

April 9, 2020

Mr. Brian Kelly
Chief Executive Officer
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620,
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SBCTA Comments on the Draft 2020 High Speed Rail Business Plan

Dear Mr. Kelly,

The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRSA's) *Draft 2020 High Speed Rail Business Plan*. The Business Plan represents a significant update and provides a better indication of how the State High Speed Rail system will serve Southern California and integrate with our urban rail systems.

Our interest in the Business Plan pertains primarily to the section on page 94 regarding the BNSF Partnership. See excerpt from the Business Plan below:

(from page 94) BNSF PARTNERSHIP

The Los Angeles to Anaheim project section is an extremely constrained existing three-track rail corridor, with roads, overpasses, businesses and homes abutting nearly every mile of the rail right of way. The corridor also is heavily used by existing diesel passenger and freight rail, which interoperate on the three tracks. Preliminary plans to add electrified high-speed rail tracks in this corridor involved adding two new dedicated electric tracks roughly parallel to the existing tracks, which would require a meaningful widening of the existing right-of-way into existing roads, buildings and homes.

Through a partnership with BNSF Railway (BNSF), CalSTA and regional rail providers, a concept was developed to accomplish largely the same capacity results with a four-track configuration (two freight and two electrified passenger) that will fit mostly inside the existing right of way, thereby reducing impacts in the main corridor. Offsetting the capacity lost by reducing freight to two tracks will require new facilities to be constructed in the Inland Empire. These facilities include the Lenwood Staging Tracks near Barstow and the Colton Intermodal Facility.

Given that SBCTA is a governing member of the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), we have a great interest in seeing the overall passenger rail system succeed in serving San Bernardino County residents, businesses, and all Southern California. However, the specifics

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of the proposal are unclear regarding how Metrolink service might be impacted or improved in the process of accommodating High Speed Rail within the Los Angeles to Anaheim segment.

Beyond that, we have questions about the magnitude of the proposed BNSF intermodal facility in Colton, the amount of traffic it would generate (particularly truck traffic), where that traffic would access the freeway system, and what both the traffic and air quality impacts would be. While we expect the EIR/EIS to disclose those impacts, as the designated transportation planning agency for San Bernardino County, we would like to get an early look at those plans and be able to suggest mitigations to the impacts.

The schedule for completion of the draft EIR/EIS is shown in the Business Plan as January 2021, and yet there is essentially no information currently available about the intermodal facility's design or planned circulation system. We would request that CHSRA contact us to provide additional information at your earliest convenience. Please also help us understand how the environmental documentation is structured, how the environmental clearance of the intermodal facility fits within that structure, and what the stakeholder outreach process will involve through the environmental process.

We also note in the Business Plan the multiple references to the Virgin Trains project between San Bernardino County and Las Vegas, a private sector venture being assisted by the State in their quest to obtain tax-exempt private activity bonds. We look forward to further information and coordination on that front as well. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment, and we look forward to additional contacts with the CHSRA in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Wolfe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ray" and last name "Wolfe" clearly distinguishable.

Raymond W. Wolfe
Executive Director