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AB-377 High-Speed Rail Authority: business plan: Merced to Bakersfield segment. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 377

CHAPTER 81

An act to add Section 185033.8 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to high-speed rail.

[Approved by Governor July 30, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State July 30, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 377, Tangipa. High-Speed Rail Authority: business plan: Merced to Bakersfield segment.

The California High-Speed Rail Act creates the High-Speed Rail Authority to develop and implement a high-speed rail system in the state, with specified powers and duties. The act requires the authority to prepare, publish, adopt, and submit to the Legislature a business plan containing specified elements on a biennial basis and to also provide on a biennial basis a project update report, approved by the Secretary of Transportation as consistent with specified criteria, to the budget committees and the appropriate policy committees of both houses of the Legislature, on the development and implementation of intercity high-speed train service, as provided. The act requires the authority to develop schedules for the delivery of specified tasks relating to the Merced to Bakersfield segment of the high-speed rail project for inclusion in the project update report and the business plan and also requires the authority to include certain other information in the project update report and the business plan relating to the Merced to Bakersfield segment, as provided.

This bill would require the authority, as part of the business plan that is due on or before May 1, 2026, to provide a detailed funding plan for the Merced to Bakersfield segment that includes certain information, including an updated estimate of the funding gap for completing the segment and a strategy for addressing the funding gap.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 185033.8 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

185033.8. (a) As part of the business plan that is due on or before May 1, 2026, pursuant to Section 185033, the authority shall provide a detailed funding plan for the Merced to Bakersfield segment that includes all of the following information:

(1) An updated estimate of the funding gap for completing the segment.

(2) A strategy for addressing the funding gap that includes all of the following:

(A) An itemized list of anticipated funds by source.

(B) A timeline describing when each source of funds must be received in order to meet the authority's schedule for segment completion.

(C) The estimated project delays that would result if any funding source fails to materialize, and a discussion of how work could be resequenced to minimize these delays.

(D) An assessment of the likelihood that each proposed source of funding will materialize, including the identification of any major risks for obtaining the funding and a plan for mitigating those risks.

(3) Options for initiating service on the segment described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 185033.7 and the estimated schedule and costs associated with the service.

(b) For purposes of this section, "Merced to Bakersfield segment" has the same meaning as defined in Section 185033.7.