

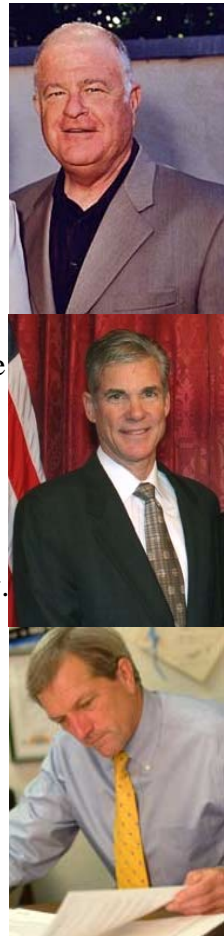
# WEEKLY FLASH

## Bay Area Council Gets It Done!! Creates *and Funds* New Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority

This Wednesday, September 12, was a day of great satisfaction in the halls of the Bay Area Council. Two years of grinding efforts by our members and staff to prepare our region for the Big One bore fruit when the legislature created the Bay Area's first new transportation authority of the 21st Century, the Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA).

WETA is the result of Bay Area Council-sponsored [Senate Bill 976](#) (Torlakson, D-Antioch) to consolidate and operate Bay Area ferry service, and to plan and build an emergency water transportation system for the region in the event of an earthquake or other disaster. SB 976 locks in \$250 million from the infrastructure bonds to start building the system. SB 976 consolidates all current public water transit operators and funding streams in the region – including the Alameda/Oakland Ferry, the Vallejo Baylink Ferry and the Harbor Bay Ferry – under the authority and control of WETA, except those of Golden Gate Transit Ferries. It also grants WETA several other operating funding streams. In short, the system is ready to start moving quickly.

The need for WETA became apparent to Senator Perata and the Bay Area Council following the Hurricane Katrina disaster, which highlighted what can happen to a region when it is not prepared. In February of 2006, Senator Perata formally requested the Bay Area Council propose and analyze a system that could help our region respond. Next, we worked the legislative process to create the new system. Nineteen months later, our members can be proud to know their organization got it done. Our thanks go to Senator [Don Perata](#) (*top picture*) for moving the whole process along, to Senator [Tom Torlakson](#) (*middle*) for authoring the bill and to Assemblymember [Mark DeSaulnier](#) (*bottom*) for managing the bill on the floor of the Assembly. So many others contributed to this success without room to thank them in this space, but, none of this would have ever happened were it not for the dedication and vision of Council Board member **Ron Cowan**, the Chairman and CEO of Harbor Bay Isle Associates. Thank you for your leadership, Ron.



### Articles of the Week

The new authority was covered on [KCBS-AM](#), [KLIV-FM](#), [the San Francisco Chronicle](#), [the East Bay Business Times](#), [the Contra Costa Times](#), [the Marin IJ](#), [The Oakland Tribune](#), among others.

### Quote of the Week

*"I'm going to veto Speaker Núñez's bill, but I want to congratulate him because he has done an incredible job, he has been open-minded."* – Gov Schwarzenegger as [healthcare reform rolls](#) on.

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