



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

April 6, 2021

The Honorable Lena Gonzalez
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 635 (Gonzalez)—Cleanup Activities on State Highways, Rights-of-Way, Off Ramps, and Homeless Encampments

Dear Senator Gonzalez,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to support SB 635, which would require Caltrans to collaborate with the Office of the Inspector General and relevant health, state, and local agencies to recommend ways to improve coordination on the cleanup of State rights-of-way.

Caltrans, the organization responsible for overseeing State roadside maintenance including litter and debris removal, faces a monumental task in maintaining State property and has experienced increased demand for cleanups statewide. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the public health and safety concerns on State rights-of-way, as trash, debris, and homeless encampments have increased exponentially, and Caltrans' maintenance policy prevents crews from cleaning unsheltered encampments along State rights-of-way during the pandemic.

In an effort to address these challenges, the City has engaged directly with Caltrans District 7 leadership and staff to prioritize the need for ongoing maintenance and cleanups on State property, and we are working to strengthen the partnership between the City, Los Angeles County, Caltrans, and other regional partners through interjurisdictional coordination. Furthermore, on March 16, 2021, the City adopted the Long Beach Recovery Act to advance economic recovery and public health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Included in the plan is funding to support increased staffing and resources to coordinate with Caltrans and regional partners to conduct cleanups along City, County, and State property in Long Beach.

The review proposed by SB 635 will help identify best practices and recommendations to support better coordination between Caltrans and local entities, as well as address other barriers to roadside cleanups. This is a critical measure to support the necessary cleanup of State property, advance public health, and uplift our most vulnerable communities. For these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports SB 635.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia", written over a white background.

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District