

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 20, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for California High-Speed Rail Authority's Application to the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP-National) Grant Funding for Fiscal Year 2024

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As members of the California Congressional delegation, we are writing to express our strong support for the California High-Speed Rail Authority's (Authority) application for Fiscal Year 2024 funding from the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail National Program for projects outside the Northeast Corridor (FSP-National).

The Authority's application for the California Phase 1 Corridor Tunneling Design – North and South – aims to support the next stage of design for the first two segments in a sequence of design sections that have been environmentally cleared: (1) Bakersfield to Palmdale (South); and (2) Gilroy to Central Valley Wye (North). The planned tunneling design work is essential for advancing the program from the current construction in the Central Valley toward the largest population centers of the State.

The project development grant application is for \$536 million that would be matched by state Cap-and-Trade funds of almost \$134 million for a total project cost of roughly \$670 million. The objective of the Project is to initiate the time-intensive and complex tunneling design work, achieving 30% design. This includes civil design, preliminary geotechnical studies, right-of-way design identification, and utility design.

The scope of work in both sections involves detailed geotechnical investigations critical to completing the future final design of two long-lead-time, complex tunnel sections: (1) through the Tehachapi Mountains in Southern California; and (2) through the Pacheco Pass in the Diablo Mountain Range in Northern California. These tunnels will enable connections with other intercity passenger rail systems in the Southwest Region Corridor.

- **In the South**, California High-Speed Rail (CAHSR) will connect with two additional high-speed rail projects underway, the High Desert Corridor and Brightline West, as well as existing rail services, including Metrolink.
- **In the North**, CAHSR will connect with Caltrain and Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) rail services.

The requested federal funds are needed to support areas of critical need in advancing the State's first intercity passenger service operating at high speeds. The projected ridership for the California Phase 1 Corridor would make it the most traveled intercity passenger service in the nation.

The Authority's FSP-National grant application is part of an on-going federal-state partnership that, to-date, has provided approximately \$28.8 billion in funding for California High-Speed Rail consisting of \$22 billion (or 76%) from state funds and \$6.8 billion (or 24%) from federal funds. *California is the only state in the country to have committed this level of funding and advanced electrified, 220 mph high-speed rail this far.*

This historic federal-state partnership has also resulted in significant job and economic opportunities including:

- Creating more than 14,200 construction jobs since the start of high-speed rail construction through September 2024, with most of these jobs going to Central Valley residents and men and women from disadvantaged communities.
- Employing more than 860 small, disadvantaged, and disabled veteran businesses through August 2024.
- Yielding \$7.0 billion in labor income and \$18.0 billion in total economic output across the State from July 2006 through June 2023.

Advancing progress on the California Phase 1 Corridor is essential for enhancing our nation's and California's strategic transportation network investments. The Phase 1 Corridor aims to address climate concerns, promote health, improve access and connectivity, and boost economic vitality, while addressing current highway and rail capacity constraints. By preparing for future final design and construction of complex tunnels in this corridor, the Project will advance both state and federal goals to improve safety, expand economic strength and global competitiveness, address equity issues, and implement sustainability practices to confront climate change. These investments will continue to support living wage jobs, provide small business opportunities, and equitably enhance the mobility of communities in need – including disadvantaged agricultural communities – all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Please consider the enormous value and meaningful impact that FSP-National grant funding will provide to advancing CAHSR beyond the Central Valley.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



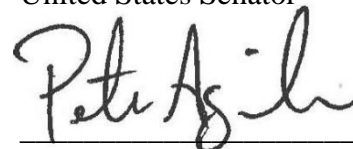
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff
United States Senator



Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress