

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 953

**Introduced by Assembly Member Jones
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Valadao)
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Harkey)**

February 18, 2011

An act to add Section 2704.77 to the Streets and Highways Code, relating to high-speed rail.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 953, as introduced, Jones. High-speed rail.

Existing law, the California High-Speed Rail Act, creates the High-Speed Rail Authority to develop and implement a high-speed rail system in the state, with specified powers and duties. Existing law, pursuant to the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century, approved by the voters as Proposition 1A at the November 4, 2008, general election, provides for the issuance of \$9.95 billion in general obligation bonds for high-speed rail and related purposes. Under federal law, funding is made available for allocation nationally to high-speed rail and other related projects.

This bill would provide that no funds from Proposition 1A shall be available to the High-Speed Rail Authority for construction of the high-speed train system until adequate environmental studies are completed based on a new ridership study that uses an acceptable ridership evaluation methodology. The bill would require the authority to contract with the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California at Berkeley to complete a revised ridership study, using the ridership methodology of the institute. The bill would require the authority to use that ridership study as the basis for subsequent

environmental studies. The bill would also require the authority to reconsider its adoption of the optimal high-speed rail route based both on the new ridership study and the ridership methodology.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 2704.77 is added to the Streets and
2 Highways Code, to read:
3 2704.77. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds
4 from the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for
5 the 21st Century (Chapter 20 (commencing with Section 2704))
6 shall be available to the High-Speed Rail Authority for construction
7 of the high-speed train system until adequate environmental studies
8 are completed based on a new ridership study that uses an
9 acceptable ridership evaluation methodology. The authority shall
10 contract with the Institute of Transportation Studies at the
11 University of California at Berkeley to complete a revised ridership
12 study, using the ridership methodology of the institute. That
13 ridership study, in turn, shall be used as the basis for subsequent
14 environmental studies. The authority shall also reconsider its
15 adoption of the optimal high-speed rail route based both on the
16 new ridership study and the ridership methodology.