

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, highways are a major cause of wildlife deaths in California, and a major contributor to the decline of wildlife populations that become isolated by habitat fragmentation and lose connectivity throughout their range; and

WHEREAS, there is a greater than 99% chance that pumas in the Santa Monica and Santa Ana mountains will become extinct within 50 years if inbreeding worsens; and the Mojave desert tortoise is projected to become extinct due to habitat fragmentation by roads and urban development if connectivity is not improved among its populations; and

WHEREAS, obstacles to wildlife movement are also a major threat to public safety. Between 2016-2020, over 44,000 collisions with large wildlife were reported to or by the California Highway Patrol. On average, five people are killed and over 250 people are injured in California in reported wildlife-vehicle collisions each year; and

WHEREAS, wildlife crossings can improve wildlife movement while reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions by up to 98%; and a recent study found that the savings from wildlife crossings to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions save costs and provide net financial benefits far beyond the costs of construction; and

WHEREAS, existing law clarifies that Caltrans, in coordination with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), may obtain mitigation credits for wildlife crossings, but it does not explicitly require that transportation projects address wildlife connectivity on California roads, nor require they address known hazards and long-term wildlife impacts from existing roads;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2021-2022 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 2344 (Friedman-Kalra), the Safe Roads and Wildlife Protection Act, which would improve safety for people and wildlife by protecting and enhancing wildlife connectivity across California's highway system; and require state agencies to implement wildlife crossings in identified connectivity areas for new projects and to address existing barriers identified as priorities.

PRESENTED BY


BOB BLUMENFIELD

Councilmember, 3rd District

SECONDED BY:



JUN 14 2022

ORIGINAL