LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA
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Measure RR
San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara Counties

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain): Sales Tax Measure

The Question: (requires 2/3 majority of all voters in the three counties to pass). Shall the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board's proposal to levy a 30-year one-eighth cent sales tax to preserve Caltrain service, providing approximately $100 million annually for Caltrain, be adopted?

The Situation: The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain) is an independent agency, which is responsible for operations, capital projects and planning for three-county train services on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Caltrain's three funding partners are the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, the San Mateo County Transit District, and the City and County of San Francisco. A formula based on ridership determines the yearly contribution from each entity, which has totaled approximately $30 million.

Caltrain is the only passenger rail service in the country that relies on voluntary annual contributions from its three funding partners, in order to cover its yearly operations costs.

The Proposal: Measure RR will provide reliable funding to cover the shortfall from rider fares, to preserve Caltrain service and support regional economic recovery, prevent traffic congestion, make Caltrain more affordable and accessible, reduce air pollution with cleaner and quieter electric trains, make travel time faster, and increase Caltrain frequency and capacity between Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco counties, with oversight and audits.

Caltrain has developed a Caltrain Modernization (CalMod) Program which outlines various stages of upgrades and modernization that would need to occur in order to maximize the ridership and benefits to the region. These improvements include the electrification of the corridor, the addition of high-performance electric trains, installation of an advanced signal system, and station upgrades to accommodate increased service and more riders. Funding has been secured to complete the first phase of the CalMod program, which includes corridor electrification and conversion of 75 percent of Caltrain's fleet to electric trains.

Additional funding is needed to fully convert Caltrain's fleet, operate longer trains, lengthen station platforms and upgrade stations to include "level boarding", which decreases dwell time and facilitates the operation of more service.

Fiscal Effects: A 30-year 1/8 cent sales tax across the three Caltrain counties will generate approximately $100 million per year. The revenue collected will cover the annual $30 million contributions from the three counties for operations funding and will provide roughly $60-70 million per year to fund the aging system's ongoing maintenance needs and to build new infrastructure that will greatly increase the capacity and efficiency of Caltrain services.

Measure RR

Arguments in Support & Opposition

Supporters say:

- Measure RR funding will save Caltrain from shutdown and preserve Caltrain service for thousands of essential workers such as nurses, teachers and first responders.
- It will fund system improvements, providing faster and more frequent trains, and cleaner, quieter trains to reduce noise and air pollution.
- It will reduce travel times and provide better all-day, all-week service and improve Caltrain connections with BART and SamTrans, preventing traffic congestion and removing cars from highways.
- Measure RR will have required financial accountability including oversight and audits.

For More Information: ***RescueCaltrain.org***

Opponents say:

- Caltrain ridership may not recover following the loss during Covid-19**.** Riders, who are mostly higher income, can continue to work remotely and some riders may be concerned about risks of using public transportation in the future.
- Low- and middle-income earners and the unemployed cannot afford adding yet another regressive sales tax at this time, yet alone one that will last for thirty years.
- Caltrain has wasteful and excessive spending on high pension costs and excessive salaries.
- The existing transportation sales taxes can fund Caltrain at its current service level. The proposed Caltrain sales tax would raise $100 million/year, netting an additional $70 million/year for Caltrain, and an additional $30 million for the other transit agencies.

For More Information: ***www.SVTaxpayers.org***