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San Mateo County Economic Development Association



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**NEW POLL FINDS OVERWHELMING AGREEMENT
THAT BART WORKERS SHOULD ACCEPT CURRENT
CONTRACT OFFER, AVOID STRIKE**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – By an overwhelming margin, Bay Area residents say BART workers should accept the most recent contract offer by BART management and avoid another strike, according to a new poll released today by the Bay Area Council and a coalition of leading Bay Area business groups.

The survey found that 63 percent of residents in counties directly served by BART think workers should accept BART's current contract offer, with just 6 percent saying BART should accept the latest offer by unions representing the system's almost 3,000 workers. Another 26 percent said the two sides should continue negotiating even if it means another strike.

"The message from the public couldn't be clearer, more direct and more urgent," said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "BART workers deserve a fair contract and what BART is offering provides that while also ensuring BART can make the critical and necessary investments to maintain and upgrade the system."

The scientific survey by EMC Research in Oakland was conducted from Sept. 29 through Oct. 2 with a sample size of 509 and a margin of error of 4.3 percent. Respondents came from the four counties – Alameda (37%), Contra Costa (25%), San Francisco (22%) and San Mateo (16%) – that BART directly serves.

For complete results, [visit BART strike survey](#).

Residents were unequivocal in where they believe BART should prioritize spending any available funding. The poll found 78 percent agree that BART should use any available funding to upgrade, repair and maintain the transit system, which operates the nation's oldest fleet of rail cars and is facing \$16.5 billion in upgrades and repairs over the next 30

years. Just 9 percent of those surveyed said BART should invest available funding to increase worker pay and benefits.

“There is way too much at stake for the business community in San Francisco and the entire Bay Area,” said Bob Linscheid, President and CEO of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. “BART riders believe overwhelmingly that BART workers should take the deal. What’s really interesting to me is that 62 percent of registered Democrats believe BART union workers should take managements offer.”

Among the 50 percent who identified themselves as Democrats, a whopping 72 percent oppose a strike. And, among respondents who said they had a union member in their household, 54 percent said BART workers should accept the offer from BART management.

“A BART strike will severely affect the economy of the entire Bay Area and bring great harm to working men and women who must rely on BART to commute to and from work,” said Greg McConnell, President and CEO of Oakland-based Jobs and Housing Coalition. “We urge our friends in labor to review the findings in the Bay Area Business Coalition poll and keep BART running. Please do not strike!”

Overall opposition to a strike was 77 percent, a noticeable increase from the 70 percent who said in an August survey that they oppose a strike. Awareness about a possible BART strike was 92 percent, similar to results from the August survey. And opposition to a strike was uniformly strong in all four counties, exceeding 70 percent.

"Many San Mateo County business leaders and residents rely on BART and need it to thrive and expand in the future," said Rosanne Foust, President and CEO of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association. "A strike would further clog our already heavily congested Highway 101 and 280. We need to get past this negotiation and refocus on making travel easier for everyone."

About the Bay Area Council

The Bay Area Council is a business-sponsored, public-policy advocacy organization for the nine-county Bay Area. The Council proactively advocates for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council is widely respected by elected officials, policy makers and other civic leaders as the voice of Bay Area business. Today, approximately 275 of the largest employers in the region support the Bay Area Council and offer their CEO or top executive as a member. Our members employ more than 4.43 million workers and have revenues of \$1.94 trillion, worldwide.