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## **High-Speed Rail Authority Board Adopts Hiring Policy Targeting California Communities and Disadvantaged Workers**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Today, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Board of Directors approved a Community Benefits Policy that promotes enhancing benefits for California community businesses and residents during construction of the California High-Speed Rail Project. The Policy supports employment of individuals who reside in Disadvantaged Areas and those designated as Disadvantaged Workers, including veterans returning from military service. It also helps remove potential barriers to Small Businesses (SB), Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE), Women-Owned Businesses, and Microbusinesses that want to participate in building the High-Speed Rail system.

“This policy is intended to help Central Valley communities where High-Speed Rail is set to begin and unemployment is still very high,” said Dan Richard, Chair of the Authority’s Board of Directors. “The project will bring thousands of jobs to the area and our policy will make sure communities have a fair shot at getting these good paying jobs and career opportunities. High-Speed Rail will help build and strengthen the economy along the High-Speed Rail alignment, and throughout the entire region, as working people pay tax dollars that are desperately needed for community coffers.”

Under the Authority’s Community Benefits Policy, design-build construction contracts will be required to adhere to the National Targeted Hiring Initiative, which states a minimum of 30 percent of all project work hours shall be performed by National Targeted Workers and a minimum of 10 percent of National Targeted Workers hours shall be performed by Disadvantaged Workers.

According to the National Targeted Hiring Initiative, Disadvantaged Workers either live in an Economically Disadvantaged Area or face any of the following barriers to employment – being homeless, a custodial single parent, receiving public assistance, lacking a GED or high school diploma, having a criminal record or other involvement with the criminal justice system, chronically unemployed, emancipated from the foster care system, being a veteran, or an apprentice with less than 15 percent of the required graduating apprenticeship hours in a program.

"The High-Speed Rail Authority's Community Benefits Policy means more opportunity for local workers and local small businesses," said Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearengin. "I applaud the Authority for adopting this policy and helping to make sure that employment and business opportunities created by the project are accessible to our local community."

"The passage of the Community Benefits Policy by the Authority sends a strong signal that it will be a priority to employ individuals from disadvantaged areas," said Henry R. Perea, Vice-Chair, Fresno County Board of Supervisors. "Central Valley citizens and small businesses will benefit from this policy."

"We applaud the Authority's decision to adopt the Community Benefits Policy," said Lee Ann Eager, President/CEO of the Economic Development Corporation serving Fresno County. "The high-speed rail project has the potential to employ thousands of central valley residents, so for the past three years, Fresno City, County, and the EDC have been working diligently to advocate for the National Targeted Hiring Initiative. We look forward to collaborating with the Authority to ensure implementation of the Initiative in order to get our residents back to work."

Contractors must agree to the Community Benefits Policy and Plan and designate a jobs coordinator, who will be responsible for the implementation of the National Targeted Hiring Initiative.

The Benefits Policy and Plan will be on equal footing with the Authority's Small Business (SB) Program approved earlier this year. It has an aggressive 30 percent goal for SB participation, which includes goals of 10 percent for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and 3 percent for Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE).

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