

Senate Joint Resolution No. 33

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 100

Senate Joint Resolution No. 33—Relative to national freight policy.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 20, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 33, Lowenthal. National freight policy.

This measure would request that Congress adopt a national freight policy as a component of the next federal transportation bill and subsequently direct the United States Department of Transportation to implement its provisions.

WHEREAS, The national supply chain, national economy, and international standing of the United States benefits from and depends on the airport, land port of entry, and seaport infrastructure that has been developed to facilitate interstate and international trade by the State of California, its local governments, and its residents; and

WHEREAS, While there are many important benefits from facilitating international trade and California recognizes the need to continue to invest in its trade and freight infrastructure, the appropriate development of that infrastructure is impeded due to the lack of federal funding and a federally endorsed national freight policy; and

WHEREAS, A lack of significant investment in interstate and international trade infrastructure in California has significant costs, most notably the additional impacts of traffic congestion on our local roads, highways, and railways; the emissions from heavy-duty equipment, trains, trucks, and ships on air quality and public health; and the public financing burdens associated with building and maintaining the transportation infrastructure necessary to grow and facilitate interstate and international trade; and

WHEREAS, California's multiple airports of international significance facilitate interstate and international trade in the national interest, and operate within an aviation system facilitated by the Federal Aviation Administration, the Transportation Security Administration, and numerous other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, California's significantly improved infrastructure at the land ports of entry at the United States-Mexico border facilitate interstate and international trade in the national interest and, with little federal participation in the creation of additional freight capacity beyond the immediate border region to mitigate the impacts, this international trade occurs under the auspices of the North American Free Trade Agreement and is regulated by United States Customs and Border Protection and numerous other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, California's 11 public seaports, whose numbers include the first, second, and fifth busiest container ports in the country, facilitate interstate and international trade in the national interest, are locally financed entities that do not receive regular federal assistance or benefit from a fair percentage of the customs revenue (of which approximately \$8 billion is generated in California) or from the federal Harbor Maintenance Tax, and operate within a maritime commerce system facilitated by the Federal Maritime Commission, United States Customs and Border Protection, United States Coast Guard, and numerous other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, California taxpayers have recently committed \$3.1 billion of taxpayer funds to improve the international goods movement infrastructure in California, invest in additional seaport security measures, and reduce air pollution from international goods movement in California; and

WHEREAS, The significant costs, both direct and indirect, of facilitating interstate and international trade should not rest primarily with the State of California, its local governments, or its citizens; and

WHEREAS, The primary responsibility for facilitating interstate and international trade and for mitigating the impacts of that trade rests with the federal government; and

WHEREAS, The federal government does not have a comprehensive national freight policy in place to facilitate the measured and planned growth of interstate and international trade amongst and between the states, our foreign neighbors, or from our international airports and international seaports to domestic points of destination, nor to address the significant direct and indirect infrastructure, environmental, health, financial, and congestion impacts resulting from interstate and international trade; and

WHEREAS, In the previous round of federal transportation reauthorization that ultimately produced the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users (SAFETEA-LU), Congress directed the creation of and a report from a revenue commission, whereby the commission analyzed and recommended multiple changes to the federal methodologies by which transportation projects are funded and financed by Congress, and these recommendations included farsighted and innovative national freight infrastructure funding strategies; and

WHEREAS, Congress has yet to authorize a new federal transportation bill; and

WHEREAS, Interstate and international trade activity through California's airports, land ports of entry, and seaports is crucial to the overall health of the state, national, and international economies; facilitates the creation of millions of jobs with higher than average wages; and contributes billions of dollars in federal, state, and local tax and fee revenues; and

WHEREAS, The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 created a national effort to finance and build national transportation infrastructure that is the National Highway System, an investment that has had an enormous impact on the productivity of the American economy; similarly, a national multimodal investment in national goods movement infrastructure to move

goods efficiently would provide a comparable impact on the American economy and its 21st century competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, The creation of a national freight policy would provide a federal basis for investment in trade-facilitating infrastructure development, public and private participation in financing trade infrastructure, significant emissions reductions and air quality benefits, and a platform for the equitable distribution of federal funds such that California and its local transportation partners would receive their fair share of those revenues; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature respectfully requests that the Congress of the United States adopt a national freight policy as a component of the next federal transportation bill and subsequently direct the United States Department of Transportation to implement its provisions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, and each Senator and Representative representing California in the Congress of the United States.