

WEEKLY FLASH



Governor Signs SB 976!

On Monday – holding a press conference with our allies Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Senate President Don Perata, Senator Tom Torlakson, Mayor Ron Dellums, Mayor Gavin Newsom and Mayor Beverly Johnson of Alameda – the Bay Area Council celebrated the Governor’s signature of Bay Area Council-sponsored Senate Bill 976 (Torlakson, D-Antioch). SB 976 creates the Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA). WETA’s mission is to plan and build an emergency response and disaster recovery water transportation system for the region, as well as relieve day-to-day traffic congestion. SB 976 identifies WETA as the agency to receive \$250 million from the infrastructure bonds passed last November to start building the system, and it has access to a host of other public transit and homeland security funding pots as well. As Council President Jim Wunderman said, “Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath spurred us to act. When our big disaster comes, the only way to move people, emergency supplies and goods around the region will be on the water. Now we will be able to do so.” Jim thanked Ron Cowan for his unwavering leadership driving SB 976, and acknowledged the work of [Sunne Wright McPeak](#), for creating WETA’s precursor, the Water Transit Authority. He also praised the Water Transit Authority CEO, Steve Castleberry, and the President of the Board, Charlene Haught Johnson.



Kaiser CEO Signs Books With Members

George Halvorson, Chairman & CEO of Kaiser Permanente, and Council Executive Committee member, signed and discussed his new book, [Health Care Reform Now! A Prescription for Change](#), with about 100 Council members and partners this week. Also, as labor groups declared war on the Governor’s health reform efforts, the Council put out [this statement](#).



Articles of the Week

Sample of the SB 976 coverage: [SF Chronicle](#), [SJ Mercury News](#), [AP](#), [Contra Costa Times](#), [Oakland Tribune](#), [KCBS-AM](#), [KTVU \(1\) \(2\) \(3\) \(4\)](#), [KPIX](#), [KGO-TV](#) and [Bay City News](#).

Quote of the Week

“California’s water crisis is about to hit Southland consumers in the wallet ... and mandatory rationing is right around the corner.” – KTLA anchor [in a recent story](#).

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