

WEEKLY FLASH

Governor & Perata Appointments Bring WETA to Life

Yesterday, [the Bay Area Council applauded](#) Governor Schwarzenegger and Senator Perata for making their four appointments to the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), bringing the new agency to life. The Governor appointed Charlene Haught Johnson as chair, Anthony Intintoli Jr. as vice chair and Gerald Bellows as a member and Senator Perata selected Alameda Mayor Beverly Johnson. The four appointed board members establish a quorum for WETA, allowing the authority to exercise all of the powers it has been granted. Speaker Nunez will make the remaining fifth appointment.

The Council immediately urged the board to move as quickly as possible to get new boats in the water and new terminals on the shore. They need to act with sincere urgency, as if people's lives depend on their actions, because they do. A study released just this week by the U.S. Geological Survey said the Hayward fault has 140 years of seismic tension ready to release. They predict that 5 million, yes million, people and \$165 billion in property is at risk. For comparison, 7 million people live in the Bay Area and our regional economy produces \$210 billion in goods and services each year. The report stressed that the entire region will be hit and a regional response mechanism, just like WETA, is desperately needed.

We have also urged WETA to look closely at building the new boats here in the Bay Area, taking advantage of many existing and mothballed facilities available in the region to create a new shipbuilding industry. WETA is the result of Bay Area Council-sponsored Senate Bill 976 (Torlakson, D-Antioch). WETA's mission is to plan and build one of the most comprehensive water transit services in the world, connecting all parts of the Bay Area, which can also respond to an earthquake or other disaster. SB 976 identified WETA as the agency to receive \$250 million from the infrastructure bonds passed in November, 2006, to start building the system. In addition, WETA qualifies for numerous possible federal funding categories, and has greater flexibility to leverage existing Bay Area regional funding sources. SB 976 also consolidated all existing state-funded ferry service in the Bay Area under the authority and control of WETA, including the Alameda/Oakland Ferry, the Vallejo Baylink Ferry and the Harbor Bay Ferry. Our vision for WETA is ambitious. The Bay Area Council drove the creation of BART 50 years ago to unite our region on the land, now WETA can unite our region on the water. With a board quorum established, we can get to work.



Article of the Week

This [SF Chronicle story](#) covers the potential impact of the next big quake.

Quote of the Week

“He’d better get a taster if I get him any food [at the next family gathering]” – Bobby Shriver, the Governor’s brother-in-law, [after he and Clint Eastwood were replaced](#) on the States Parks Commission, against their will.

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