

Legislature Acts on Bond and Other Facilities Bills in Key Fiscal Committees

Today the Legislature met a significant deadline that required them to act on bills with a potential state fiscal impact. Today the Senate and Assembly Appropriations Committees took up the “suspense file,” acting on a number of bills with school facilities implications. When bills are initially heard in the Appropriations Committee, the Committee will often defer action, sending bills to suspense. This is a mechanism whereby each house collects and prioritizes bills with state fiscal implications, acting upon them at a later date. Bills that are “held” in the Appropriations Committee at this point in time will likely not be moving forward through the legislative process for the remainder of the year; they become “two-year bills” with the opportunity to move again at the beginning of 2016.

State Bond Bills

Various actions were taken on the three major bond bills:

- **AB 148 (Holden)** *was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee* and will become a two-year bill. This bill would place a K-14 bond on an unspecified 2016 ballot, and no dollar amount is specified, though Assembly Member Holden has indicated that he is considering a “bridge” bond in the amount of \$1.8 billion.
- **AB 1088 (O’Donnell)** *was never scheduled to have its initial hearing in Assembly Appropriations Committee* and therefore was not on the suspense file and will become a two-year bill. It would place a Kindergarten through University bond on an unspecified ballot, and the bill is silent on the dollar amount. CCFC supports this bill.
- **AB 1433 (Gray)** *was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee* and will become a two-year bill. The bill would place a higher education bond on the 2016 ballot for community colleges, UC, and CSU. No dollar amount is specified, and the author has indicated that this is a vehicle to focus conversations on higher education issues not being addressed in other bond bills. CCFC supports this bill.
- **SB 114 (Liu)** *was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee with a 5:2 vote (Republicans voting no).* The bill will require a 2/3 vote on the floor to pass out of the Senate. The bill would place a K-12 bond on the November 2016 ballot, and it is silent on the dollar amount. It originally included community colleges, CSU, and UC, but they were all removed from the bill in order to focus the conversation on possible reform for the K-12 program. It does not appear that the Senate Appropriations Committee took amendments to specify a dollar amount, which is an unusual step given that the Committee typically needs to be able to characterize the fiscal implications.

Note that SB 114 is the only bond bill that is continuing to move this year, and it does not currently include community colleges.

Other Facilities Legislation

Additional actions on key pieces of legislation include:

- **AB 677 (Dodd) – Safety Locks**

This bill was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee, which is a positive outcome. AB 677 requires community colleges to equip classrooms, offices, or other rooms where students and school staff gather with locking mechanisms, also known as classroom function locks, that allow doors to be locked from the inside. This requirement would apply to all new construction projects undertaken at a community campus or facility. CCFC initially had concerns with the language in the bill, primarily related to costs and applying the requirements to modernization projects, and we worked with the author's office and the Assembly Higher Education Committee consultant in pursuit of amendments that removed modernization and achieved other technical fixes.

- **AB 1347 (Chiu) – Claims Process**

This bill was passed with a unanimous vote and amendments that reflect ongoing negotiations between the author's office and representatives of the public works sector, including CCFC. We still need to review the amendments when they are in print, but we hope to be able to remove our opposition to reflect the compromise negotiated by United Contractors, the sponsor, and the public works community. The bill establishes a new claims process that is attempting to achieve timely payment for undisputed claims.

- **SB 47 (Hill) – Artificial Turf**

This bill was held in Senate Appropriations Committee, which reflects the hard work done by education stakeholders to oppose certain provisions of the bill. As introduced, SB 47 proposed to prohibit the installation of new artificial turf fields and playground surfaces containing waste tires (aka crumb rubber infill) for two years beginning January 1, 2016 while the state conducted a comprehensive study of the potential health impacts of crumb rubber infill. The author amended the bill in an attempt to meet some of the concerns of opponents; these amendments removed the prohibition on the installation of such artificial turf fields and play surfaces but created additional bid requirements that would make it more difficult to move forward with such projects. CCFC adopted an oppose position unless this bill is amended; we believe that it would likely affect community colleges, as the bill applies to "a public or private school."

- **AB 351 (Jones-Sawyer) – Small Business Procurement**

This bill was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee. It would require a state agency to establish and achieve an annual small business participation goal of 25% for state procurements and contracts. The bill explicitly states that it would apply to community colleges, UC, and CSU for the state portion of funds. If the 25% goal is not met, it would trigger a corrective action plan and ongoing Department of General Services (DGS) involvement. CCFC did not have a formal position on this bill but did have concerns about increased project costs and issues related to the DGS oversight role and coordination with districts.

~ Rebekah Cearley