

Revised May 26, 2005

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OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER _____ Larry E. Reid



A RESOLUTION URGING THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE TO RETAIN IN STATE LAW THE SELF-ANCHORED SUSPENSION DESIGN OF THE SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND BAY BRIDGE; TO URGE THE GOVERNOR AND CALTRANS TO ADVERTISE THAT DESIGN FOR CONSTRUCTION BIDS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; AND TO URGE THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNOR TO PROMPTLY COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT FOR THE LATEST COST OVERRUNS FOR THE TOLL BRIDGE SEISMIC RETROFIT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Loma Prieta earthquake struck 15 years ago, killing 63 persons, collapsing and closing highways throughout the Bay Area and forcing the closure of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge for one month to make repairs to its damaged eastern span; and

WHEREAS, the Northridge earthquake struck Southern California 11 years ago, killing 51 persons and causing major highway damage; and

WHEREAS, thousands of California highway bridges have been retrofitted or replaced costing the State of California billions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, after years of engineering studies, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) concluded in 1996 that it was more cost-effective to construct a replacement structure rather than seismically retrofit the existing east span; and

WHEREAS, in February 1997, Governor Pete Wilson announced that the state would construct a replacement "skyway" bridge connecting Oakland to Yerba Buena Island, and that the Bay Area would have to contribute regional funds for an enhanced design; and

WHEREAS, in August 1997, Senate Bill 60 was signed by Governor Wilson to authorize the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to extend for up to two years the \$1 toll surcharge enacted by the bill in order to fund the following enhancements: (1) a cable-supported suspension design; (2) a bicycle/pedestrian path; and (3) improvements to the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, in July 1998, based upon the expert advice of a blue-ribbon panel of seismologists, geologists, bridge engineers, and architects, and after holding over two dozen public hearings and workshops throughout the Bay Area, MTC approved an extension of the toll surcharge for one and one-half years to include a Self-Anchored Suspension design and bicycle/pedestrian path in the new east span project based on cost estimates for those enhancements provided by Caltrans at the time; and

WHEREAS, in September 2001, Assembly Bill 1171 was approved, which codified the Self-Anchored Suspension design in state law and funded cost increases for the new east span as well as other bridge safety projects by extending the \$1 toll surcharge for another 30 years, and committed additional federal and state highway funds, continuing the precedent established in Senate Bill 60 for an equitable cost-sharing arrangement between statewide and local taxpayers in financing the toll bridge seismic retrofit program; and

WHEREAS, in January 2002, Governor Gray Davis presided over groundbreaking ceremonies to mark the start of construction of the new east span of the Bay Bridge; and

WHEREAS, construction work has continued since that time, with over 65 percent of the skyway portion of the bridge near the Oakland shore now completed; the west pier of the Self-Anchored Suspension now complete on Yerba Buena Island; the contract to construct the tower and east pier for the Self-Anchored Suspension span 20 percent complete; and a total of \$200 million in design and construction work on the Self-Anchored Suspension span with already expended; and

WHEREAS, in August 2004, Caltrans reported additional cost overruns for the toll bridge seismic retrofit program, with the Self-Anchored Suspension portion of the new east span replacement project estimated to be responsible for approximately half of the cost increase; and

WHEREAS, in September 2004, Caltrans rejected the sole bid received to construct the superstructure of the Self-Anchored Suspension design and announced it was undertaking a review of the east span project to determine whether to redesign the bridge; and

WHEREAS, in December 2004, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed to scrap the Self-Anchored Suspension design and replace it with a skyway alternative originally proposed by Governor Wilson seven years before; and

WHEREAS, independent reports from the Federal Highway Administration, Bechtel Infrastructure Corporation, and Caltrans Seismic Safety Peer Review Panel generally support retaining the current Self-Anchored Suspension design, with the seismic safety panel concluding: "Any change in bridge type or geometry could result in multi-year delays which are unacceptable from a seismic safety point of view. Furthermore, with recent and continuing increases in material and construction costs it is not clear that project delays will result in overall cost savings"; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Bay Area has experienced nine major earthquakes in excess of 6.5 or greater over the past 170 years, averaging a major earthquake every 19 years; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Geological Survey has estimated a 62 percent probability of a magnitude 6.7 or larger earthquake within the next 30 years on the San Andreas and Hayward faults, both of which are adjacent to the east span; and

WHEREAS, such an earthquake could cause the collapse of major sections of the existing east span cantilever truss structure, which is used by 180,000 persons every day; and

WHEREAS, such a collapse could kill or injure thousands of people and cause severe economic dislocation for businesses and workers in San Francisco, Oakland, and throughout the Bay Area and State of California; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Oakland City Council of Alameda County endorses the principle that the fastest path to seismic safety for this critical component of the region’s transportation infrastructure is to retain the Self-Anchored Suspension design that is 100 percent complete, fully permitted, and ready to construct; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Oakland City Council of Alameda County urges the California Legislature to retain the Self-Anchored Suspension design in state law and urges the Governor of California and Caltrans to advertise that design for construction bids as soon as possible; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Oakland City Council of Alameda County urges the State to continue construction of the Self-Anchored Suspension Bridge immediately; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Oakland City Council of Alameda County urges the California Legislature and Governor of California to promptly commence negotiations to achieve an agreement for the latest cost overruns for the toll bridge seismic retrofit program; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Governor of California, the California Senate and Assembly, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and other appropriate agencies and officials.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 20_____

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES- BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID and PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: _____

LaTonda Simmons
City Clerk and Clerk of
the Council of the City of Oakland, California