

Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 5



City and County of San Francisco

ROSS MIRKARIMI

June 10, 2009

Matt Nichols, Senior Transportation Planner  
City of Berkeley  
1947 Center St., 3rd floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704

RE: Commuter Benefits Legislation

Dear Mr. Nichols :

As a second-term member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the passage of the Transit Benefit Ordinance on August 18, 2008 was a great milestone in my legislative career. It is satisfying to sponsor legislation that receives support from such a wide variety of constituents.

This ordinance was supported by environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and the San Francisco Department of the Environment; smart transportation and planning groups such as Livable Cities, Transportation Management Association of San Francisco, and San Francisco Planning and Urban Research; and business groups such as the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the San Francisco Building Owners and Managers Association, the Union Square Merchant Association, and the Golden Gate Restaurant Association

The San Francisco City Attorney approved this ordinance as to form and has full confidence that this legislation does not create any potential liability for the City. There has been no legal challenge to this ordinance and we have not heard of any plans to challenge it.

I am encouraged to see that there is interest in replicating this legislation in other communities. This simple, straightforward ordinance seeks to raise awareness with employers and their employees of the tax savings the federal government offers to riders who commute to work using transit. Increased use of commuter tax benefits helps the environment, improves overall quality of life, and also saves businesses money by reducing their payroll taxes.

Please let me know if there is any further information that I or my staff can make available to you in your process.

Sincerely,  
Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross Mirkarimi".

Ross Mirkarimi  
Supervisor