewardship

- Would authorize the Park District to establish and administer approximately 30,000 acres of environmentally significant lands in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties through the East Bay Hills Conservation Program to address resource and recreational goals of the East Bay Hills.
- Attached sample map of the proposed conservation area.
- Authorization to collaborate with state, regional, and local partners to help achieve specified goals of the program. The bill would require a proponent or party to a certain proposed development project to convert natural lands within the East Bay Hills to provide notice to the Park District of the proposed project and would authorize the Park District to provide analysis of the environmental values and potential impacts of the proposed project.
- The bill would require the East Bay Hills to be acknowledged as an area of statewide significance in local planning documents developed or updated on or after January 1, 2026, affecting land use within the East Bay Hills.
- SB 392 would add Article 4 to Chapter 3 of Division 5 of the Public Resources Code relating to regional park districts.



SB 55 (Umberg D-Santa Ana) Gold Star Family State Parks Pass

Key advocacy goal:
equitable park access

- Require the California Department of Parks and Recreation to provide a free day use pass to eligible Gold Star Family members.
- A gold star lapel button is typically awarded to immediate family members of service members who have died while serving in the U.S. military during specified periods of war or military operations.
- When an eligible Gold Star Family member presents appropriate proof of their status to the Department, they will be issued a pass that allows them free entry to any state park operated by the state.
- Impacts on Del Valle Regional Park, McLaughlin Eastshore State Park and Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach.
- Would add a section to the Public Resources Code relating to state parks.

**SB 88 (Caballero D-Merced)
Quantifying Carbon Emissions for
Wildfire Resilience**

**Key advocacy goal:
Wildfire Resilience**

- Require the State Air Resources Board to finalize a standardized system for quantifying carbon emissions from fuel reduction activities by 2027 and develop a method for calculating avoided carbon emissions from prescribed fires by 2028.
- Would mandate the creation of a carbon credit protocol for biochar and other carbon-removal products resulting from wildfire prevention efforts.
- State-funded forest health projects would be required to include a scientifically-based approach to biomass disposal. Highlight the potential of biomass in producing low-carbon fuels like hydrogen in future reports.
- SB 88 would add a section to the Health and Safety Code relating to air resources. The Park District's carbonizer program has the potential to serve as a key example of what's possible in support of this legislation's goals.

SB 239 (Arreguín D-Berkeley)
Advisory Committee Teleconferencing

Advocacy principle alignment:
equitable service delivery

- Would apply to advisory legislative bodies (such as the Park Advisory Committee) and allow these bodies to use teleconferencing with specific requirements, such as: conducting meetings which protect public and participant rights, ensuring members participate through audio and visual technology, providing public access methods like two-way audiovisual platforms or telephonic services, designating a primary physical meeting location, posting agendas, and allowing real-time public comment.
- Members must visibly appear on camera during open meetings, with exceptions for technological challenges, and must disclose if other individuals are present at their remote location.
- The legislative body which establishes the subsidiary body must approve teleconferencing by a two-thirds vote, as well as make findings about how teleconferencing would enhance public access and promote member diversity.
- Any final recommendations must be presented at a regular meeting of the establishing legislative body, ensuring transparency and accountability in proceedings.

**SB 287 (Arreguín D-Berkeley)
California Trails Conservancy**

Key advocacy goal:
Equitable Access

- Would establish the California Trails Conservancy Program within the California Natural Resources Agency.
- Establish specific goals and objectives to promote, enhance and expand environmentally sound greenways and trail networks in California.
- This program would align with and compliment the Park District's trail program and goals.

AB 259 (Rubio D-Baldwin Park) Local Agency Teleconferencing

Advocacy principle alignment:
equitable service delivery

- Eliminate the sunset associated with Assembly Bill 2449 (Rubio, 2022), thereby allowing for the indefinite use of its provisions. Though the terms of AB 2449 have been amended since their passage, the sunset date associated with its terms has not been changed.
- The alternative Brown Act meeting procedures established by the bill are set to expire at the end of 2025. AB 2449 provided local agencies the option to invoke alternative Brown Act meeting procedures in the event of a board member's absence in connection with a "just cause" or "emergency circumstance."
- AB 259 is sponsored by the California Special Districts Association. The Park District has previously supported the original legislation (Resolution NO.: 2022-5-116).

**AB 269 (Bennett D-Ventura)
Dam Safety and Climate Resilience
Local Assistance Program**

**Key advocacy goal:
Ecosystem Stewardship**

- Would include removal of dams as an eligible type of project that can receive state funding in service before 2023. Previously, the program supported various dam-related improvements such as repairs, seismic retrofits, spillway repairs, and sediment removal, but this bill would explicitly include facility removal as an eligible project type.
- Grant recipients must provide at least a 50% cost share, though the Department can waive or reduce this requirement if the dam poses a significant public safety risk and the full cost share would cause extreme financial hardship. The bill maintains the program's core priorities of protecting public safety, restoring water storage, reducing flood risks, enhancing water supply reliability, and protecting habitat and water quality, while continuing to prohibit dam height increases or expanded water impoundment.
- AB 269 would amend Section 6700 of the Water Code relating to dams.

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