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**WALKSacramento**
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Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-9255
www.walksacramento.org

**WalkSanDiego**
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www.walksandiego.org

**Walk Oakland Bike Oakland**
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**Walk San Francisco**
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**Walk Bike Glendale**
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**Bike Walk Alameda**
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July 17, 2013

**VIA E-MAIL**

Secretary Brian Kelly
State Transportation Agency
980 9th Street, Suite 2450
Sacramento, CA 95814-2742
Brian.Kelly@calsta.ca.gov

**Re: Principles to Advance Walking within the Proposed Active Transportation Program**

Dear Secretary Kelly,

The California WALKS Network—a coalition of local walk, blind, and disability advocacy organizations across the state—would like to thank you for striving to bring active transportation to the forefront of the Transportation Agency. Despite accounting for 13.5% of all trips in California,[1] walking as a transportation mode has been consistently underfunded—with **combined** spending on walking and bicycling over the next ten years planned to be a mere 2.3% of the State's transportation spending.[2]

With a consolidated Active Transportation Program (ATP), we are excited by the opportunity to increase funding over time to meet the walking and biking needs of

[1] McGuckin, Nancy. *Travel to School in California: Findings from the California – National Household Travel Survey*. 2013. Available at http://www.travelbehavior.us/Nancy-pdfs/Travel%20to%20School%20in%20California.pdf
[2] California Transportation Commission, "Summary Table. Cost of Projects to be Completed Between 2011-2020." *2011 Statewide Transportation Needs Assessment*, November 2011. Available at http://www.catc.ca.gov/reports/2012%20Reports/Trans_Needs_Assessment_corrected_01172012.pdf

Californians. While we are supportive of the concept of a single Active Transportation Program, we do have concerns with the proposal as written. We strongly urge you to consider the following suggestions in order to ensure that the Active Transportation Program supports **both** walking and bicycling in California.

***Ensure Eligibility of Walking & Pedestrian Projects in Statute***

In consolidating the various state programs, the trailer bill adopted language wholesale from existing statutes without making the necessary additions to reflect a broadened active transportation scope. In particular, project eligibilities in the trailer bill drawn from the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) remain exclusively focused on bicycle projects. A true Active Transportation Program must accord walking the same level of treatment in statute as biking; otherwise, it is "active transportation" in name only. Accordingly, we urge you to include comparable pedestrian and walking facilities, projects, and programs when bicycle facilities, projects, and programs are mentioned in the final enacting legislation. Examples of eligible walking and pedestrian projects could include, but are not limited to:

- **Sidewalks, pathways, walkways**;
- **Curb extensions/bulb-outs**;
- **Median refuge islands**;
- **Striping** (high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian warnings);
- **Signage** (CA-MUTCD R1-5, R1-5a, R1-6, R1-6a, R1-9, R1-9a, R10-15, W11-2, SW50 (CA));
- **Signals** (pedestrian hybrid beacons, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, accessible pedestrian signals, signal timing adjustments);
- **Pedestrian-level lighting**; and
- **Pedestrian facilities related to transit** (bus shelters, benches).

We believe including walking and pedestrian project eligibilities parallel to bicycle project eligibilities is a simple and straightforward change that is essential for the ATP to live up to its active transportation name, scope, and purpose.

***Prioritize Safety & Address Inequities in Traffic Fatalities & Serious Injuries***

One of the biggest barriers to walking and biking in California is the lack of safe conditions and facilities. Pedestrians alone comprise more than 22% of all California 2010 traffic fatalities (nearly twice the national average and rising annually).[3] Older adult pedestrians fare even worse with a fatality rate 63% higher than the national average—ranking third highest in the nation.[4] Low-income and disadvantaged communities in California bear a disproportionate share of the pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries and in fact, are less likely to have basic walking infrastructure such as sidewalks (49% v. 89%) and roughly half as likely to have traffic calming features or marked crosswalks when compared to higher-income communities.[5] In pursuing an

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[3] National Center for Statistics and Analysis, "Table 7. Motor Vehicle Crash Fatalities, Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates by State, 2010," *Traffic Safety Facts: Pedestrians, 2010 Data*, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. DOT-HS-811-625, August 2012. Available at http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811625.pdf

[4] *Id*.

[5] Bridging the Gap. *Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking,* March 2012. Available at http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/_asset/02fpi3/btg_street_walkability_FINAL_03-09-12.pdf

ATP, we strongly urge the State to prioritize safety—through comprehensive engineering, education, and enforcement strategies—as one of the guiding principles of the program and to address inequities in traffic fatalities and serious injuries (between modes, as well as within disadvantaged communities).

***Focus Investment on Mode Shift for Short Trips***

While trips over 10 miles comprise 18.6% of all trips in California, nearly one third (32.3%) of all trips statewide are one mile or less.[6] Yet, 59.7% of these very short trips are currently made by motor vehicle, whereas only 33.9% of these trips are on foot.[7] Given that the average walk distance per trip is roughly three-quarters of a mile,[8] California's investment in creating safe and walkable places to shift these short trips from the highest polluting per mile mode (motor vehicle) to non-polluting walk trips is an efficient and promising strategy for meeting greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets mandated by SB 375 and SB 391. We urge you to prioritize funds from the Active Transportation Program on short trips (2 miles or less)—constituting 45.6% of all trips in the State[9] —which are the most likely candidates for shifting to walk or bike trips.

***Reward Localities for Pedestrian Planning & Assist Disadvantaged Communities without Resources to Conduct Pedestrian Planning***

Throughout the entire state, there are only 41 standalone Pedestrian Master Plans and an additional 77 combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans. This number pales in comparison to the number of standalone Bicycle Master Plans in California (approximately 173 as of 2010)[10]—due in large part to the BTA's requirement for jurisdictions to have a bicycle plan in order to be eligible for BTA funds. In our review of combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, we have found these combined plans oftentimes neither adequately address pedestrian needs nor develop pedestrian projects with the same degree of detail as bicycle projects. If the BTA bicycle plan requirement is carried over into the ATP, we urge you to either include a parallel pedestrian plan requirement that mirrors the existing statutory components for bicycle plans or to expand the existing language of the bicycle plan requirement to include walking and pedestrian needs, projects, and programs in order to be eligible for ATP funds. For disadvantaged communities without the resources to undertake pedestrian (or bicycle) planning, we urge the State to set aside and designate a portion of Caltrans' Community-Based Transportation Planning and Environmental Justice grants as an Active Transportation Planning Fund for Disadvantaged Communities—this would help to level the playing field between communities and demonstrate a commitment to reducing transportation disparities under federal Title VI requirements.

***Establish State & Regional Advisory Committees for ATP Guideline Development & Project Selection***

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[6] McGuckin, Nancy. *California Statewide Person Trip-Length Frequency*, April 2013. (Unpublished Data)
[7] McGuckin, Nancy, "Table 10. Percent of Trips One Mile or Less by Means of Travel." *Walking and Biking in California: An Analysis of the California-National Household Travel Survey*, August 2012. Available at http://www.travelbehavior.us/Nancy-pdfs/Walking%20and%20Biking%20in%20California%20Final.pdf
[8] *Supra* 7 at 13, "Table 8. Average Walk Trip Length and Sum of Miles by MPO."
[9] *Supra* 6.
[10] "Bicycle Transportation Plan Status," Caltrans, May 2010. Available at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bta/PDFs/BTP_List052610.pdf

Public engagement and transparency should be key operating principles of the ATP. Accordingly, we recommend that both state and regional advisory committees be established with representation from diverse stakeholders, including but not limited to walking/pedestrian organizations, bicycling organizations, environmental organizations, public health, health equity, social justice, and accessibility/disability groups, etc. These advisory committees should be heavily involved in the development of ATP program guidelines and implementation for both the State and regions, as well as in project scoring/selection.

***Ensure Adequate Staffing for the ATP in the Caltrans Division of Local Assistance, Office of Community Planning, and the California Transportation Commission***
With such a transformative program, the State needs to match the ambition of the ATP with adequate staffing. Ensuring the program's success requires a dedicated and knowledgeable team of active transportation professionals. At a minimum, we recommend that the state Safe Routes to School Coordinator, state Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator, and Complete Streets staff[11] should be maintained and a new Active Transportation Program Coordinator position within the California Transportation Commission be created.

The ATP presents California with a great opportunity to set a national trend for safe and accessible walking and biking infrastructure, while also prioritizing the needs of the most at-risk and disadvantaged communities. We look forward to working with you to ensure that walking is a core component of the Active Transportation Program, and to making California a leader in active transportation!

Sincerely,

Wendy Alfsen, Executive Director
California WALKS

Teri Duarte, Executive Director
WALKSacramento

James D. Stone, Executive Director
WalkSanDiego

Jonathan Bair, President of the Board
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Lucy Gigli, President, Board of Directors
Bike Walk Alameda

Donna Pomerantz, President
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Bob Planthold, Board of Directors
SF Bay WALKS

[11] The Senate Budget Subcommittee 2 restored five Division of Transportation Planning positions related to the Caltrans' Complete Streets program on May 16, 2013 in order to continue work on the Complete Streets Implementation Plan. *See* http://sbud.senate.ca.gov/sites/sbud.senate.ca.gov/files/SUB2/Outcomes05162013Sub2Trans.pdf. These positions were blue-penciled by the Governor in the adopted budget, but we strongly urge that these positions be restored. Without adequate active transportation staffing, neither the ATP nor the Complete Streets Implementation Plan will be successful in shifting active transportation to the forefront of the Transportation Agency.

Nancy Holland, Founder
*Walk & Roll* Berkeley

David Grant, Chair
SF Walks & Roll

Gladwyn D'Souza, Project Director
Green Youth Alliance

Frank Cruz, Director
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