



April 7, 2022

Chairman Tom Richards
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
REVISED DRAFT 2022 BUSINESS PLAN

Dear Chairman Richards:

I would like to express my support for Governor Newsom's vision and plan for high-speed rail in California, particularly the essential infrastructure investments in transportation in the heart of California—the Central Valley. High-speed rail will provide a commitment to clean, low- and no-carbon transportation strategies that help reduce pollution in the Central Valley, home to some of the nation's worst air quality and highest asthma rates.

My commitment includes continued support for the draft 2022 Business Plan for the high-speed rail project, which provides for pursuing Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield Interim Service with stops at Kings/Tulare and Madera. In addition, my support includes electrified, high-speed rail service to Californians at the earliest possible time.

Merced, Fresno, and Bakersfield are home to nearly one million Californians, and the respective counties—Merced, Fresno, Kern—have a population above two million people. As a result, the cities in the Central Valley are among California's fastest-growing communities, ripe with the opportunity to carry California into a sustainable future.

Governor Newsom's commitment and vision for high-speed rail are memorialized in the Revised Draft 2022 Business Plan, including a Central Valley segment that cuts travel time in half between cities in the Valley compared to today's rail service or traveling by car. In addition, the plan frames a high-speed rail line that provides connections in Merced to the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) train service and the San Joaquin service to Oakland and Sacramento in the north and the Central Valley and Los Angeles in the south.

While the project is transformative for the Central Valley, it maintains critical targeted investments adopted by the High-Speed Rail Authority in the Bay Area and Los Angeles.

Board of Supervisors

Rodrigo Espinoza
Supervisor, District One

Josh Pedrozo
Supervisor, District Two

Daron McDaniel
Supervisor, District Three

Lloyd Pareira, Jr.
Supervisor, District Four

Scott M. Silveira
Supervisor, District Five

Raul Lomeli Mendez
County Executive Officer

Merced County
Administration Building
2222 "M" Street
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 385-7366
(209) 726-7977 Fax
www.countyofmerced.com

Equal Opportunity Employer

*Striving for
Excellence*

This project is key to opening Valley-to-Valley access to allow companies to expand to the Central Valley and offer affordable housing prospects that align with the Governor's overall goals to ensure statewide coordinated investments.

High-speed rail also connects Merced and the Central Valley to the Megaregion efforts from the Bay Area—providing a regional perspective on addressing housing, workforce, and educational issues, including leveraging State investments in dynamic institutions such as UC Merced.

Merced to Bakersfield HSR Interim Service will generate significant economic benefits, with over \$38 billion in total economic activity and over 200,000 job-years of employment. Corridor-wide ridership increases from 2.6 million passengers in 2017 to 8.8 million passengers in 2029, which results in reduced State subsidies for passenger rail services. Electrified high-speed rail improves air quality in the Central Valley and reduces GHG emissions by shifting from diesel to clean, electrically powered trains.

Again, I would like to express my support of high-speed rail and I look forward to a continued partnership in doing its part to provide solutions to California's long-term challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Josh M. Pedrozo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Josh" written in a large, stylized script, followed by "M." and "Pedrozo" in a similar but slightly smaller script.

Supervisor Josh Pedrozo
Merced County Board of Supervisors, District Two

cc: *California High Speed Rail Authority Board of Directors*
Paul J. Yoder, Partner, SYASL
Karen Lange, Partner, SYASL