



A Transit Riders' Association for San Francisco
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April 6, 2005

The Honorable Mark Leno
State Capitol, Room 3146
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 799 - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblyman Leno:

Rescue Muni, San Francisco's transit riders' association, strongly supports AB 799, a bill that would allow San Francisco to enact a local Vehicle License Fee (VLF).

San Francisco is currently facing a severe budget deficit of over \$100 million, which threatens many of the vital public services that the City provides. In particular, the San Francisco Municipal Railway was forced to raise fares and parking fees and cut service to close a \$55 million budget gap this year. The deficit has been worsened by the roll-back of the VLF in 2003, which was not fully backfilled by the State, resulting in a loss of nearly \$56 million in revenue.

In this climate, we must closely examine all possible fiscal alternatives. AB 799 is one of the most intelligent and palatable proposals available. The measure would potentially, provide up to \$64 million. While we would prefer that all of this revenue be dedicated to public transportation, we support the proposed VLF option even if it goes to the city's General Fund, because a portion will fund Muni via the mandatory subsidy established in Proposition E (1999).

By authorizing a local VLF, you give San Francisco's local government control over their revenues without jeopardizing state funding. Furthermore, any VLF measure would need to go before the voters, allowing the people to decide for themselves.

Thank you for introducing AB 799. We strongly urge your colleagues to pass it immediately.

Sincerely,

Andrew Sullivan
Chair, Steering Committee