

**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	January 10, 2024
TITLE	Recommended Legislation to Support
DIVISION	General Manager's Office
FROM	Erich Pfuehler, Chief of Government and Legislative Affairs Dr. Ana M. Alvarez, Deputy General Manager
APPROVED	Sabrina B. Landreth, General Manager

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends the Board Legislative Committee approves extending support of the following legislation, H.Res. 881 and S. 3416.

BACKGROUND

As part of the 2023-2024 Legislative Session, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) Board of Directors will take formal positions on bills as they are introduced and considered by their respective Legislatures. To guide bill analysis, the Park District's Board of Directors established seven key advocacy goals through Resolution NO.: 2023 – 01 – 015. These advocacy goals strive to align funding and policy advocacy with identified project and program needs and priorities. Guided by the Park District mission, elected Board of Directors and General Manager, Government and Legislative Affairs staff work to align advocacy goals, overarching principles include equitable service delivery, advancing climate resiliency adaptation and mitigation, guiding work with an environmental ethic, supporting inclusive interpretation and educational opportunities, increasing conservation through land acquisition, and ensuring the fiscal health of the Park District. The specific goals are as follows:

- Climate - Friendly Transportation: To expand accessible active and public transportation to and within East Bay parks and trails.
- Community Health: To ensure equitable access to parks so all East Bay communities can enjoy the physical and psychological benefits of nature.
- Ecosystem Stewardship: To support ecosystem health through restoration, acquisition and habitat enhancement, and improved efficiencies in regulatory approvals.
- Green Jobs: To guide the development of career pathways for all in the parks, recreation, outdoor and environmental fields.
- Sea Level Rise Preparedness: To address sea level rise with nature-based infrastructure and initiate mitigation strategies regarding climate change.
- Welcoming Visitor Use Facilities: To be sure all visitors are welcomed to the East Bay parks and trails by providing facilities which are safe, accessible, inclusive and sustainable.
- Wildfire Resilience: To minimize the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the East Bay by using proactive vegetation management which is ecologically sound.

ANALYSIS

The legislation proposed for support by the Park District, as listed below, has been identified based on its alignment with at least one of the seven advocacy goals of the Park District and support for overarching principles of advocacy approved by Resolution NO.: 2023 – 01 – 015. To engage on the identified bills, the proposed resolution will direct staff on specific actions related to Park District supported legislation, including writing letters of support, participating in bill hearings in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., and engaging with the author/sponsor and relevant elected official's offices directly.

Of the two legislative acts recommended for support, both address climate resiliency. This includes acknowledging climate change has caused local species loss, increases in disease and ecosystem restructuring. As well as, issuing climate bonds annually for climate resiliency work. All of these components align with the Park District's advocacy goals including ecosystem stewardship and others.

H.Res. 881 (Byer D-VA) Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the passage of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 aligns with the advocacy goal of ecosystem stewardship. The non-binding resolution is a commemorative piece of legislation recognizing the importance of the Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, the legislation recognizes, as of October 2023, a total of 2,363 species of animals and plants were listed as either endangered or threatened. This increased awareness allows the Park District to continue its conservation and stewardship work.

S. 3416 (Durbin D-IL) Climate Change Resiliency Fund for America aligns with multiple advocacy goals. The legislation would authorize the U.S. Department of Treasury to issue from \$200 million to \$1 billion in state and local tax-exempt "climate bonds" annually. The funding would establish grant programs to invest in national climate work. The Park District would likely be eligible to participate in such programs.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Federal Legislation to Support