

AEP Day at the Capitol 2018

AEP's Legislative Review Committee held its annual Day at the Capitol in April of 2018, taking an opportunity to continue educating and developing relationships with important policymakers in Sacramento. This year, we were able to build on relationships formed in the past and offer assistance and feedback to legislators and their staff. As we have made these visits more regular and have gotten involved in more legislation over the last several years, many legislators and staff are familiar and appreciative of AEP's role in the Capitol.

Splitting up into groups, the Legislative Committee covered a lot of ground in the Capitol, holding back-to-back meetings the entire day. AEP met with Legislators and staff from both sides of the aisle who sit on our most important policy committees and who are carrying CEQA-related legislation in 2018. We met with Assemblymember Marc Berman, who is carrying AB 1804; Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, who chairs the Local Government Committee; Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, who chairs the Natural Resources Committee; Assemblymember Laura Friedman, who is carrying AB 2782; Assemblymember Susan Eggman, who sits on the Natural Resources Committee; Senator Henry Stern, who sits on the Senate Environmental Quality Committee; and Senator Jeff Stone, Vice Chair of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee.

On a staff level, the AEP Legislative Committee met with several important staffers. We met with Katie Kolitsos, CEQA and Housing policy consultant to Speaker Rendon, to discuss housing legislation proposals, transitional housing permitting issues, and the myriad CEQA bills being proposed in the Legislature. We also met with Derek Chernow, an influential chief of staff for Senator Bob Wieckowski, who chairs the Senate Environmental Quality Committee as well as the Budget Subcommittee on Resources and the Environment. Lastly, we met with policy staffers for several other important legislators, including Senator Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember Mark Stone, Assemblymember Todd Gloria, Assemblymember Monique Limon, and Senator Ted Gaines.

In addition to the legislative meetings, the legislative committee spent lunch with OPR's Scott Morgan and Natalie Kuffel to discuss coming improvements to CEQAnet, status of the CEQA Guidelines Update, and a conversation about proposed legislative ideas.

On day two of AEP's visit, AEP President Devon Muto, Vice-President Bill Halligan, and Legislative Review Committee member Kristin Blackson gave a presentation to legislative staffers from the legislature. Given the attention on housing by both AEP and California's legislature, that was the focus of the presentation, which was titled: *"2018 CEQA Issues: Housing and CEQA: Are they mutually exclusive?"*

All in all, it was another successful visit to California's Capitol to maintain existing relationships, develop new ones, and spread AEP's message.