

Honorable Member

I've served the City of Lemon Grove (25,000) since 2002 as a member of the City Council. We incorporated in 1977 choosing not to become a community of the City of San Diego. Our founders knew that living in the shadow of San Diego would be no easy task. My first exposure to that, and one of my first council assignments, was as an alternate as Sandag where I served in that role until the retirement of our long time mayor Mary Sessom. I currently represent my City as primary on the Sandag Board of Directors and East County on the Sandag Executive Committee.

I was at Sandag when the current dual track voting system was instituted in 2002. At no time before or since did I feel that my small town had such an equitable chance to have our voice heard and our concerns addressed. Regional collaboration became more than words and Sandag became more than a rubber stamp for the 800 pound gorilla. I've had a very different experience on the Metro Wastewater JPA where we are 30% investors in the processing plant San Diego owns and we only have an advisory, take it or leave it, role. The current simultaneous tally/weighted vote at Sandag works like the House and Senate at the same time. In my experience this voting system applied to other regional bodies would make them much more equitable and effective. Allowing San Diego to make decisions unilaterally with a "weighted vote only" at Sandag would be the end of regional collaboration and decision making. There would simply be no incentive for them to work collaboratively with the other jurisdictions in the region or to embrace the consensus we've come to know in the region. As to the dedicated Chair, the chair of any organization should be determined by it's members and not an outside influence or by any arbitrary standard.

The accountability and transparency elements of the bill have merit. Mistakes were made and the investigation into that has just begun. We're told that a spreadsheet mistake was made years ago and due to the complexity of the algorithms involved only became obvious by the enormous scope of the "Great Recession". That in itself is not a betrayal of the public trust unless there was a

cover-up and the Sandag Board has taken prudent steps to investigate that possibility as well as any structural deficiencies that may need to be corrected. As a new primary member of the Sandag Board I am committed to the investigation and expect that, among others things, there will be procedural and structural recommendations made by the investigators. Though I believe that internal changes can be effective, if the legislature feels that there needs to be some state mandated changes I urge the committee to recommend examination of the independent investigation when completed and working with the current Sandag Board rather than going around them. Good decisions and change are made from proper examination of facts and not political vendettas.

Sandag, like the legislatures at the state and federal levels, will never be popular with everyone and more likely not popular with anyone. As has been said of America, it's not perfect but there is nothing better. With many parochial interests at the table, to say Sandag is completely broken is just not true and does not reflect the successes and current state of regional collaboration and consensus building in San Diego county. That regional collaboration has produced two successful self-help measures in the past (Transnet and Transnet II). The failure of the third (Measure A) does not establish a pattern that warrants the dismantling of a system that by most accounts has been working. Measure A's failure is less about Sandag's structure and miscalculations and more about a failure to understand what the voters will and won't pay for. One can argue how much transit, how much freeway, how much local street, and how much climate change elements should have been included but no one can know the outcome of those "what ifs". No one can know what effect the flawed projections would have had though logic says that the advantage would have gone to those that prevailed in opposing the measure without a correction. Measure A was transit heavy but the same supporters of AB 805 opposed it because there was too much freeway. Ironically they joined with the "too much transit" opposition to defeat a measure that primarily promoted their cause. They believe that changing Sandag will change the outcome of this past election without considering the will of the voters. There is no reason to change something that has been working by

adjusting the structure of Sandag, MTS and NCTD when simply allowing the transit agencies taxing abilities will accomplish what the supporters of transit and AB 805 really want. In the end the voters will decide and all voters of all areas of the county deserve to have their say.

Jerry Jones, Lemon Grove Council Member