



April 23, 2022

Senator Josh Becker
1021 O Street, Suite 7250
Sacramento, CA 94293

Re: SB 917 (Becker) – Seamless Transit Transformation Act – Support

Dear Senator Becker,

Friends of Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) is pleased to support SB 917, your bill to bring transit agencies in the Bay Area together to work more closely to improve coordination and integration across a spectrum of rider-focused areas.

The challenges of navigating between 27 different transit operators in the Bay Area has acted as a barrier for residents and visitors, while disproportionately burdening low-income and vulnerable populations. The system requires riders to use multiple systems operated independently with little coordination, to pay multiple separate fares, experience unpredictable transfers, and to navigate different wayfinding systems.

Historically, only about 4% of all trips taken in the Bay Area involve transit, and transit has never been used by more than 12% of the population for commute trips since 1970. By contrast, cars comprise over 75% of commute trips. We must act quickly to bring riders back to transit and reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, which have remained stubbornly high as congestion and commutes have grown.

The Bay Area has already seen the tangible benefits of initial agency coordination over the past two years as Caltrain has aligned schedules with BART at Millbrae station and other operators have made incremental steps toward further coordination. Important efforts are underway at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and among the transit agencies to examine the potential creation of a regional network management framework – but in the meantime, action is needed to ensure progress does not stall on other important efforts, including the recently concluded work of the MTC Fare Integration Task Force and the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force.

SB 917 will help transform the Bay Area’s transit system into a world-class, seamless experience for the public, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving access to jobs and housing for residents by requiring transit agencies to work together to improve coordination and integration in multiple service areas. We are pleased to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Jack Swearingen

Jack Swearingen, Chair Friends
of SMART

Web friendsofsmart.com

Email friendsofsmart@sbcglobal.net