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**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**  
Governor

**Brian P. Kelly**  
Secretary

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June 16, 2017

Secretary Elaine Chao  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Statement of Interest – Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program

Dear Secretary Chao:

On May 13, in response to President Trump's Executive Order 13766 "Expediting Environmental Reviews and Approvals For High Priority Infrastructure Projects", Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. sent the President a letter requesting assignment of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority). Such assignment would enable expedited review and approval of the environmental documents required for the California High Speed Rail System, one of the largest infrastructure investments in the United States.

In accordance with 23 CFR Section 773.105, the State of California is declaring its interest in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program described in 23 U.S.C. Section 327 to assume responsibilities for compliance with NEPA and all other federal environmental laws pertaining to the review or approval of all aspects of the High-Speed Rail System, including ongoing and all future actions.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) was the only state program to assume NEPA responsibilities from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under the Surface Transportation Project Pilot Program authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Caltrans has successfully executed those responsibilities for almost ten years, reducing time and costs to deliver the program. The department recently renewed the agreement for another five years. The Caltrans experience in expediting the environmental process for transportation projects in California can

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serve as a model as we pursue greater participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program.

California supports the Trump Administration's efforts to deliver critical transportation infrastructure projects quickly and efficiently. The first phase of our high-speed rail construction, begun after years of laborious approvals, is putting American steel, concrete and over 1,200 workers on the job, together generating over \$4 billion of economic activity. Assigning the federal responsibilities under NEPA and other environmental laws to the Authority will enable faster approvals of environmental documents, leading to faster construction and the creation of jobs - just what the President recently called for in his remarks at USDOT. Further, transferring the responsibility and the work from FRA to the Authority will free up FRA's limited resources to benefit other projects nationwide.

We understand that with assignment of NEPA obligations, the Authority will be responsible for complying with all applicable federal environmental laws and with FRA environmental regulations, policies and guidance, and will be legally responsible and liable for the environmental decisions made on all California High-Speed Rail projects. This includes projects currently under review as well as any future projects necessary for the High-Speed Rail System.

We will actively work to submit a draft application and meet all applicable program requirements under 23 CFR Part 773, and will work with USDOT on an expeditious review and assignment to maintain progress on this key infrastructure investment.

California looks forward to continuing our close working relationship with USDOT, and specifically with the FRA, during the application process and implementation of this critical program. As a Cabinet-level agency, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) will coordinate State activities and provide assistance to the Authority and Caltrans, both of which are state agencies housed within CalSTA. The main point of contact for this effort is Brian Annis, Undersecretary of CalSTA. In his role at CalSTA, Mr. Annis can coordinate effectively with the Authority, as well as leverage the experience of Caltrans to ensure that the application process proceeds efficiently, providing oversight and a single point of contact for the FRA and USDOT in this effort. His contact information is below:

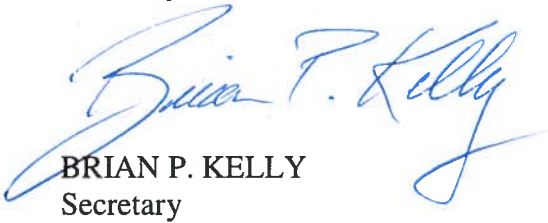
Brian Annis  
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Following the example of Caltrans, the Authority would like to request a pre-application coordination meeting with FRA within the next 30 days to review the program, the application requirements and next steps in the process. Mr. Annis will be reaching out to the FRA to set up that coordination meeting immediately.

Thank you for your attention to this important initiative, and we look forward to working together with USDOT to advance this and other important infrastructure investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian P. Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being the most prominent part of the script.

BRIAN P. KELLY  
Secretary