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Metropolitan Transportation Commission and
Association of Bay Area Governments
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, California 94607

Ladies/Gentlemen:

I understand that the comment period for Draft Environmental Impact Report ends at 4 P.M., Thursday, May 16, 2013.

I believe that the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) lack political legitimacy. I say this because the respective members of the boards of directors of ABAG and MTC not directly elected by voters.

ABAG and MTC should, therefore, be abolished.

I keep reading about plans for ABAG and MTC to disrupt local communities' land use and housing patterns. For example, I have been reading about ABAG-MTC plans to order the construction of high-rise, high-density housing in various Bay Area communities.

I live in Orinda, California, and am not paying taxes to have unelected, unaccountable bureaucracies make decisions for local communities.

Orinda has an excellent semi-rural, village-like environment. And changes to that environment should be made only by the voters of Orinda.

I am very disturbed that, in Orinda, a 67-unit senior citizens housing complex is being built in downtown Orinda at 2 Irwin Way (across the street from a Citibank branch on Orinda Way). I favor building, in Orinda, housing for senior citizens, but I do not favor placing the housing in downtown Orinda, where traffic and parking conditions are miserable.

I understand that ABAG and MTC make projections on future Bay Area population growth. Such growth is unlikely to occur if job growth in the Bay Area does not materialize.

Bay Area job growth may be anemic or nonexistent if California imposes unusually high levels of taxation and regulation. Currently, California has the highest statutory sales-tax rate in the nation. Also, California has the highest top personal income-tax bracket in the nation: 13.3%. Moreover, California has the seventh highest corporate income-tax rate in the nation.

With such high levels of taxation, California businesses may relocate to other states or countries. Alternatively, these businesses may close down, reduce the number of employees, or cut compensation to existing employees.

New businesses may avoid California entirely. Existing businesses in other places may decide not to create jobs in California.

A famous document stated: "He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance." The document is the Declaration of Independence. The word, "he," refers to King George III of England.

I believe that ABAG and MTC are operating much as the British did before and during the American Revolution.

ABAG and MTC, as I stated above, should be abolished.

The Bay Area, like the American colonies in 1776, does not need swarms of officers to eat out our substance.

ABAG and MTC must stay out of the actions and ordinances of local communities.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Colman
Resident of Orinda

cc: Ms. Amy Worth, chairperson of MTC and mayor of Orinda