

# Coastal Commission Assembly OKs Coastal Commission bill

SACRAMENTO — Flying directly against the stated wishes of Governor George Deukmejian, the state Assembly passed a bill Thursday morning that would instruct the Coastal Commission to maintain its offices in Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara.

Assembly bill 2443, authored by Assemblyman Sam Farr, D-Monterey, will now be forwarded to Deukmejian's desk. A press aide to the governor said Thursday that she assumed he would be opposed to the bill, although he has taken no official stand yet.

The Assembly vote was 41-34. The state Senate passed the bill Wednesday, 22-7.

"What this bill does is clarify a situation which is murky right now," Farr said Thursday.

Deukmejian ordered two of the commission's five offices closed in July, ostensibly to cut \$319,000 from the state budget. But the commission has said that it can save the money in other ways while still maintaining the Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara offices.

The bill instructs the commission to keep its offices open until that becomes financially infeasible.

"We're wondering if the governor is really looking at cost savings or just

wants to shut down the Coastal Commission," Farr said.

The 12-member commission, whose members are named by the governor and legislative leaders, helps regulate development along the 1,100 mile California shoreline. It was formed following a 1972 coastal protection initiative approved by California voters.

The commission has said it still needs regional offices to manage coastal resources and help local governments prepare coastal protection plans.

"The commission has been willing to show it can exist within its means," Farr

said. "If you close the offices, you hurt people who want to protect the coast, but you hurt the developers as well.

"Even if they don't like the commission, they probably won't like driving to San Francisco and talking with people who don't even know the area they're dealing with," Farr said.

The bill had been supported by the Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara and Monterey County boards of supervisors, the League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, the cities of Santa Cruz, Monterey, Seaside, Pacific Grove, Santa Barbara, Trans America Corporation and others.