

## SANTA CLARA VTA

### RIDERS UNION

P.O. Box 390069, Mountain View, CA 94039-0069 - phone (408)888-2208  
<http://www.vtaridersunion.org/>

June 29, 2007

California State Assembly  
Committee On Local Government  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

To: All Members of the Committee On Local Government  
RE: Please Oppose SB 264

The Santa Clara VTA Riders Union (SCVTARU), an independent public transit advocacy and watchdog group, today expresses its opposition to SB 264. We urge you to oppose this bill as well.

If passed into law, SB 264 would permit the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to place a 1/8-cent sales tax ballot measure in 2008. The bill was written by State Senator Elaine Alquist of San Jose (13th District). We understand that state law only permits VTA to place sales tax measures of 1/4-cent or more on the ballot.

There are two reasons why we oppose SB 264 and why you need to oppose this bill. The first reason is that VTA has done nothing to address the lack of fiscal responsibility and mismanagement identified in an organizational audit by the Hay Group released 3 months ago. That audit can be found on VTA's web site at [http://www.vta.org/inside/boards/packets/2007/03\\_mar/032307/org\\_fin\\_report.pdf](http://www.vta.org/inside/boards/packets/2007/03_mar/032307/org_fin_report.pdf). The same concerns were echoed in a Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury report in 2004. That Civil Grand Jury can be found at [http://www.vtaridersunion.org/docs/sccounty\\_gjreport\\_2004.pdf](http://www.vtaridersunion.org/docs/sccounty_gjreport_2004.pdf). A microcosm of VTA's ongoing mismanagement is given in a recent story in *Metro Silicon Valley*. The story pointed out how VTA's subcontracting for its paratransit services are "monopolized, unregulated, and lacks transparency. That story can be found on the Metroactive web site at <http://www.metroactive.com/metro/06.06.07/vta-0723.html>

The other reason why we oppose SB 264: the VTA's Board of Directors is accountable to no one. Santa Clara County voters have no voice in who sits on the VTA Board, nor can they run for a seat on the VTA Board. It makes no sense to give VTA permission to dip into the wallets of Santa Clara County taxpayers when its management and spending continue to be out of control.

For too long, fiscal responsibility and accountability have been absent at VTA. Your opposition to SB 264 will send a message that the VTA must be fiscally responsible and accountable to Santa Clara County taxpayers.

Sincerely,



Eugene Bradley  
Founder, Santa Clara VTA Riders Union  
/eeb