



San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

FROM: ROB FITZROY, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DATE: APRIL 18, 2024

SUBJECT: CALAFCO LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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BRIAN A. PIERIK
Legal Counsel

RECOMMENDATION

Action 1: Review the proposed legislation and by motion provide direction to the Executive Officer to submit letters of support to CALAFCO.

SUMMARY

The California Association of Local Agency Formation Commissions (CALAFCO) serves as an organization dedicated to assisting member LAFCOs with educational, technical, and legislative resources.

CALAFCO has been pursuing two legislative solutions. A brief summary and analysis of the bills are below, and the draft legislation in its more current form is included in Attachment A and B. CALAFCO has requested that all LAFCOs consider preparing letters of support.

Senate Bill (SB) 1209 – Introduced by Senator Cortese

Bill Summary

This bill would authorize a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to require, as a condition, for processing a change of organization or reorganization, that the applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the LAFCO, its agents, officers, and employees from and against any claim, action, or proceeding, as specified, arising from, or relating to the action or determination by the LAFCO.

Analysis

As a part of the declaratory relief action entitled *City of Pismo Beach v. Pacific Harbor Homes, Inc., et al.*, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Case No. CV130383, to which SLO LAFCO was a party to, it was determined that LAFCOs do not have the authority to require indemnification because it is not expressly

allowed within the Government Code. Though any city, county, or other agency may require indemnification, LAFCOs would not be allowed to do so under this court ruling, that is, unless a legislative solution was proposed. SB 1209 would allow all LAFCOs to require indemnification as a part of application submittal. This would allow all LAFCOs to process applications objectively and ensure that Commissioners can make discretionary decisions based on the merits of the project without concern of litigation if certain decisions are made. Staff and legal counsel have reviewed the proposed language and have no concerns.

The following section would be added to the Government Code (as it is drafted as of the release of this staff report):

56393.5

The commission may require, as a condition for processing a change of organization or reorganization, a sphere amendment or a sphere update, or any other action or determination requested from the commission, that the applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the commission, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the commission, its agents, officers, or employees arising from or relating to the action or determination by the commission.

Assembly Bill (AB) 3277 Omnibus – Introduced by Committee on Local Government

Omnibus Bill Summary

AB 3277 is an omnibus bill and modifications within it are minor and only intended to clarify existing law. This bill includes one particular modification to clarify that when a district is formed, the commission shall determine the amount of tax to be exchanged ***if*** the applicant is seeking a share of the 1 percent ad valorem property tax. Existing law already allows LAFCO to determine the tax exchange, but clarification was needed that this only applies when an applicant is seeking property tax.

Analysis

This modification to existing law only clarifies that LAFCO can determine the tax exchange when property tax is sought when a district is formed. If the applicant is not seeking property tax as a part of a district formation, LAFCO would not make any determinations about the tax exchange. This is already the state-wide practice, but this modification clarifies the practice. Staff and legal counsel have reviewed the proposed language and have no concerns.

The following existing Government Code Section would be modified as follows (as it is drafted as of the release of this staff report):

56810 (a) (1)

If the proposal includes the incorporation of a city, as defined in Section 56043, the commission shall determine the amount of property tax revenue to be exchanged by the affected local agency pursuant to this section and Section 56815.

(2) If the proposal includes the formation of a district, as defined in Section 2215 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and if the applicant is seeking a share of the 1 percent ad valorem property taxes, the commission shall determine the amount of property tax to be exchanged by the affected local agency pursuant to this section.

Attachment A: SB 1209

Attachment B: AB 3277

Attachment A

SB 1209



SB-1209 Local agency formation commission: indemnification. (2023-2024)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2023–2024 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO. 1209

Introduced by Senator Cortese

February 15, 2024

An act to add Section 56383.5 to the Government Code, relating to local government.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1209, as introduced, Cortese. Local agency formation commission: indemnification.

Existing law, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, provides the exclusive authority and procedure for the initiation, conduct, and completion of changes of organization and reorganization for cities and districts, except as specified. The act continues in existence in each county a local agency formation commission (LAFCO) that consists of members appointed, as specified, and oversees those changes of organization and reorganization. The act authorizes a LAFCO to, among other things, review and approve with or without amendment, wholly, partially, or conditionally, or disapprove proposals for changes of organization or reorganization, as specified.

This bill would authorize a LAFCO to require, as a condition for, among other things, processing a change of organization or reorganization, that the applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the LAFCO, its agents, officers, and employees from and against any claim, action, or proceeding, as specified, arising from or relating to the action or determination by the LAFCO.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 56383.5 is added to the Government Code, to read:

56383.5. The commission may require, as a condition for processing a change of organization or reorganization, a sphere amendment or a sphere update, or any other action or determination requested from the commission, that the applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the commission, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the commission, its agents, officers, or employees arising from or relating to the action or determination by the commission.

Attachment B

AB 3277



AB-3277 Local agency formation commission: districts: property tax. (2023-2024)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2023–2024 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 3277

Introduced by Committee on Local Government

February 27, 2024

An act to amend Section 56810 of the Government Code, relating to local government.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 3277, as introduced, Committee on Local Government. Local agency formation commission: districts: property tax.

Existing law, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, establishes the sole and exclusive authority and procedures for the initiation, conduct, and completion of changes of organization and reorganization for cities and districts. Existing law requires proceedings for the formation of a district to be conducted as authorized by the principal act of the proposed district, and authorizes the local agency formation commission in each county to serve as the conducting authority, as specified. Existing law requires a commission to determine the amount of property tax revenue to be exchanged by an affected local agency, as specified, if the proposal includes the formation of a district, as defined.

This bill would, instead, require a commission to determine the amount of property tax revenue to be exchanged by an affected local agency if the proposal includes the formation of a district and the applicant is seeking a share of the 1% ad valorem property taxes. By adding to the duties of a local agency formation commission, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 56810 of the Government Code is amended to read:

56810. (a) (1) If the proposal includes the incorporation of a city, as defined in Section 56043, the commission shall determine the amount of property tax revenue to be exchanged by the affected local agency pursuant to this section and Section 56815.

(2) If the proposal includes the formation of a district, as defined in Section 2215 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, *and if the applicant is seeking a share of the 1 percent ad valorem property taxes*, the commission shall determine the amount of property tax to be exchanged by the affected local agency pursuant to this section.

(b) The commission shall notify the county auditor of the proposal and the services which the new jurisdiction proposes to assume within the area, and identify for the auditor the existing service providers within the area subject to the proposal.

(c) If the proposal would not transfer all of an affected agency's service responsibilities to the proposed city or district, the commission and the county auditor shall do all of the following:

(1) The county auditor shall determine the proportion that the amount of property tax revenue derived by each affected local agency pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 93 of the Revenue and Taxation Code bears to the total amount of revenue from all sources, available for general purposes, received by each affected local agency in the prior fiscal year. For purposes of making this determination and the determination required by paragraph (3), "total amount of revenue from all sources available for general purposes" means the total amount of revenue which an affected local agency may use on a discretionary basis for any purpose and does not include any of the following:

(A) Revenue which, by statute, is required to be used for a specific purpose.

(B) Revenue from fees, charges, or assessments which are levied to specifically offset the cost of particular services and do not exceed the cost reasonably borne in providing these services.

(C) Revenue received from the federal government which is required to be used for a specific purpose.

(2) The commission shall determine, based on information submitted by each affected local agency, an amount equal to the total net cost to each affected local agency during the prior fiscal year of providing those services which the new jurisdiction will assume within the area subject to the proposal. For purposes of this paragraph, "total net cost" means the total direct and indirect costs that were funded by general purpose revenues of the affected local agency and excludes any portion of the total cost that was funded by any revenues of that agency that are specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (1).

(3) The commission shall multiply the amount determined pursuant to paragraph (2) for each affected local agency by the corresponding proportion determined pursuant to paragraph (1) to derive the amount of property tax revenue used to provide services by each affected local agency during the prior fiscal year within the area subject to the proposal. The county auditor shall adjust the amount described in the previous sentence by the annual tax increment according to the procedures set forth in Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 95) of Part 0.5 of Division 1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, to the fiscal year in which the new city or district receives its initial allocation of property taxes.

(4) For purposes of this subdivision, in any county in which, prior to the adoption of Article XIII A of the California Constitution, and continuing thereafter, a separate fund or funds were established consisting of revenues derived from the unincorporated area of the county and from which fund or funds services rendered in the unincorporated area have been paid, the amount of property tax revenues derived pursuant to paragraph (3), may, at the discretion of the commission, be transferred to the proposed city over a period not to exceed 12 fiscal years following its incorporation. In determining whether the transfer of the amount of property tax revenues determined pursuant to paragraph (3) shall occur entirely within the fiscal year immediately following the incorporation of the proposed city or shall be phased in over a period not to exceed 12 full fiscal years following the incorporation, the commission shall consider each of the following:

(A) The total amount of revenue from all sources available to the proposed city.

(B) The fiscal impact of the proposed transfer on the transferring agency.

(C) Any other relevant facts which interested parties to the exchange may present to the commission in written form.

The decision of the commission shall be supported by written findings setting forth the basis for its decision.

(d) If the proposal would transfer all of an affected agency's service responsibilities to the proposed city or district, the commission shall request the auditor to determine the property tax revenue generated for the affected service providers by tax rate area, or portion thereof, and transmit that information to the commission.

(e) The executive officer shall notify the auditor of the amount determined pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) or subdivision (d), as the case may be, and, where applicable, the period of time within which and the procedure by which the transfer of property tax revenues will be effected pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (c), at the time the executive officer records a certificate of completion pursuant to Section 57203 for any proposal described in subdivision (a), and the auditor shall transfer that amount to the new jurisdiction.

(f) The amendments to this section enacted during the 1985–86 Regular Session of the Legislature shall apply to any proposal described in subdivision (a) for which a certificate of completion is recorded with the county recorder on or after January 1, 1987.

(g) For purposes of this section, "prior fiscal year" means the most recent fiscal year for which data on actual direct and indirect costs and revenues needed to perform the calculations required by this section are available preceding the issuance of the certificate of filing.

(h) An action brought by a city or district to contest any determinations of the county auditor or the commission with regard to the amount of property tax revenue to be exchanged by the affected local agency pursuant to this section shall be commenced within three years of the effective date of the city's incorporation or the district's formation. These actions may be brought by any city that incorporated or by any district that formed on or after January 1, 1986.

(i) This section applies to any city that incorporated or district that formed on or after January 1, 1986.

(j) The calculations and procedures specified in this section shall be made prior to and shall be incorporated into the calculations specified in Section 56815.

SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.