



SENATOR DESAULNIER TO LEAD COMPREHENSIVE INVESTIGATION OF BAY BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

October 30, 2013

Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord) will lead an investigation to examine the issues that plagued the construction of the eastern span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Staff will systematically review past decision making to build a report that details the issues faced throughout the construction of the new eastern span. Senator DeSaulnier will also chair a series of Senate Transportation and Housing Committee hearings to look at problems that impact all megaprojects, as well as improvements that can be made by Caltrans management.

“While I am glad that the toll payers are finally able to cross the new eastern span of the Bay Bridge, it is important that we examine the problems that caused the construction of the new span to be 10 years late and \$5 billion over budget,” Senator DeSaulnier said. “The need for a new eastern span has been evident since the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989, and our committee will investigate the key decisions that shaped this project over the past 24 years. The committee will systematically review this project, and produce a report on our findings that I expect will inspire reform measures. Creating legislation that creates greater accountability at Caltrans, and improves the management of future projects, will be a top priority of mine during the 2014 legislative session.”

“The problems encountered with this project raise a lot of questions, and California taxpayers and commuters deserve answers,” said Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg. “I’m confident Caltrans will cooperate fully with this inquiry.”

The following is a tentative schedule of hearings to be held by the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee on the Bay Bridge, Caltrans, and megaprojects. Additional media advisories will be sent as dates, times, locations, and panelists are confirmed.

Improving Megaproject Outcomes

November 13, 2013

Invited Panelists:

- Bent Flyvbjerg – Professor of Major Program Management, Saïd Business School, Oxford University.
- Professor Virginia A. “Ginny” Greiman – Professor of Megaprojects and Planning, Boston University.
- Dr. William Ibbs – Professor of Civil Engineering; Group Leader, Construction Management Program, University of California, Berkeley.
- Louis Thompson – Chairman, California High Speed Rail Peer Review Group

Bay Bridge Lessons Learned

Date to be announced

Caltrans Management Improvements

Date to be announced

Senator DeSaulnier has already spearheaded efforts to begin reforming Caltrans. This year Governor Brown signed Senator DeSaulnier's SB 425. The bill sets standards for assembling peer review panels used in public works projects in a clear and transparent manner. SB 425 defines peer review and requires administering agencies utilizing a peer review group on a public works project to develop a transparent process for selecting members of the review group.

Additionally, Senator DeSaulnier has worked with Transportation Agency Secretary Brian Kelly to begin making reforms administratively. Inspired by Senator DeSaulnier's SB 486, the agency has directed Caltrans to begin publishing reports with quantified performance data on Caltrans' construction projects. The goal is to make this data easily and publicly available, in order to promote transparency and provide clearer metrics to judge department performance.

Further reforms aimed at making Caltrans more accountable will be a top priority in Senator DeSaulnier's 2014 legislative package.