



May 30, 2024

The Honorable Blanca Pacheco  
 California State Assembly  
 1021 O Street, Suite 6240  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 817 (PACHECO) LOCAL GOVERNMENT: OPEN MEETINGS – SUPPORT AS AMENDED  
 MAY 30, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Pacheco:

On behalf of the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD), League of California Cities (CalCities), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representative of California (RCRC), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS (CAPA-IHSS), we are pleased to sponsor this important legislation and thank you for your leadership in removing barriers to entry into civic leadership.

We and the undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for AB 817.

This measure would remove barriers to entry in civic participation by aligning provisions for local advisory bodies with state advisory bodies, allowing these non-decision-making sub-bodies of a legislative governing body to participate remotely via two-way virtual teleconferencing without posting of their location.

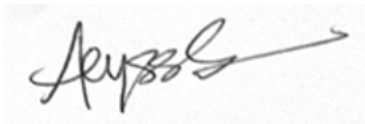
The in-person requirement to participate in local governance bodies presents a disproportionate challenge for those with physical or economic limitations, including seniors, persons with disability, single parents and/or caretakers, economically marginalized groups, and those who live in rural areas and face prohibitive driving distances. During the COVID-19 global pandemic individuals who could not otherwise accommodate the time, distance, or mandatory physical participation requirements to engage locally were able to participate remotely, accessing leadership opportunities and providing communities with greater diversified input on critical community proposals.

Existing law (Stats. 1991, Ch. 669) requires local bodies to publish and publicly notice opportunities that exist to participate in and serve on local regulatory and advisory boards, commissions, and committees under the Local Appointments List, known as Maddy's Act. However, merely informing the public of the opportunity to engage is not enough: addressing barriers to entry to achieve diverse representation in leadership furthers the Legislature's declared goals of equal access and equal opportunity.

Last year, the Legislature overwhelmingly passed, and the Governor signed, SB 544 (Stats. 202, Ch. 216). Noting equity issues presented by physical attendance requirements, this bill provided teleconferencing flexibility to members of State advisory only bodies. AB 817 would remove these same barriers to leadership opportunities by providing the same narrow exemption for non-decision-making legislative bodies that do not take final action so that equity in opportunity to serve locally and representative diversity in leadership can be achieved. For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 817 and thank you for your leadership on this most important issue.

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Alyssa Silhi at (916) 505-4978 and/or Johnnie Pina at (916) 802-4997.

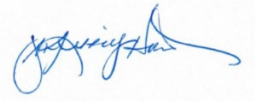
Sincerely,



Alyssa Silhi  
Legislative Representative  
California Association of Recreation and Park  
Districts



Johnnie Pina  
Legislative Representative  
League of California Cities



Jean Hurst  
Legislative Advocate  
Urban Counties of California



Sarah Dukett  
Policy Advocate  
Rural Counties Representatives of California



Eric Lawyer  
Legislative Advocate  
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Kim Levy Rothschild, CAE  
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Lucas Frerichs  
Chair  
Yolo County Board of Supervisors



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California Municipal Utilities Association



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Chair, Western Riverside Council of  
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Councilman, City of Jurupa Valley

Jim Lites  
Executive Director  
California Airports Council

Janie Whiteford  
President  
California In-Home Supportive Services  
Consumer Alliance

CC: Members and Staff, Senate Local Government Committee  
Brady Borchering, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor Gavin Newsom's Office of Legislative Affairs