



City of
SANTA CLARITA

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November 2, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Cameron Smyth
Mayor

**RE: SUPPORT FOR UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program
INTERSTATE 5 (I-5) GOLDEN STATE CHOKEPOINT RELIEF PROGRAM**

Laurene Weste
Mayor Pro Tem

Dear Secretary Chao:

Bob Kellar
Councilmember

On behalf of the Santa Clarita City Council, I am writing to express our strong support for the grant application being submitted by the County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the California Department of Transportation for FY 17 and FY 18 Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) funding to advance the I-5 Golden State Chokepoint Relief Program.

Marsha McLean
Councilmember

Bill Miranda
Councilmember

The City of Santa Clarita, California, located in Los Angeles County immediately north of the City of Los Angeles, has been and continues to be a rapidly growing community. The City's population has more than doubled since incorporation 30 years ago; having grown from approximately 110,000 residents in 1990 to approximately 225,000 residents today within the incorporated area and another 70,000 residents residing in the adjacent unincorporated area. Collectively, this area is known as the Santa Clarita Valley. Santa Clarita is currently the third most populous municipality in Los Angeles County and the 17th most populous city out of 482 cities within the State of California. The extensive local growth, when combined with statewide population growth and heightened regional, state and national demands for better facilitated goods movement, has placed increasing and significant pressure on Interstate 5 and arterials in our community.

The program proposed for INFRA grant funding offers a comprehensive approach to fixing congestion, addressing safety, and providing more route choices along a critical 18-mile stretch of I-5 in north Los Angeles County. It focuses on a chokepoint in the rapidly-growing Santa Clarita Valley where, due to unique topography of the area, I-5 is the sole major north-south link between the agricultural areas and logistics centers of the Central Valley and the Los Angeles Basin, where the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach support 40% of the nation's containerized freight volumes.



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The lack of route choices along this chokepoint, combined with challenging inclined terrain, not only heightens the vulnerability of local residents and businesses to major traffic incidents and natural disasters, but makes the entire West Coast vulnerable to paralyzing supply chain disruptions along the entirety of I-5, a vital international trade corridor stretching nearly 800 miles from Mexico to Canada.

On behalf of residents and businesses of the City of Santa Clarita, I urge the United States Department of Transportation to leverage over \$440 million in committed local investment and award discretionary INFRA funds for construction of truck lanes and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes along the I-5 chokepoint and for widening of The Old Road, the key arterial highway paralleling I-5 that serves as a critical bypass during freeway shutdowns. This targeted program of improvements will add new roadway capacity for commuters and freight traffic where it is most needed, thereby relieving the chokepoint, enhancing safety and security, and supporting continued economic development both in the Santa Clarita Valley and the nation as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Should you or your staff require any additional information regarding the Santa Clarita City Council's support for this grant application, please contact Michael P. Murphy, Intergovernmental Relations Manager, at (661) 255-4384 or mmurphy@santa-clarita.com.

Sincerely,



Cameron Smyth
Mayor