



**For Immediate Release**

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Sept. 9, 2008

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## **‘Self-Help’ Counties Are More Effective in Getting Transportation Projects Delivered, Study Finds**

**SACRAMENTO** – California counties involved in the “self-help” program have significantly more influence over delivering transportation projects, particularly through the use of private engineering consultants, according to the findings of a study released today.

“The Self-Help Program: A Better Way to Deliver Local Transportation Projects,” by former Legislative Analyst Dr. William G. Hamm, is based on extensive interviews with state and local transportation officials, and a variety of published data on transportation project delivery.

The “self-help” county program is a local voter-approved special sales tax that raises money for county transportation programs. Current California law authorizes the state’s 58 counties to enact such programs with the approval of two-thirds of the voters in a county.

The study found:

- Because self-help counties are able to exercise control over locally raised transportation funds, they have considerably more influence over how transportation projects are delivered for the benefit of their residents.
- With more influence over delivery, self-help counties can adopt project delivery mechanisms that will be most effective in meeting the needs of their residents.
- The ability to use private consultants to deliver transportation projects is extremely valuable – even for counties that rely primarily on the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for project delivery.
- Where self-help counties have made extensive use of private consultants, they found that consultants made significant contributions by speeding up project delivery, improving responsiveness to residents’ needs and priorities, and using tax dollars in the most cost-effective manner.

“This study shows how the government can get to work improving our roads and freeways without wasting tax dollars on bureaucratic gridlock,” said Teresa Casazza, president of the non-partisan California Taxpayers’ Association. “Taxpayers deserve to know that the money they approve for transportation projects is used wisely, with their needs in mind.”

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“The study illustrates that the combination of the self-help program and the use of private consultants to deliver transportation projects is a recipe for success in California,” added Agnes Webber, chair of the Infrastructure Delivery Council (IDC), an affiliate of the American Council of Engineering Companies of California (ACEC California).

Dr. Hamm, principal author of the study, is a successful economics consultant with high-level experience in both business and government. Prior to entering the private sector, Dr. Hamm headed the non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office in California, where he earned a nationwide reputation for objectivity, expertise and credibility on various public policy issues ranging from taxation to health care.

To download a copy of the study, visit [www.acec-ca.org/?pid=384](http://www.acec-ca.org/?pid=384).

### **About Cal-Tax**

*The California Taxpayers' Association is a non-partisan, non-profit organization formed in 1926 to oppose unnecessary taxes and to advocate for government efficiency. Cal-Tax is online at [www.caltax.org](http://www.caltax.org).*

### **About ACEC California**

*ACEC California, formerly known as CELSOC, is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 private consulting engineering and land-surveying firms that average 20 employees each. ACEC California is dedicated to enhancing the consulting engineering and land surveying professions, protecting the general public and promoting the use of the private sector in the growth and development of our state. Members provide services for all phases of planning, designing and constructing projects. For more information, visit [www.acec-ca.org](http://www.acec-ca.org).*

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