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Taxpayers Association Calls for SANDAG Board Members to Consult With Municipal Colleagues
SANDAG Board Members Speak for Their Cities – Who Determines What They Are Saying?

San Diego (December 10, 2021) – San Diego County Taxpayers Association President & CEO Haney Hong addressed the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Board of Directors on Friday ahead of their adoption of the controversial 2021 Regional Plan, which comes with a \$160 billion price tag.

While the Association recognizes the importance of SANDAG and understands that addressing challenges as one region is largely more efficient than each agency working alone, he expressed concern over potential inequities and underrepresentation *at* member agencies. Hong requested information about how board members collected input from their respective agencies prior to voting on their behalf for a policy that will have major taxpayer implications.

“Whether you vote aye or nay, there needs to be a formal, transparent process before coming to the SANDAG board room by which each of you, as representatives of your agencies, collect input from your fellow municipal elected leaders and the constituents you collectively represent,” said Hong during his testimony in the meeting. “Without debates at your member agency, there is no assurance that you are not simply voting for your own personal priorities.”

The purpose of SANDAG is to serve as one regional hub to address our collective challenges, but there is no current requirement or consistent practice for board members to consult with their municipal colleagues in a structured, public way at their agencies.

In 2017, SDCTA made six recommendations to address inequities and underrepresentation at individual agencies with respect to SANDAG policy matters, namely by increasing dialogue and transparency at the agency level. Among these recommendations were:

- SANDAG Board of Directors should adopt a policy requiring member representatives to report back to their respective agencies on program developments, project updates, changes to voter-approved expenditure plans, and potential ballot measures at least on an annual basis.
- Member jurisdiction city councils and the County Board of Supervisors should adopt policies requiring that SANDAG Board Members transmit to the SANDAG Board of Directors their list of local funding/project priorities and community concerns about all policy issues subject to funding or policy direction by SANDAG at least on an annual basis.
- SANDAG and member agencies should adopt policies to require reports on utilization of funds and performance audits or absence thereof.

The full report on SDCTA’s 2017 recommendations to SANDAG can [be found here](#).

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