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March 8, 2021

AssemblyMember Chair Richard Bloom CHAIR  
Assembly Transportation Committee and Budget Subcommittee 3  
Capitol Office, Room 2003  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0050

Re: Support of the California High Speed Rail Authority Revised 2020 Business Plan

Chair Bloom and Subcommittee members,

On behalf of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, I offer our support of the California High Speed Rail Authority's ask of the Legislature to appropriate the remaining \$4 billion in Proposition 1A funds to complete construction and electrify the corridor in the Central Valley.

The Authority's Revised Draft 2020 Business Plan sets forth a plan to get electrified high-speed trains running as soon as possible while continuing to advance the entire high-speed rail system from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim. The current proposal calls for completion of the 119 miles under active construction in the Central Valley, with an extension to 171 miles of electrified rail connecting Merced, Fresno and Bakersfield as an interim operating segment as the rest of the project is completed. The funding from Proposition 1A funds is critical to meeting the goals outlined in the Authority's Business Plan.

Completing construction in the Central Valley and getting electrified service running has been extensively reviewed and shown to be the best use of the investment with the ability to increase ridership, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution in areas with the worst air quality in the country, and demonstrate the value that high-speed rail can bring to the traveling public. In addition, investment in high-speed rail has generated over \$10 billion in economic activity providing direct benefits to disadvantaged communities in the Central Valley which have seen over half of that investment to date.

Even as COVID has impacted the program, the Authority has made huge strides in construction throughout the pandemic, doubling the number of construction workers on site since the start of 2020 to over 1,200 at the end of last year. Failing to appropriate the funds would mean that we would have to slow down construction and lay off construction workers just as the economy will be coming back from COVID.

Allocation of the remaining \$4.2 billion in Proposition 1A funds to complete construction on the first operating segment in the Central Valley is a critical step in advancing the work in Northern and Southern California beyond environmental clearance to the next stages of design and development. This would get the Authority well positioned for funding opportunities to extend the system to the Bay Area and to Los Angeles. We urge you to appropriate the remaining \$4 billion in Proposition 1A funds for these critical steps towards electrifying the Central Valley.

Thank you for your consideration,

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce