

Enabled Voices



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Eureka City Council Talks Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety at Harris & K Streets in Eureka was a major topic of last Tuesday's Eureka City Council meeting at the City Hall.

"It's a nightmare crossing," said Council member Chris Kerrigan in his report to the Mayor and Council. "It's one of the worst intersections in the City."

Action on some level is urgently needed and this is a major safety issue for people with disabilities as well as others. This is highlighted by the fact that a local resident who uses a wheelchair was seriously injured by a careless motorist at this intersection last year.

Kerrigan noted that over 100 households in that area have signed a petition to have the City address the safety issue at Harris and K. He also cited a recent study by the Redwood Community Action Agency which indicated that from 1994 to 2004, there were 12 pedestrian and 19 bicycle collisions along Harris Street—a significantly higher rate than on other, comparable street throughout Eureka. He further noted that the greater numbers of public and affordable housing sites in that area translate into greater pedestrian and bicycle traffic and greater potential for accidents.

"Many people that live there must walk, bus or bike to work," he pointed out.

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Keeping Track of Sacramento

Among the (literally) thousands of bills before the California State legislature are several more that may interest people with disabilities. They include the following:

Assembly Bill 1654 (Huffman, DeSaulnier & Saldana) would allow counties, cities or districts, if approved by the board of supervisors, to authorize all-mailed ballot elections (hearing held on 4/17).

AB 271 (Cook) would require proof of citizenship for a person to receive any form of state-funded benefits.

AB 14 (numerous authors) expands non-discrimination protections in various areas by



adding the disabled, among other groups.

Senate Bill 122 (Steinberg, Kuehl & Yee) would add "homeless status" to the list of actual or perceived characteristics of a hate crime (hearing held on 4/24).

SB 483 (Kuehl) pertains to Medi-Cal eligibility for nursing or other long-term facilities.

SB 840 (Kuehl) calls for single-payer health care coverage in California.

As of the date of this issue, all of these bills are being discussed in committees. Check with TCIL or on-line (<http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>) for updates.

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Councilmember Larry Glass noted that he had visited the area on foot and was surprised.

“It was worse than I thought and the area deserves immediate attention,” he said.

The Council, overall, seemed to agree that it should examine options for addressing the problem as it heads into budget time. Possible remedies mentioned were better enforcement and various forms of traffic calming.

The Council later held a public hearing on unmet transit needs in this area. Joyce Hayes, Executive Director of the Humboldt Senior Resource Center, indicated that one major concern of seniors is the lack of transportation options for evenings and the weekends.

“It’s a big problem and not the way to keep people active and engaged in our community,” she pointed out.

Eureka resident, Nancy Myers, echoed that sentiment.

“I have trouble getting around and the bus or dial-a-ride are our only alternatives to cars,” she said. “The bus is inconvenient because of the stops and dial-a-ride is too expensive for many.”

Council members echoed this need for more and better service.

“We need more service on weekends and evenings,” said Kerrigan.

“We need smaller, utilitarian vehicles that are not restricted to certain routes,” added Glass.

The City Council will forward a transcript of public comments to the Humboldt County Association of Governments to be included in a 2007-2008 report of unmet needs.

Support for AB 238

AB 238 (Beall) needs letters of support. The bill would allow IHSS workers to be paid for providing reading services to care recipients who are blind/visually impaired. Call TCIL at 445-8404 for more information or send your letter to us at 955 Myrtle Ave., Eureka, CA 95501.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mon						
Tue						
Wed						
Thu						
Fri						
Sat						
Sun						

**IMPORTANT
DATES**

Disability Capitol Action Day--Wed., May 23, Sacramento.