

Agenda Report

TO: City Council

July 23, 2001

THROUGH: Legislative Committee

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Support Senate Bill X2 84 (Burton), *State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission*.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Support Senate Bill X2 84 (Burton), *State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission*; and
2. Authorize the Mayor to send letters to the appropriate authorities stating Pasadena's position

BILL SUMMARY

This bill would require the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission to develop and implement a program to provide battery backup power for those official traffic control signals that the commission, in consultation with cities and counties, determines to be a high priority traffic control signals. The bill would authorize the commission to grant 70 percent of the funds to a city, county or city and county for backup battery power for traffic control signals retrofitted with light-emitting diodes.

The bill would appropriate \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the commission for the purpose of providing matching grants pursuant to the bill.

The bill would take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

BACKGROUND

California is faced with a statewide electric generation shortage. This impending energy crisis could mean frequent blackout conditions throughout the State due to inadequate generation supplies. Although the City of Pasadena has adequate supplies of generation to meet the needs of the community, it is required by the California Independent System Operator to supply energy to

the electric grid during Stage III emergencies because the State provides the City's power reserves. As a result, Pasadena and other communities have experienced rolling blackouts when electric reserves have dipped below what is considered safe by the operators of the State's electric grid.

The city is consciously looking for ways to minimize the impacts on public health, safety, and welfare of the community from blackouts. One of the major concerns is the flow of traffic through the city. Traffic signals become non-operational during rotating blackouts. This causes a safety hazard for motorists as they proceed through non-operating intersections.

Senate Bill X2 84 would allow the Energy Commission to develop and implement a program to provide battery backup power for those official light-emitting diodes (LED) traffic signals that the Commission, cities and counties determine to be high priority traffic control signals. The intersections selected will be based on traffic factors including, but not limited to, traffic volume, number of accidents, and presence of children.

Light-emitting diodes traffic signals qualify under this bill because they reduce energy consumption by 90 percent compared to incandescent traffic signals, and as a result, require a relatively small battery backup power device. Although the City of Pasadena only has one full LED intersection that may qualify under this legislation, (at Walnut and Garfield Avenue), staff feels this bill is a step in the right direction. Ninety-eight of the city's intersections have both red and green LEDs and twenty-four intersections have red only LEDs. While these intersections don't currently qualify under this legislation, future legislation may include "flashing red only" battery backup power systems. Blackouts at intersections produce a serious safety hazard for the community. This bill is the first step at providing some relief to this issue.

This bill is supported by the League of California Cities and is currently in the Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee waiting for a hearing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

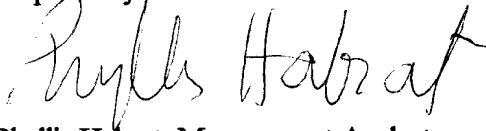
The passage of this bill would have no fiscal impact on the City of Pasadena.

Respectfully submitted,



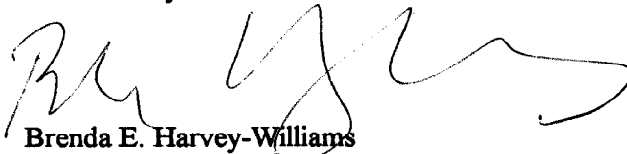
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